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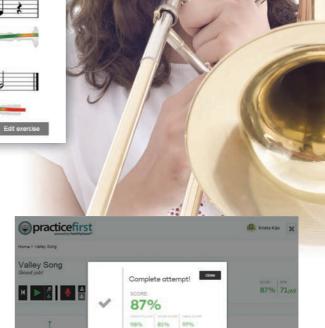
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BUSINESS MANAGER Barbara Boughton

CONTRIBUTORS: Andrew S. Berman, Debbie Galante Block, Chad Criswell, Cynthia Darling, Justin W. Durham, Steve Fidyk, Josef Hanson, Cathy Applefield Olson, Adam Perlmutter, Joseph M. Pisano, Susan Poliniak, Paul Sigrist

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Adjudication: A Learning Opportunity

Andrew Berman's article "Judgment Day" in the August 2015 Teaching Music caught my interest; coincidentally, I wrote on the same subject for the NJMEA's TEMPO Magazine about a year ago. I thought a few observations would be relevant.

I think one of the biggest problems is the perceived adversarial relationship between judges and performers. Many younger players seem to think that the adjudicator is sitting with sharpened pencil, eager to take off points for every little squeak or crack. In most cases, nothing could be further from the truth. Students often don't seem to realize (or want to believe) that the adjudicator is on their side; that in reality, everyone—student, director, and adjudicator—wants the same thing: They all want the group to sound better. Once students are convinced that the adjudicator is there to help them, the whole process becomes easier and far less stressful.

Nonetheless, in the years I've adjudicated concert band, jazz band, and orchestra, I've noticed the same problems cropping up almost continuously, and often in every group in a program.

The first is our old nemesis, bad intonation. I think that over the years I've talked and written about poor intonation more than any other problem. And yet, it need not be so. Intonation is a skill that can be practiced and improved upon. A simple first step is to have the band tune pianissimo. Many's the time I've seen a group take the stage and then begin what they think is the tuning process. After the tuning note is given, they all begin to honk and blare at a forte level or louder.

They can't possibly hear each other, and, worse, I almost never see any adjustments being made. Softer playing allows better hearing.

The other common problem is balance. This is much harder to improve, since the adjudication is generally taking place on a strange stage in a strange hall. It seems to be at its worst among jazz bands, where the rhythm electronics (bass, guitar, and keyboard) drown out the wind instruments. Sometimes, a change of setup can be of value. I've heard numerous successful jazz bands that set up in a

"V" formation, with rhythm in the middle at the point of the V, and the winds down each flank. This gives everybody a better chance to hear other players and adjust the sound accordingly.

Balance in string groups can occasionally be improved by moving string basses to the center of the group. In the traditional setup, basses and back-stand violins can be a whole stage length apart. Moving basses to the middle allows everyone to hear the bottom a little

Adjudication can be a valuable experience for any group or musician. Just keep in mind that it's a learning experience. -John Pursell, Yamaha trumpet artist and clinician; senior ceremonial

trumpeter, United States Air Force Band (Ret.); Chambersburg, Pennsylvania; johnpursell@msn.com

Accentuate the Positive!

It was wonderful to see composition pedagogy addressed in the August 2015 issue of Teaching Music. Interviewee Robert Deemer offered several helpful strategies for teachers encountering emerging composers, facilitating the work of young composers, and seeking just the right thing to say to students tackling compositional challenges. Deemer also noted that learning to compose, just like learning to sing or play an instrument, is a process that takes time.

> Unfortunately, the writer of the article closed with "There is no immediate gratification in compos-

ing for the teacher or the student." While this statement was clearly intended to emphasize the importance of investing time in composition, it seems incongruous to end an article titled "Accentuate the Positive" with a sentence so easily construed as negative when positives abound.

Compositional gratification does not rest only in the finished piece that we hear or perform; it can also be found in compositional processes. The act of composition is comprised of hundreds of smaller actions and decisions, with each providing opportunities for gratification. Whether the "instant" is found in successfully placing two notes, shaping a melody, completing a song, or drafting the outline of a piece for chamber ensemble, each artistic choice

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,

is rewarding in its own way.

As teachers empower students to exercise their compositional capacities in bringing their own music to life, both discover the potential for wide-ranging and continuous gratifications. Indeed, gratification can even be found in composition's many challenges, as each is ripe with the potential for important learning—and that is a positive outcome worth accentuating! —Michele Kaschub, professor of music education and coordinator of music teacher education, School of Music, University of Southern Maine, Portland; kaschub@usm.maine.edu

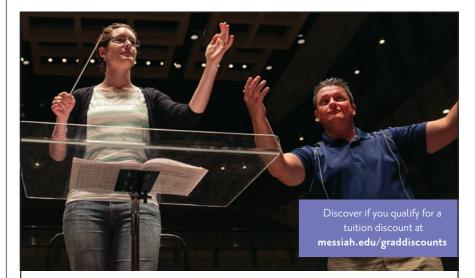
Rob Deemer Responds ...

I very much appreciate both Debbie Galante Block's article "Accentuate the Positive" in the August 2015 *Teaching Music* and Michele Kaschub's follow-up comments in this issue. Michele is spot-on when she emphasizes the gratification that occurs throughout the compositional process. Students can realize amazing gratification through the successful completion of a goal they or their instructor has set out for them as well as through unforeseen discoveries.

My comments during my interview with Ms. Block were meant to explain how concepts and ideas about composing may take time to become integrated into the young composer's vernacular; concepts such as precompositional planning, development of ideas, or thinking abstractly about music can indeed take time and teachers have to be patient and "play the long game" when working with their students with those concepts.

I offer one other brief addendum to the article for clarification's sake. The statement "the composer can't be wrong" is technically correct—the composer ultimately gets to decide what is "right" or "wrong" compositionally in their work—but it must also be emphasized that the student can and should be challenged to make the best decision for the piece. I have no qualms with telling a composer that they can keep something that, in my mind, doesn't work in their piece, but I make sure they understand why that component of their work is ineffective and will provide several

examples of how their work could be improved through alternate options. If we have built trust between us, the student will usually agree to experiment further and ultimately improve their piece. —Rob Deemer, associate professor of music composition, School of Music, State University of New York at Fredonia; deemer@freedonia.edu



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



LAURA NELSON—the lower school music teacher, high school/middle choral director, and fine arts director at Orangewood Christian School in Maitland, Florida-brings many years of teaching experience in public and private

school settings. A NAfME member, she holds a bachelor's in music education from Florida State University, and is a two-time quarterfinalist for the GRAMMY for Music Educator Award. Nelson shares her tips for integrating new students into an ensemble at the beginning of a school year.

"At Orangewood Christian School, it is always fun to see new faces in our high school choir at the beginning of the school year. To help our new choir students feel more comfortable, I pair them up with a veteran choir member who can answer any questions and help them navigate the daily routine. I've also found that laughter is a great way to break the ice and help our new students to feel included. Rounds and canons are a fun, easy way to get everyone singing, and it creates unity as students work together with their 'team' to stay on track.

One of our favorites is a round called 'Little Tommy Tinker.' We add goofy movements, and everyone is usually laughing hysterically by the end. We also use our warm-ups to add a little fun and humor to class. One of our most requested activities is one in which I ask the students to sing a vocal

exercise as if they are different ages. Not only does it make everyone laugh, but the students can really hear the difference between singing with a young, horizontal sound as compared to a beautiful, mature, tall vowel sound," says Nelson. "Another variation is to sing our warmups using different emotions, such as anger, sadness, surprise, fear, happiness, etc.," says Nelson. "As an educator, I strive to make everyone feel welcome and included. When we are in unity and

work together as a team, it can be heard in a beautiful, blended sound, and that is our ultimate goal."

The GRAMMY Foundation has chosen 213 quarterfinalists for the 2016 GRAMMY Music Educator Award™. Of that number, 122

> are NAfME members. In all, over 4,500 initial nominations were submitted from all 50 states. NAfME congratulates all of these talented, dedicated music educators. Visit nafme.org and search for "GRAMMY Educator" to see a list of NAfME-member quarterfinalists.

> The GRAMMY Music Educator Award was established to recognize current music educators (kindergarten through college in both public and private schools) who have made significant and lasting contributions to the field of music education and demonstrate a commitment to the cause of maintaining music education in the schools. Other NAfME-member quarterfinalists share their tips for creating cohesive ensembles at nafme.org.

> A partnership and presentation of the Recording Academy and the GRAMMY Foundation, this award will be presented at the Special Merit Awards Ceremony &

Nominees Reception during 2016 GRAMMY Week.

Nominations for the 2017 Music Educator Award are now being accepted. Visit grammyintheschools.com/programs/grammy-music-educator-award/faq for more information. The deadline to nominate teachers for recognition in 2017 is March 15, 2016.



We add goofy movements, and everyone is usually laughing hysterically by the end. -LAURA NELSON

NAfME **ANNOUNCES CANDIDATES** FOR 2016-18 **NATIONAL** PRESIDENT-

In June at the 2015 National Assembly meeting in Tysons, which included NAfME national. state and division leaders, President Glenn Nierman announced the names of the two candidates who will run for the office of NAfME 2016-18 President-Elect.

All active and retired NAfME members can vote online beginning on the second Tuesday in January 2016. Electronic ballots will be available January 12, 2016 through midnight on February 10, 2016.

Candidate videos statements, and biographical information can be found on the NAfME website. Visit nafme.org and search for "2016–18 President-Elect.

The candidates are: **▼ David Branson.** a NAfMF Western **Division Past President** and fine arts administrator from the Washoe County (Wyoming) School District, is currently a clinician for the Conn-Selmer Institute.



▼ Kathleen D. Sanz, a NAfMF Southern Division Past President. is currently Florida Music Educators Association state executive, and president and CEO of the Center for Fine Arts Education in Tallahassee, Florida.





In July 2015 a select group of music teachers met at NAfME's Reston headquarters to review piloters' student work, refine the assessments, and identify potential "benchmark" student work to illustrate the expectations spelled out in the new Standards.

The National Core Music Standards Move from Theory to Practice

THE JUNE 2014 PUBLICATION of new National Core Music Standards marked an important step in NAfME's efforts to provide music educators with the tools to develop and deliver effective curricula that meets the needs of 21st-century students.

The writing and revision that led to publication also produced draft Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs) to help music teachers measure students' Standard achievements. Refined versions of the MCAs were posted on the NAfME website and piloted by dozens of music teachers during the 2014-15 school year. These teachers uploaded students' work from those tasks to shareassessment.org. NAfME Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer Mike Blakeslee says the piloting exercises of the MCAs bring the Core Music Standards into the real world of the music classroom. "It gives us an idea of what success actually looks like. Ongoing field tests are essential to this process."

In July 2015, a group of music teachers met at NAfME's Reston, Virginia, headquarters to review piloters' student work, refine the assessments, and identify potential benchmark student work to illustrate the expectations in the new Standards. Scott C. Shuler, co-chair of the Music Standards

Writing Team, says, "Consistent with the all-volunteer process that produced the standards and MCAs, these teachers generously donated their time; their travel expenses

pilot-testing of all elementary MCAs and going on to fully pilot the standards for: Ensembles Guitar/Keyboard/ **Harmonizing**

Instruments Composition/ Theory Music Technology

TAKE PART IN

THE

PILOT-TESTING

ASSESSMENTS!

NAfME is collecting

names for continued

To request a part in this piloting process, visit nafme.org/MCApilottest for a webinar by Scott C. Shuler, co-chair of the Music Standards Writing Team.

were funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. It was my privilege to coordinate this effort in collaboration with Richard Wells and former South Carolina Arts Assessment Project leader Ching Ching Yap." Researcher teams headed by Fred Burrack of Kansas State University, and A. Kelly Parkes of Virginia Tech worked with Brian Wesolowski of the University of Georgia to analyze scores and guide the benchmarking process. "The fall of 2015 offers you an opportunity to join other music teachers across the U.S. in helping establish high standards for our profession, by piloting newly revised versions of the MCAs in their classrooms," Says Shuler. Visit nafme.org/MCApiolettest to pilot the standards in your own classroom.

To read more, visit nafme.org and search for "National Core Music Standards." For a colorful resource for your classroom, see our Core Music Standards Poster at shop.nafme.org.

NAfME Recognizes Tri-M® Chapters for Outstanding Work

NAfME announces its 2014-15 Tri-M® Music Honor Society Chapter of the Year recipients and runners-up.

SENIOR DIVISION WINNERS: Chapter of the Year: The Wheatley School, Old Westbury, New York First Runner-Up: Herricks High School, New Hyde Park, New York Second Runner-Up: Elizabeth Forward High School, Elizabeth, Pennsylvania

JUNIOR DIVISION WINNERS: Chapter of the Year: Ranney Middle School, Tinton Falls, **New Jersey** First Runner-Up: West New York Middle School, West New York, New Jersey
Second Runner-Up:

Chesterfield Elementary School, Chesterfield, New Hampshire. NAfME's Tri-M Music Honor Society is the

international music honor society that recognizes the academic and musical achievements of middle/junior high and high school students, rewards them for their accomplishments and service activities, and inspires other students to excel at music and leadership.

To activate or renew a chapter for the 2015-16 school year, visit nafme.org/Tri-M for

the newest activation form. Please note all chapters must pay a \$100 fee to activate or renew. Chapter advisors are encouraged to renew their chapters as soon as possible. On the NAfME website, you'll also find an online Quick- Start
Guide with lots of service ideas and suggestions for fund-raising projects.



Tri-M[®] Music HONOR SOCIETY

MUSIC PLAYS an important role in a complete education. It's collaborative, encourages critical thinking, and allows students to better understand themselves and the world around them.

Discover how you can give students the inspiration they need to learn and create in different ways! It's not too late to join NAfME at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee, October 25–28, for more than 300 innovative professional development sessions emphasizing in-depth learning. Session focuses include Band, Choral, Collegiate, Composition, General

Interest, General Music, Guitar, In-Ovations, Jazz, Music Program Leader, and Orchestral tracks. In short, NAfME's 2015 National In-Service Conference will "Empower Creativity!"

Throughout the In-Service Conference, there will be opportunities to network with fellow music educators from throughout the United States and beyond. Share ideas! Make new friends!

On Sunday, October 25th, Wayne and Karey Kirkpatrick will give the Keynote Address to open the Conference. Wayne Kirkpatrick is a Grammy® Award-winning songwriter of tunes such as "Change the World" for Eric Clapton and "Wrapped Up in You" for Garth Brooks. His



Join us at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center October 25–28.

brother Karey is a screenwriter who has worked on films including *Chicken Run* and *The Smurfs 2*.

Wayne and Karey are also the brains behind the hit Broadway musical, Something Rotten!, which was nominated for 10 Tony Awards for the 2014–15 season. The Kirkpatricks created the music and lyrics, and Karey wrote the book along with John O'Farrell. Set in the 1590s, the satirical musical centers around two brothers trying to write a play in an era overshadowed by the most famous of playwrights, William Shakespeare.

Other events at NAfME's In-Service Conference will

include the NAfME Young Composers Concert, concerts by the All-National Honor Ensembles, the Vanderbilt Melodores—the University's internationally recognized all-male a cappella group—and the Give a Note Monster Mash Extravaganza.

Need help justifying your attendance? NAfME has put together a Toolkit to help you make your case to attend the most exciting and inspiring music education conference there is! Visit nafme.org/nashville2015, and scroll down to the Justification Toolkit to read more.

Visit nafme.org/nashville2015 for further Conference information and to register for an empowering, creative time in Nashville!

NAFME'S SPECIAL LEARNERS PRECONFERENCE: INTERACTIVE, AUTHENTIC, AND PRACTICAL

Please join us for NAfMÉ's Special Learners Preconference, Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). October 24-25 at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee, in conjunction with NAfME's 2016 In-Service Conference. Registration for the Preconference is \$150. Clinicians will join K-12 teachers, parents, and students with ASD for the sessions. Alice M. Hammel—a well-known music educator, author, and clinician—will give the opening remarks and close the Preconference. Sessions will include "A Music Curriculum for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder" by Stephen Shore and Kaname Ueno; "The Musical Tug of War: Coaching Students on the Autism Spectrum in Verbal Expression" by Amy Hourigan; "Creating a Well-Structured Classroom for Students with Autism" by Elise Hackl; and more.

One graduate credit and/or certificate will be presented to teachers who complete the Preconference. See the full schedule at inserviceconference. nafme.org/sessions/music-education-for-students-with-autism-spectrum-disorders-asd. Register at nafme.org/Nashville2015.

Drum Major, Musicians Announced for the 2016 All-American Marching Band

Vitaliy Popovych from Heritage High School, Georgia, was named Drum Major of the 2016 U.S. Army All-American Marching Band, accepting the shako from Emily Swanson of Kings High School in Kings Mills, Ohio, the 2015 Drum Major, at a ceremony during Drum Corps International's World Championships in Indianapolis, Indiana.

On January 9, 2016,
Popovych will lead the band
during halftime of the U.S. Army
All-American Bowl. Produced by
All-American Games, the Bowl
will feature the nation's top high
school senior football players
and marching musicians. Band
members, selected for the



USAAAMB following a rigorous audition process, receive all-expenses-paid trips to San Antonio, Texas, for the Bowl at the Alamodome.

NAfME, the selection partner for the band, has named

Left to Right: Emily Swanson ('15 Drum Major), Ken Bodiford ('16-'17 Lead Director), and Vitaliy Popovych ('16 Drum Major)

the roster of the 2016 U.S. USAAAMB. Visit nafme.org and search for "2016 USAAAMB Band Roster" to see a full list of band members and their music teachers. The 2016-17

USAAAMB director is Ken Bodiford of Jacksonville State University in Alabama, where he conducts the Jacksonville State University Chamber Winds, and directs the internationally known "Marching Southerners."
Since his appointment as
director, the band program has
grown in both quantity and quality, and the Marching Southerners has more than doubled in
size.

The USAAMB, founded in 2008 with 97 members, has since grown to 125 members: 1 drum major, 24 color guard members, and 100 marching musicians.

Nominations for the 2017 U.S. Army All-American Marching Band open on September 1, 2015. For more information, visit nafme.org and search for "U.S. Army All-American Marching Band."



SAVE THE DATE! NAfME's 2015–2016 School Year Calendar

OCTOBER 2015

OCTOBER 1: George N. Parks Leadership in Music Education Award deadline. nafme.org/ nominations-for-the-george-n-parks-award-are-open

OCTOBER 1: NAfME Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference, Call for Proposals deadline. nafme.org/call-for-proposals-2016-music -research-and-teacher-education-national-conference



OCTOBER 13: NAfME 2016 All-National Honor **Ensemble applications open**

OCTOBER 25-28: NAfME National In-Service Conference, Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center, Nashville, Tennessee. inserviceconference.nafme.org

OCTOBER 25-26 National Tri-M Leadership **Summit, Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention** Center, Nashville, Tennessee nafme.org/programs/ tri-m-music-honor-society

NOVEMBER 2015

NOVEMBER 1: 2017 U.S. Army All-American Marching Band applications open. nafme.org/ programs/u-s-army-all-american-marching-band

NOVEMBER 16: Marine Band Concerto Competition deadline. marineband.marines.mil/About/ ConcertoCompetition.aspx

DECEMBER 2015

DECEMBER 1: Tri-M Giving Tuesday. nafme.org/Tri-M

DECEMBER: Tips for Concert Etiquette. nafme.org/concert-etiquette-is-for-everyone

JANUARY 2016

JANUARY 9: U.S. Army All-American Bowl, San Antonio, Texas. usarmyallamericanbowl.com/ marching-band-about/

JANUARY 12 TO FEBRUARY 10: NAfME Conducts Elections for 2016-18 National President-Elect

JANUARY 18: National Tri-M Service Day. nafme.org/Tri-M

JANUARY 31: Nomination deadline for the 2017 Army All-American Marching Band. nafme.org/ programs/u-s-army-all-american-marching-band/

FEBRUARY 2016

FEBRUARY 15: NAfME Student Composers Competition deadline nafme.org/programs/ contests-calls-competitions/ student-composers-competition

MARCH 2016

March is Music in Our Schools Month®! nafme.org/programs/miosm

←MARCH 16-19: NAfME Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference, Westin Peachtree Plaza, Atlanta, Georgia. nafme.org/ community/conferences-and-events

Proposals: nafme.org/call-for-proposals-2016-music -research-and-teacher-education-national-conference

APRIL 2016 (JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH)

APRIL 15: NAfME Electronic Music Composition Contest Deadline. nafme.org/programs/contests-calls-competitions/nafme-electronic-music -composition-contest

APRIL 15: All-American Marching Band audition and application deadline. nafme.org programs/ u-s-army-all-american-marching-band

APRIL 15: Tri-M Recognition of Excellence. nafme.org/Tri-M

MAY 2016

MAY 6: Tri-M Chapter of the Year deadline. nafme.org/Tri-M

▶ MAY 11: NAfME All-National Honor Ensembles deadline. nafme.org/programs/ all-national-honor-ensembles



JUNE 2016

JUNE 22-26: NAfME National Assembly, Tysons Corner, Virginia

> NAfME Federated State Association Conferences State MEAs present Conferences throughout the year. nafme.org/about/federated-state-associations

OPEN NAFME'S TROVE OF TEACHER RESOURCES **FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR!**

Be ready for whatever the school year brings you with NAfME in your backpack! We've provided a variety of helpful resources to keep you organized and prepared for the year ahead: a school-year calendar, Back-to-School-Night handouts, lesson plan ideas, and more. You'll want to bookmark the page mentioned below and check for new resources throughout the year.

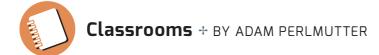
Want a handy Welcome Letter for parents/guardians? You'll find one. There's also a list of practice tips for students of different age-groups, information on how to be an advocate for your music program, and more. You can also manage your Association membership and check out student performing opportuni-

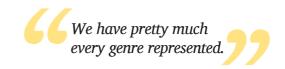
The Back-to-School web feature also includes a printable School-Year-at-a-Glance Calendar, as well as a variety of resources in categories including:

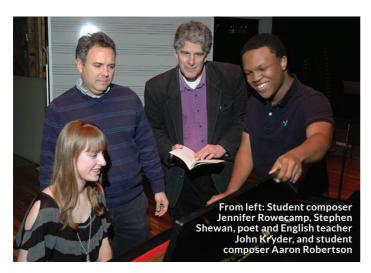


- Back-to-School Night
- Lesson Plans and Classroom Tips
- Copyright 101
- Tri-M Music Honor Society
- Student Performance **Opportunities**
- Contests and **Scholarships**
- Music In Our Schools Month[®]
- NAfME In-Service Conference
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- Music Standards

Visit nafme.org/ backtoschool.







Composing a Great Experience

A New York high school's innovative program requires instrumental students to complete at least one composition a year.

MANY HIGH SCHOOL musicians try to compose, but not many have the benefit of doing so in a program as innovative as that at Williamsville East High School in East Amherst, New York. There, all instrumental students are required to complete at least one composition each year. "We have pretty much every genre represented, and students write for standard and unusual ensembles, occasionally with electronic instrumentation," says Stephen Shewan, who teaches music and directs the bands at Williamsville East.

All of the school's music teachers contribute their own composition units. As director of the wind and jazz ensembles, Shewan prepares students by working on analysis and aural skills—for example, by

learning the major themes of each band piece by ear. "I'm constantly asking the students to identify what is happening in a piece. Many of them become fairly adept at recognizing compositional techniques, forms, phrase structures, etc. Last year, we played Vincent Persichetti's Divertimento for Band, which is full of bitonality. Not surprisingly, bitonality then showed up in the students' compositions. You are what you eat!"

Shewan strikes a balance between devoting ample attention to both composition and instrumental technique. "Giving students the gift of composition does not teach them their two-octave scales and multiple tonguing, and speed up their rudiments. But ultimately, the aural skills and musicianship [developed through composing] are so much more advanced that, for me, any little tradeoff is a no-brainer."

The highlight of the school year is the Poetry, Music, Art & Dance (PMAD) program, for which a districtwide committee selects 18 or fewer student compositions to be performed by students and faculty. A prominent poet is brought in to read his or her work, setting the tone for the event. "The main parameter for the PMAD is that every composition be inspired by a poem by our guest poet or by one of our student poets—and that pieces be under four minutes in duration," says Shewan. So that students whose pieces are not chosen for this program can hear their works brought to life, he makes sure that they're performed during other concerts and rehearsals. This gives students the benefit of receiving feedback from their peers. "The vast majority of comments are positive. Because the students in the room are all composers, they understand the challenge of creating a piece of music and have great respect for the process as well as their peers' final products." I■

FACTS & **FIGURES**

WILLIAMSVILLE **EAST HIGH SCHOOL**

East Amherst, New York **GRADES 9-12**

STUDENTS: **Approximately**

PERCENTAGE OF LOW-INCOME STUDENTS:

ETHNICITY OF STUDENT BODY:

77.3% White

2.5% Hispanic

2.0% **African American**

15.5% **Asian**

2.3% Multiple

0.4% American Indian/ Alaskan Native

NUMBER OF MUSIC TEACHERS:

full-time, 1 part-time

ENSEMBLES/ CLASSES: Girls Chorus, Mixed Chorus, Chorale, Music Theory, Philharmonic Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra, **Concert Band, Wind** Ensemble, Jazz Band, Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Improvisation, Lessons (Orchestra. Band, Voice)

CALLING ALL STUDENT COMPOSERS!

NAfME sponsors an annual Student Composition Contest for works by Elementary, High School, and College students. For 2016 contest guidelines, go to nafme.org/programs/contests-calls-competitions and click "NAfME Student Composers Competition." Up to 10 winning composers will receive cash awards. For more information, contact Shannon Kelly at ShannonK@nafme.org.



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20 SCHOLARSHIPS









The Elementary and Secondary **Education Act**

NAfME members play an important role in the U.S. Senate vote.

THE LATEST reauthorization effort for The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is approaching the finish line. In July, U.S. Senate passed a sweeping overhaul of the ESEA. According to Chris Woodside, NAfME's Assistant Executive Director, "It is a very positive climate we are working in, and a great deal of the credit for that goes to our members who sent over 14,000 letters to Congress over the course of a couple of months in support of key language."

For the first time, the bill lists both music and arts as core academic subjects. "I have heard countless reports from our delegates coming off of Capitol Hill in late June that

they were blown away by the change in attitude," says Woodside. "They felt there was a receptive audience to their 'asks."

How have the NAfME members become so strong? NAfME does a lot of capacitybuilding and advocacy training throughout the country all year long. Their biggest event, however, is their annual National Leadership Assembly in June. There is a lot of education that goes on in conjunction with that almost weeklong summit: For one, an advocacy event called Hill Day takes place. This year over 200 delegates attended—the largest contingency ever. Also part of Hill Day is a Collegiate

Advocacy Summit for young music educators. "It's really important for music educators and prospective music educators to know that you essentially have two full-time jobs: music teacher and advocate," says Woodside. "Teachers should be a part of NAfME's annual event because the stories that they can tell about their programs and the ways they impact kids' lives are much more impactful than any talking point."

Teachers who are leading the advocacy charge know that federal lobbying is important, but the most valuable advocacy work that music educators can do is in their own backyards. "What happens in Washington when ESEA comes up is incredibly important, but no matter what Washington does, teachers have to know their local issues. They have to form coalitions; they have to create strategic provisions as to how to protect their programs. They have to involve parents and community members and students themselves. That's how you protect music education." Woodside advises teachers to take the lead by getting in touch first with their state music education associations, virtually all of which work closely with NAfME. "Teachers are always welcome to call us, but it all begins at the local level."

For further information on some of NAfME's advocacy activities, visit broaderminded.org. II

I have heard countless reports from our delegates coming off of Capitol Hill in late June that they were blown away by the change in attitude.

HILL DAY

In June, NAfME capped off its annual Hill Day event with more than 200 music education advocatesincluding those from 47 state associations, and nearly 70 collegiate membersgoing to Washington, D.C., to meet with their members of Congress and staff. Hill Day also coincides with National Leadership Assembly.

"The timing of Hill Day was unique this year," notes Chris Woodside, NAfME's **Assistant Executive** Director. "The odds that you can line up a Congressional fly-in with the exact timing of when there is a bill you care about being considered ... this is once-in-a-lifetime. People felt empowered by that and also by the fact that, this year, all they had to say was 'thank you.' The bill already included what we wanted, and that is a product of the progress they made over the years.

Roughly 180 meetings with congressional offices were conducted. Music education advocates and collegiate members were joined by members of the Music Education Policy Roundtable and special guests from the rock band San Fermin.

"The fact that the delegates could be the last voice before the bill went to the Senate floor was a gift," says Woodside.

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Cabinets Rollable, smart cabinets that you can customize to fit your needs.

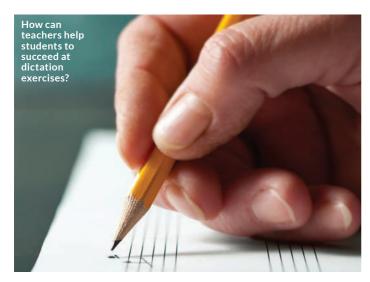
Mobile Media Storage



Music Library Systems Sheet or digital music storage now in two widths.







Getting Ready for the Takedown

Do preparatory ear-training tasks help or hinder students with a dictation exercise?

EAR TRAINING can be a daunting subject for many students, and dictation in particular can prove very difficult to those who are not endowed with perfect pitch or excellent relative pitch. Pre-dictation strategies are often used by music educators to help students to improve their chances of dictation success—but do they really help? New research conducted by Nathan Buonviri, assistant professor of music education at the Boyer College of Music and Dance at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, explores this subject.

Buonviri tasked 49 undergraduate music education majors with taking melodic dictation under three distinct conditions. After hearing an orienting chord sequence they sang a preparatory solfège

pattern in the key, meter, and tempo of the target dictations; prepared themselves silently during an equivalent time interval; or took the dictations immediately afterwards. An analysis of the results showed that participants scored significantly higher when they began the dictation exercise immediately following the chord sequence than when they first sang the preparatory pattern.

"One of the main things to consider is that it might not necessarily be helpful to try to pair up activities the way music teachers often do, like, 'Let's sing first, because that will pave the way to take a dictation," says Buonviri. "One activity may actually be distracting from another." In fact, his research suggests that assigning students preparatory

tasks may trigger a situation of overload. "One of the things that may be happening in our classrooms is that we are sometimes giving students too many things to do at once, and expect them to process a lot of levels of a given activity. That practice may be taking away from their ability to perform well in any one aspect of the activity. It's an implication I'm drawing from the research; we need to keep testing it."

Buonviri remarks that he was driven to conduct the research because, "in practice, it's very common to do what is described in the opening section of the article, which is that teachers use some sort of singing pattern to try to get people ready to take dictation. My thought going in was not so much that I expected a certain result, but I wanted to test out what seems to be the common practice because it hadn't been done before."

Buonviri further notes that this research is "a reminder to us that we do need to keep testing and checking and testing again the things we are doing in our classrooms and make sure we aren't doing them just because that's the way it's always been done." II

STRUCTURING THE IDEAL **EAR-TRAINING CLASS**

The first order of business, Buonviri notes, is providing time in the schedule for ear training. "A lot of time the written theory and the aural theory are combined. So, the initial question is 'how much time is being spent on written vs. ear training?' and a lot of time the ear training goes under the bus because the teacher feels like they have to move through so much material so fast.

If it's possible to include ear training in the schedule, Buonviri suggests that teachers bear in mind the following.

Ensure that students practice ear training daily. Just as with vocal and instrumental training, it is often advisable to practice a variety of things a little bit every day, as opposed to doing an occasional marathon "crunch" session.

Draw the line between production tasks and reception/ perception tasks, and devote ample time to the latter. "If we are singing something, we are producing something," states Buonviri. "That's different from receiving and perceiving, which are also important. If teachers can develop students' listening skills and production skills into some sort of balanced, integrated approach, that's ideal."

TIME FOR EAR TRAINING

Buonviri notes that ideally students should receive daily ear training. "There needs to be a little bit of a lot of things every day rather than trying to crunch everything in in one day."





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- Send in the activation form with your chapter activation fee (\$50-\$125 based on the size of your school)
- 3. Receive a packet from NAfME with a guide to start your chapter and get going!





Partnerships + BY JOSEPH M. PISANO



Be Part of the Band

A new program helps band directors with recruitment and retention.

ABOUT FOUR YEARS AGO. music educator and leadership speaker Scott Lang (scottlang. net) asked a question: "How do we get more students to be part of the band?" The phrase "be part of the band" seems simple enough on the surface. However, directors everywhere struggle with recruiting; consequently, enrollment numbers are often not what they should be. Lang, a successful public school band director of over 16 years, has developed an innovative program for band directors that provides free resources on recruiting and retention: Be Part of the Band (BPOTB).

The BPOTB program includes an abundance of free, high-quality media found at bepartoftheband.com. This includes professionallyrecorded videos and documents, created to be both kid-friendly and pragmatic. The videos feature real students demonstrating instrumental sounds and techniques, and include quick

primers for each instrument. The videos also allude to the "coolness" factor of each instrument. In addition to these instrument videos, there are also those targeted to parents, teachers, and administrators.

"Our goal is to enroll 1,000,000 additional children in music education annually," says Lang, who keeps detailed data on the schools that adopt the program. "In 2014, directors that utilized our program saw almost a 20% enrollment increase that resulted in an average of 11 more students involved per school. Over 92% of the directors who have used BPOTB have stated that it had a positive impact on their enrollment and, of that, 80% stated it had a significant impact."

Lang describes the importance of a systemic approach to recruiting: "When you think about it, if each school district has an average of seven elementary schools and

enrollment is increased each year in the band by 11 students, every year you will be increasing the size of your program by 77 kids. Following this through to the high school level means an additional 308

kids in your band program over time. Enrollment is the silver bullet of music education programs. Enrollment is the one thing in every band director's control."

BPOTB has partnered with NAfME and other prominent music organizations. "Sponsoring this product was an easy decision because it truly is a great opportunity for our members and such a fantastic resource for our teachers," states Barbara Pavesi. NAfME's Business Development Manager. "We are particularly excited about how this product is evolving into all aspects of music education."

"Upon launching BPOTB, we immediately received requests to include other ensembles," remarks Lang. "I'm excited to say that in August we will be launching an integrated music product called Be Part of the Music (bepartofthemusic.org) that will cover all aspects of teacher recruiting including band, orchestra, choir, elementary, middle school, high school, and teacher recruitment and retention—all while keeping the product completely free for teachers." I■

Enrollment is the silver bullet of music education programs.

BE PART OF THE ORCHESTRA

"Be Part of the Orchestra is arriving just in time for the start of the school vear!" exclaims Lang. Be Part of the Orchestra (BPOTO) provides directors with the tools to bolster enrollment numbers, and help with the ongoing tasks of recruiting and retention. "BPOTO will mirror the strengths and direction of our existing band product, and we believe it will be just as successful for the orchestra directors as it has been for the band directors.'

The BPOTO materials are free and readily available as a newly integrated part of bepartofthemusic.org. Lang notes, "We have upgraded and enhanced many of the materials for the BPOTO program, and they have all been tailored to meet the specific needs of our orchestra directors

Program materials include pre-made documents, advocacy articles, and videos. For those teachers who do not have Internet access in their classrooms, the videos may be downloaded for offline usage. DVDs may also be purchased directly from the site.





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Martina Vasil, Assistant Professor, Music Education, University of Kentucky School of Music

"By being able to learn during the summers and go back into the classroom each fall and put the theories and techniques into practice, I was able to make my learning authentic and pragmatic."

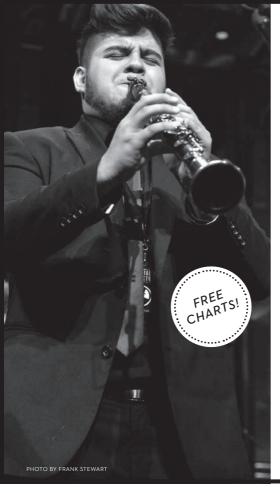
Debbie Rohwer, Ph.D., Lead Editor, Update: Applications of Research in Music Education, University of North Texas, Chair of Music Education

"The opportunity to be working, talking, and experiencing music with serious musicians was revitalizing, reminding me why I was teaching MUSIC in the first place"

Penelope Cruz, NY-ACDA President, 2016 ACDA Eastern Division Conference Program Chair









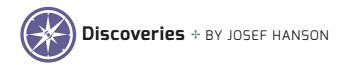
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The Large Brass Choir:

Creating a Buzz-Worthy Addition to Your Music Program

JOSEF HANSON is an instructor at the University of Rochester in New York, and directs the university's Brass Choir, which he founded in 2008. He can be contacted at josef.hanson@rochester.edu.

PERHAPS OUR PREHISTORIC ANCESTORS

fortuitously pioneered brass ensemble playing with animal horns and conch shells pressed to their lips. Once established, brass music was typically relegated to civic or martial service until the art of brass was born in 16th-century Europe. A combined Hebrew and Christian antiphonal brass tradition culminated in the magnificent works of the Venetian School, including the first extant composition for brass instruments, Giovanni Gabrieli's 1597 "Canzon duodecimi toni."

The large brass ensemble (or "brass choir") remains one of the least common ensembles in high school and collegiate music programs. This presents an opportunity: The brass choir format offers a means of emphasizing blend, balance, and intonation in your brass ranks while promoting camaraderie and a sense of pride. You can establish a brass choir on an ad hoc basis, with minimal expense and hassle, to develop musicianship and promote a seriousness of purpose among your program's brass players.

Instrumentation and Layout

The typical American brass choir consists of B-flat trumpets, horns in F, trombones, baritones/euphoniums, and tubas. Additional instruments sometimes found in brass choir literature include C, E-flat, and piccolo trumpets,

cornet, flugelhorn, bass trombone, and E-flat tuba. In situations where these more specialized brass instruments are not available, it may be acceptable to transpose or assign the parts to other instruments, although care must be taken to maintain the composer's intent. There is no standardized layout for brass choir. You can pattern the layout to mimic that of a small band or orchestra, keeping in mind the following:

- Tubas should be placed in the center of the ensemble for optimal balance.
- Projection issues require that your horn section be placed in the front right side of the ensemble (as you face it) so the hornists' bells face inward.
- Trumpets work best in a block no more than four players wide but as deep as necessary due to the directional nature of the instrument.

Blend, Balance, and Intonation

Your brass students will enjoy enhancing their tone quality through simple warm-ups, such as a sing/buzz/whistle/ play exercise (see Figure 1). Imagine the benefits of even 15 minutes of brassensemble work in the development of section blend-benefits that will become abundantly clear when your brass players rejoin the full ensemble. Use a descending chromatic warm-up to teach blend (see Figure 2). This exercise requires the entire ensemble to blend in unison and focus on attacks and releases, intonation, and the development of other good habits. Another way to address blend is to play brass quintets, especially lyrical works and arrangements of Bach chorales.



With entire sections playing parts intended for only one player, students quickly realize the importance of section and ensemble blend.

Balance in any ensemble is an exercise in mindful diversity and should be approached differently depending on the repertoire at hand. Encourage your students to visualize a double pyramid (representing both section-specific and ensemble-wide balance) that is changeable, depending on the style of a particular piece. In his Effective Performance of Band Music (Southern Music/J.W. Pepper), W. Francis McBeth provides the following exercise for evaluating and adjusting ensemble balance. Direct members of your brass choir to sustain an E-flat major triad over six to eight slow counts (tubists should play the E-flat root; other students may choose any chord tone). The balance will likely be flawed. Next, discuss the double pyramid and relative balance of chord members, and have your students play the triad again (using the same pitches). Improvement!

Try it once more, adding a crescendo from pianissimo to fortissimo over six counts. The balance will likely be lost as the dynamics change. To alleviate this problem, discuss the importance of maintaining the double pyramid throughout dynamic fluctuations. The lowest instruments should perform the



crescendo fully (a 10 out of 10) and the highest instruments should perform a restrained crescendo (one out of 10), with interior players following suit based on their placement in the pyramid (i.e., horns would probably be a five out of 10, trombones a seven out of 10, etc.). Now, try the crescendo again—success! Occasionally, it may help to intentionally perform these balance exercises upside down (i.e., tubas play softest and trumpets play loudest) just to prove the point. The ensemble's sound will be much more strident and out of tune when the balance is incorrect.

Brass choir intonation requires special attention, as the absence of rich woodwind overtones can magnify faulty brass tuning. Model the spine-tingling joys of flawless brass ensemble intonation by sharing recordings of Empire Brass, Philip Jones A brass choir ... is an exciting way to provide an alternative to the traditional large-ensemble experience.

Brass Ensemble, and other professional groups. More advanced students will benefit from a basic introduction to pure intonation and the overtone series. Stephen Colley's Tune-up Boot Camp (www.tuneupsystems.com) breaks down the elements of pure intonation into easy-to-understand explanations and exercises. One of the most helpful components of Collins's "boot camp" is the inclusion of frequency (cents) adjustments necessary to achieve pure tuning of every interval (a semitone encompasses 100 cents). For example, most students eventually learn to adjust a harmonic major third downward until they eliminate acoustical beats, but giving them a number to remember as they adjust (14 cents downward, in this case) helps them conceptualize it in a less abstract way.

Repertoire

The biggest challenge facing brass choir enthusiasts is lack of repertoire. A wide range is available for British brass band but requires transposition or transcription (several British brass band arrangers, including Andrew Norman of pdfbrass.com, are willing to transpose their music at no additional fee beyond the purchase price). Appropriate beginning repertory for American brass choir is available in two volumes, Brass

Recital and Concert Repertoire (available through Hal Leonard).

As a first step, include a brass fanfare in your full band or orchestra's concert program. Selections like "Fanfare" from La Péri by Paul Dukas (Editions Durand) or "Quidditch" by John Williams (Hal Leonard) can be put together in a few rehearsals and can add a festive air while challenging your brass section. High-quality repertoire for high school and collegiate brass ensembles has been written by several skilled composers, especially David Uber, Vaclav Nelhybel, and Eric Ewazen. You'll find additional performance opportunities in orchestral repertoire that requires extra brass accompaniment, including Shostakovich's Festive Overture and the final movement of Respighi's Pines of Rome.

No brass-choir folder would be complete without a more lyrical piece to round out all the bombast. On a Hymnsong of Philip Bliss by David Holsinger (TRN Music Publisher) is an ideal vehicle for this, as are "Hats off to Thee" by John Zdechlik (Kjos), Mutations from Bach by Samuel Barber (G. Schirmer), and "Liturgy for Brass Choir" by David Uber (Ensemble Publications). Finally, consider taking time (or even asking your students) to arrange and compose for brass choir. With only five instrument voices, developing new selections for brass choir is a feasible and rewarding endeavor.

Take the Plunge!

Establishing a brass choir at your school is an exciting way to provide an alternative to the traditional large-ensemble experience. In doing so, you'll also enhance the musicality of your larger ensembles while generating enthusiasm and a more focused atmosphere among your brass students.

▼ FIGURE 1 An exercise to be performed as a call-and-response or on cue. Students (a) sing the four-measure passage while removing mouthpieces from instruments, (b) buzz the passage on mouthpieces alone, (c) whistle the passage while replacing mouthpieces/preparing to play, and (d) perform the passage on instruments. Repeat on a different starting pitch, or use your own melodic patterns.



▼ FIGURE 2 At the University of Rochester, we call this warm-up "The Remington" after legendary trombone professor Emory Remington. Continue the pattern downward chromatically.



Technology for the Orchestra Classroom

A variety of robust apps and more can help you and your students to tune, learn, and excel as instrumentalists.

ALMOST EVERY MUSIC education

classroom can be enhanced in some way through the use of technology, and there are hundreds of different tools out there that can be used to help students learn more effectively and retain that knowledge longer. Properly used, these same tools can provide teachers with many useful ways to meet curricular standards in our classrooms. The suggestions in this article draw from the knowledge of two experienced orchestra directors, but the tips they provide can easily be applied to any classroom.

Angela Harman, orchestra director at Spanish Fork Jr. High in Spanish Fork, Utah, is one such orchestra teacher who is using technology in a wide variety of ways. Her classroom contains the standard tech that one

might expect in a modern classroom, but her use of technology extends far beyond these staples to include the use of equipment such as electronic violins and iPads. She has found several ways to maximize the limited amount of contact time that she gets with her students by leveraging these technologi-

In one example, as an integrated part of her rehearsals Harman will often make video recordings of herself performing specific sections of a piece that the students can then use in their small-group, sectional rehearsals. "If we are doing really difficult sections of music, I record myself doing sectionals and then post those recordings to YouTube. I divide the kids up into different rooms, each with an iPad, and



have them play along in groups during rehearsal. Putting them on YouTube allows the kids to use them for home practice as well."

When it comes to using the iPad or other mobile devices in the classroom, the possibilities for enrichment are many. Another such example is

RESTRICTED ACCESS MODES ON MOBILE DEVICES

To prevent a student from exiting out of an app during an assignment, most mobile platforms now have some kind of restriction feature to lock the device into using a single app. For this purpose, there is a useful feature built into iOS called Guided Access; on the Android platform, locking a de-vice into using a single app requires a special app of its own. When a device is "locked," the student cannot exit the app or switch they have the teacher's

special pass code for the device.

TO ACTIVATE GUIDED ACCESS ON THE IPAD: • Launch the Settings

- app.

 Navigate to "GenerAccesal," and then "Acces-
- sibility."
 Navigate to "Guided Access" under the "Learning" subheading, and click the button on the screen
- to turn it on. Select "Passcode Settings," and then "Set Guided Access Passcode.
- **Enter and then** re-enter a four-digit

- passcode of your choosing, and note that it does not need to be the same code , vour device.
- Navigate back to the main screen of your iPad (click the Home button once), and open the app you want your students
- While in the app, click the Home button three times in rapid succession. The window for that app will shrink, and options will appear above and below
- If you simply want a

student to be unable to navigate away from this app, click "Start" (upper-right corner). Other options you can enable include setting time limits on the app, disabling the Sleep/ Wake and Volume buttons, disabling the touch sensitivity of the screen, and disabling selected parts of the screen (by drawing a circle around them while in

- this screen).
 Hit "Start" to put
 the iPad into Guided
- To end Guided Ac-

cess, triple-click the Home button, type in the passcode you set earlier, and click "End" (upper-left corner).

USING KIOSK MODE ON AN ANDROID DEVICE Third party apps that provide this capability include free titles such as SureLock Kiosk Lockdown and Kiosk Browser Lockdown. Install one of these apps and follow their instructions to restrict the tablet to using only the app that you select.



Harman's use of learning stations scattered around the room during rehearsals. "My favorite is to do a series of mini-games where students rotate from station to station, doing tests and activities in apps like Rhythm Cat, Flashnote Derby, StaffWars, and many others. I find it way more useful if they can do this in small groups and rotate through since I have a limited number of iPads."

Michael Watson, orchestra director at Coon Rapids High School in Coon Rapids, Minnesota, also uses mobile apps in his classes, but with only a single iPad to work with, he normally uses it as something that gets passed around the room. Says Watson, "When I have kids who are struggling with key signatures in my classroom, I pass around the iPad during class and have them use the Tenuto music theory testing app. Each student has to get a specific percentage correct before they can pass it on to the next student."

FAVORITE APPS

ANGELA HARMAN: NinGENIUS FOR IPAD (\$17.99 for School Edition: also available in a Studio Edition for \$8.99 and a Student Edition for \$2.99) NinGenius turns note identification and fingering drills into a fun, martial arts-themed game with varying degrees of difficulty. Results are saved in a way that allows the teacher to view the play history and stats for individual students.

MICHAEL WATSON'S FAVORITE: TONALENERGY TUNER (iOS \$3.99, Android \$1.99) With TonalEnergy, you can get your students in tune, play notes on the keyboard, have it drone chords while students play scales, and even use it as a metronome at the same time. The tone generator/keyboard has a transposition feature that is useful for playing notes for instruments during full orchestra rehearsals. It also has a wonderful loop feature that Watson uses for his own practicing at home.

Watson also mentions a very useful trick to use when having students use the iPad in an unmonitored setting: To prevent a student from exiting out of an app and doing something else he often puts the iPad into Guided Access mode (see sidebar), which locks the iPad into using just the app that he has chosen for that activity.

Both teachers use a variety of other apps, both individually with students and in ensemble situations. Both teachers are fans of TonalEnergy Tuner (available for both iOS and Android) because of its flexibility and ease of use. Watson in particular says that he often uses the app's looping feature when practicing. "I'll record a section slowly, then use the loop to speed it up and help myself practice fast passage work." Harman likewise uses other apps to provide fun accompaniments for scale work and other parts of her rehearsals. "I hook the iPad up to GarageBand and use it to keep a beat or play an accompaniment that makes playing 'Twinkle' a lot more fun. I also use an app called iReal Pro [available for iOS, OS X, and Android] that lets you chain together

I hook the iPad up to GarageBand and use it to keep a beat or play an accompaniment that makes playing 'Twinkle' a lot more *fun.*—ANGELA HARMAN

chord progressions to let kids play along with their own little backup band." Both teachers use a variety of other apps that are available both for iPad and Android. Harman says that "the nice thing about some of these apps is that, once I show them to my students, they often wind up getting them, especially the free ones."

Watson also makes use of some non-iPad tech in his classroom in the form of simple, inexpensive, clip-on digital tuners that students can use to tune their instruments quickly prior to and during rehearsals. Says Watson, "Some schools in our area have full classroom sets of these so that every stand has their own. It lets them check their tuning and speeds things up considerably. We start teaching them to use the clip tuners in the seventh grade so that by the time they get to high school they are comfortable with them. There are lots of brands out there that physically clip to the pegs, and you can get them as low as \$15-\$20 each. To manage them, I have a box in front that they clip them to after rehearsal. Other schools have them clip them to the director's stand. The only problem is that since they are so small they tend to disappear, especially on concert days. So, number them to help keep track."

One thing that both teachers agree on is that the technology they are using is never the primary source of instruction. Instead, it is brought in to enhance or reinforce specific problem areas with which their students need assistance. Have a try with some of the apps they recommend, or go out and discover some of your own. II

Teaching Singers to Read: A Practical Approach to Sight-Singing in the Choral Rehearsal

JUSTIN W. DURHAM is the director of choral activities at Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina. He can be contacted at durham5@clemson.edu.

> **ONE OF THE MOST** frustrating comments a young singer can hear from an instrumentalist peer is "Singers can't read music, and they definitely can't count!" This stereotypical remark, while infuriating, unfortunately contains some truth. Instrumentalists have an advantage over vocalists in sight-reading proficiency, partly due to the fact that instrumentalists have fingerings to correspond to specific pitches, while vocalists are expected to produce pitches with little external help. Because this is challenging, choral students often rely on either the director or the piano to find pitches, causing rote teaching to be the primary method of instruction. It's possible, however, to teach singers to sight-sing during choral rehearsals, creating better musicians and saving time in the process.

Conductors treasure rehearsal time, and anything taking time away from getting to the music is often viewed with annoyance. Unless the choir

contains a large number of good sight-singers, the majority of rehearsals leading to a performance is likely spent learning pitches and rhythms, leaving little time for expressive elements. There are, of course, advantages to maintaining the status quo. There is no way around the fact that sight-singing instruction initially lessens the amount of time spent rehearsing the choral literature, dissuading many conductors from including it in their curricula. Another hindrance is that singers in the choir likely possess varying skill levels: Some read music better than others do. When there is a mix of good and poor readers—with most falling somewhere in the middle—teaching without some students becoming bored while others are overwhelmed is a difficult task. These two obstacles are surmountable with time and patience, however, and the advantages to including sight-singing instruction in the rehearsal far outweigh the disadvantages.

Topping the list of positive attributes of sight-singing instruction is that students will eventually become musically literate. The proverb "Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day; teach



a man to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime" rings true. Students who are independent from the piano and/or conductor are better musicians than those who are dependent singers. More relevant to the day-to-day rehearsal, however, is when singers become adept at reading music, it actually saves time in rehearsal and allows the ensemble to move to learning the expressive elements of the music more quickly.

Getting Started

Paramount to teaching choral students to sight-sing is building a foundation in a nonthreatening manner by establishing a base of knowledge. In choosing a sight-singing system such as solfège (fixed or moveable do) or scale-degree numbers, consistency is of the greatest importance. Conductors should select the system they prefer (or the one with which their students are already familiar) and stick to it rather than changing it for variety. There are myriad advantages and disadvantages in each system, but for



the purpose of this discussion, movable *do* (*la-ti-do* minor) will be the referenced system of instruction.

Establish a knowledge base on which each student, regardless of experience, can draw in the early stages of sight-singing instruction. Before students ever look at a sight-singing exercise, they should be able to sing patterns (a major scale, for example), and later move to unison exercises. Focusing on scalar intervals provides students with a grasp of the sightsinging vernacular (do, re, mi, etc.) and allows students to be successful quickly. In the beginning stages, it's not necessary that students know the names of the notes. Once students have a firm grasp of reading intervals, it is appropriate to introduce note names and key signatures for the purpose of enabling students to be more independent. When students are able to identify particular syllables quickly, it's a good time to introduce larger intervals (minor thirds and greater). In each

subsequent lesson, focus on one particular interval (do-mi, re-fa, etc.) while reviewing previously covered intervals to keep them fresh. As part of the vocal warm-up for the day, try incorporating new intervals. As student confidence and ability increase, you can move toward multipart sight-singing exercises (for example, partner songs and canons or rounds in two, three, and four parts) to help students gain greater independence.

When teaching students to sightsing, especially working with intervals larger than a step, it's imperative to maintain a positive and nonthreatening demeanor. If students feel they will be reprimanded for making a mistake, they will not sing with confidence. To assist in building a foundation of trust between teacher and student, I've established two rules for sight-singing exercises that can also be applied to sight-singing the literature:

- Sing with confidence.
- Keep singing no matter what happens!

READY TO TAKE THE LECTERN?

Each issue of *Teaching Music* features an article by an experienced music educator on an academic topic with a practical application that may be of interest to colleagues. Please send your previously unpublished 1,000- to 1,500-word submissions to Caroline Arlington, *CarolineA@nafme.org*. Note that submission does not guarantee publication. All submissions accepted for publication in *Teaching Music* may be edited for length and style.

One of the responsibilities of the conductor is to encourage the singer. Praise students for the smallest achievements, even if they simply continued to sing throughout the entire exercise.1 Reinforce appropriate behavior when students do something correctly and are successful.In his 1983 study "The Effect of Conductor Academic Task Presentation, Conductor Reinforcement, and Ensemble Practice on Performers' Musical Achievement, Attentiveness, and Attitude," Harry Price found that the largest musical gains are made when teachers assign tasks, allow for student performance, and reinforce the performance with specific feedback. According to Kenneth Murray in "The Effect of Teacher Approval/Disapproval on the Performance Level, Attentiveness, and Attitude of High School Choruses" the feedback should be at least 80 percent positive.

Seating charts can also be valuable tools when sight-singing. Placing weaker readers close to those who are more adept accomplishes two things: First, it allows the weaker student to gain confidence as a result of being next to a person with greater skill. Second, it gives the latter a sense of leadership and/or importance without assigning any undue emphasis. Even if this

¹The largest musical gains are made when teachers assign tasks, allow for student performance, and reinforce the performance with specific feedback (Price, 253). According to Murray (p. 177) student attitude is significantly better when feedback is 80% positive.

arrangement is different than one would use for a concert, the benefit of placing less-skilled readers close to those who are stronger is well worth the time it takes to create a separate seating chart.

It is important that students not view sight-singing exercises as rehearsal. The purpose of sight-singing exercises is to establish a foundation that later leads to musical literacy. Therefore, avoid rehearsing the

exercises. When students sing a particular example more than twice, it becomes rehearsal. Sing through the example, isolate trouble spots—such as particular intervals where students struggled—review, and run it a second time. Praise, praise, praise the students for what they did well!

Gradual Integration

In her September 2001 Music Educators Journal article "Enhancing Learning in

the Choral Rehearsal," Lynn Corbin suggests that if students are to give full effort and concentration to sightsinging during rehearsal, they must see that the exercises do not occur in a vacuum—that they are useful in some way. Therefore, it is a necessity that conductors begin to use sight-singing in the literature as quickly as possible. The entire reason, after all, for teaching students to read music is for them to use that skill when learning pitches/rhythms for their concert music. Unless applied to the literature, sight-singing will be viewed by students as a waste of time. Only a strong and regular commitment to the development of this skill will make the transition from exercises to literacy possible. Moving from reading exercises directly into the literature, however, can seem quite daunting, especially if the music being learned is difficult. Take small steps to avoid frustration and potential disaster.

Instead of jumping head-first into the music declaring, "We're going to read this piece of music entirely using solfège," look for diatonic, largely conjunct phrases where students can easily achieve their goal. A key to successful integration is to identify small sections in the literature where success is not only possible but probable. Students need to be successful immediately, and they should receive large doses of praise. If the choir (or a single voice part) sings several intervals or rhythms incorrectly, but does so confidently without stopping, they should be praised for following the rules! If they believe that the conductor is going to be upset or frustrated, they will be timid. In contrast to the sight-singing exercises where two repetitions are enough, it is completely acceptable to use solfège to rehearse passages where students struggle. Isolate troublesome intervals, master them, and incorporate them into the phrase.

How I Teach

Stephen J. Kogut

Choral Music Director & Department Head Music Technology Instructor,

Getting Your Students In Tune

Ormond Stone Middle School, Centreville, VA

How long have you been using In Tune?

I have been at Stone Middle School for 22 years, and currently teach chorus and music technology. We've gotten In Tune for our students since 2006.

How do you use it in the classroom?

The articles and features really help extend what I do in the classroom by covering current artists, technology and equipment, music theory concepts and techniques, history, and style. I've also used it in class to reinforce our schoolwide reading program.

Do you use In Tune for specific subjects?

Ido. I use it so my chorus singers get to see areas of their musical world they rarely would have come to know otherwise. But then, ten years ago, I created a Music Technology Class to meet the needs of students who love music but don't necessarily want to perform. It covers composing on DAWs using notation software and sequencers. We start with a music theory "boot camp" and then dive in to arranging and composing. The class also provides hands-on experience with setup and proper use of audio equipment for PA and recording.

How has the magazine helped you connect with students?

This year, we utilized In Tune's much-improved website [to expand lessons] on sound design, vocal warm-ups, and more. My students also take advantage of the pop quiz and matching quiz provided in each month's teacher edition. I learned to create a Kahoot! game from the guizzes. We end each month with a rowdy game reviewing the answers and having fun.

You already get *In Tune's* Teacher's Edition. Now it's time to get your students IN TUNE!



Afterward, praise the students for being perseverant and successful.

As the choir begins to show signs of success, it is natural to want to use solfège in every new piece of music. In the beginning, however, giving the students a break from it is just as important to their success. Transitioning from piece to piece in solfège, especially in different keys, can quickly overwhelm even an experienced reader. In these instances, singing text, count-singing, or using neutral syllables are all acceptable methods of learning pitches. Student progress is achieved more efficiently when opportunities for success are abundant, and oversaturation can be an impediment to success. Remember that this process takes time.

Once the choir has achieved a level of sight-singing comfort, its full integration into the rehearsal is possible. It is truly amazing what students can accomplish when they have confidence in their own success. As it is with any method of instruction, there will be times when the difficulty of the assigned literature is at a level (extremely chromatic and/or disjunct, highly melismatic, etc.) where the use of solfège is impractical. Using fixed-do solfège or count-singing may lead to greater success in these instances.

What about Rhythm?

Occasionally, challenging rhythmic passages become hurdles to successful sight-singing. In these instances, removing pitch from the process may be helpful. Isolating the challenging passage by speaking/chanting the rhythm on either neutral, solfège, or Kodály syllables may serve to remove the rhythmic barrier so that successful singing may be achieved.

The purpose of this discussion is to provide insight into one method of sight-singing instruction as it relates to pitch literacy; therefore, the subject of rhythmic accuracy has not been thoroughly addressed. I recommend *Building Choral Excellence* by Steven M. Demorest (Oxford University Press, 2001) for further insight into several methods of rhythm instruction.

Rise to the Occasion!

Every choir can become proficient at sight-singing and, although it takes time, it is well worth the effort. Build a foundation and establish a base of

knowledge through unison exercises. Teach in a nonthreatening manner, and praise every instance of student success. For a change of pace, find ways to make sight-singing exercises fun through the use of games or competitions between the sections in the choir. Finally, when the choir is ready, take small steps to integrate this new skill into the rehearsal gradually, increasing frequency and difficulty as student proficiency rises.

Bring Music Alive! for Your Students

How I Teach

Veronica Romansky

K-5 general music and chorus teacher, Downey School, Brockton, MA

How long have you been using Music Alive!?

Our urban district is the ideal place to share my enthusiasm for all types of music, and *Music Alive!* has always been a part of my 20+ year career.

How do you use it in the classroom?

My 700+ students—including special needs classes—all head straight for the "Song of the Month." By the end of the school year, even the kindergarten students can scan the lyrics. My students enjoy various genres of music, and every year, they each find issues of *Music Alive!* that include their favorite styles. These same kids love Mozart as well! While the articles are sometimes above my students' reading level, we're able to use *Music Alive!* for instrument identification, notation reading, and music vocabulary, which are all parts of our curriculum... and supported by *Music Alive!*

Do you use Music Alive! for specific subjects?

Music educators debate the use of popular vs. classical music but I was inspired by wonderful teachers myself, and my varied background includes early piano lessons, serving as accompanist for my elementary school chorus, and performing in "GB" bands and musical theatre productions. I love and use it all.

How has the magazine helped you connect with students?

I find it thrilling to hear the exuberant singing following those spontaneous shouts of "I know this song!"

Keep your students learning about the everchanging world of music with *Music Alive!*



For more information and to get classroom sets of *MusicAlive!*, call 914.358.1200 x310 or e-mail musicalive@intunepartners.com. To view a sample issue of *Music Alive!* please visit musicalive.com.



SOSAND SOSTHE PROGRAME

Popular music can energize your classroom and help your students to connect with music pedagogy in new, exciting ways. By Cathy Applefeld Olson

may not love the music that's being taught to them in school," says Dick Siegel, an adjunct instructor in the music school of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and coordinator of the High School Singer-Songwriter Program at Interlochen Center for the Arts. "The music programs in some schools—the songs are kind of archaic, really, when you think about the music that kids are actually interested in. If you were to present pop music to them—different versions of it, different approaches to it—in an educational setting, I think you would find you'd have many more interested in learning about music. [At Interlochen,] when someone sings a song, the others often say something like, 'That sounds just like Fall Out Boy. I would buy that.' What it shows to me is there is a lot of interest in contemporary music. They are constantly listening—to a degree that wasn't even possible before the Internet."

While students are rampantly sharing their tastes in music, a stigma often keeps pop songs out of the classroom. "You want a balanced diet—vegetables and dessert," says Darla Hanley, dean of the Professional Education Division at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. "I see popular music as both of those. It's not only candy, but it has historically been treated that way in classical conservatories that are teaching only classical repertoire."

Hanley, president of the Association for Popular Music Education, works with an

escalating number of educators who champion the use of pop music. "It's all about making music education relevant for students. And with the increased access to technology, the exposure to popular music is exploding." The tech component is key. "When I was a K-12 teacher, if I didn't own it, I didn't have anything else at my fingertips. Teachers today, if they're in the middle of a lesson and decide there's an Ed Sheeran tune or Maroon 5 song that would be great for the students to hear, they can go straight to the computer and students can be hearing that example in seconds. The access is allowing us to blur the lines and

make education more relevant for young people."

Yet some stumbling blocks still remain, including that of clout, notes Scott Burstein, director of music education at Little Kids Rock, a nonprofit organization based in Verona, New Jersey, and a member of the Music Education Policy Roundtable, that provides free music instruction and instruments to under-served public school districts. "If you talk to people about what they're studying, no one is going to say they took this great class in popular music education. In many places in the U.S., it still doesn't exist." Although the number of popular music classes at universities is on the rise, "Most of these programs have classes in how to become a popular musician, but not how to teach it. If you're a teacher and you teach as you were taught and you didn't get any instruction in popular music education—what are you going to do?"

Getting Started

For starters, teachers should venture out of their comfort zones. "There's a basic fear of the unknown," remarks



Burstein. "Teachers think they don't know how to do this, and are a little scared to do it around their kids. Some also worry if the kids are more familiar with the music than they are." Some teachers, then, take popular music and teach it in a traditional way. "They think, 'We are good with using pop music but we're still going to recite it because we've got to do well at the festivals, so everyone work on reciting this piece.' The biggest pieces they aren't doing are the improvisation and composition portions of it."

As with any lesson, it's important to familiarize yourself with the material before bringing it to the students. "A lot of music teachers don't understand the musical aspects of hip-hop," says William Smith, assistant professor of music technology at Bowie State University in Maryland, who used to head a hip-hop music education association. "I suggest, before implementing it in the classroom, take some time to study it yourself, and to understand the mechanics of it. The mechanics of hip-hop are very usable in an educational situation. The music talks about current events and uses pop culture in

> language that's appealing to kids. It's very useful in educating kids about language and creating poetry, and you can use it in many different classes."

NAfME's Council for IN-ovations

As the trend toward introducing popular music in the classroom gains momentum, NAfME's Council for **IN-ovations continues** to provide excellent resources for teachers to connect and share information.

"We have had lots of other councils to champion our traditional music groups, but we didn't have a structure to champion other kinds of music, specifically popular music," says Jeanne Reynolds, chair of PreK-12 performing

arts at Pinellas County Schools in Florida and Council Chair.

IN-ovations is building an infrastructure to connect music educators who are stepping into non-traditional realms. Upcoming offerings include a webinar about teaching popular music within a traditional music classroom setting. Also in the works is a database and social media network of those who are teaching popular music and those who are interested in going in that direction.

"We want teachers to be able to share their ideas: some of the battle scars, and some of the things that work and don't work," says Reynolds. "They need help with the political infrastructure to go forward and not be ridiculed by their colleagues; they can share ideas on curriculum and, once you get the kids in the door, continuing to engage them.

Reynolds notes that,

along with supporting some of NAfME's other councils, IN-ovations is working to "Identify the movers and shakers [in pop music education and make it be not just OK but important to teach popular music. To change that perception takes a while, but it can be done.

For more information on the IN-ovations Council, see the NAfME website at nafme.org, and look for the "Societies and Councils" page in the "Community section.

What to Doand Not Do

Once a teacher is ready to infuse the classroom with popular music, the sky's the limit in terms of lesson plans. To help with this, here are some do's and don'ts to ensure maximum success for

teachers and students.

Don't think of popular music as a one-and-done lesson. "It needs to be embedded and threaded throughout the year," says Hanley.

Don't be a perfectionist. "If I were a classroom teacher, I wouldn't try to reinvent the wheel," notes Burstein. "The first thing most teachers do is listen to the song and try to figure out all parts. One of our core values is approximation: It doesn't have to be perfect."

Do let the students help select the songs. "Any time you engage them and involve them in the decision-making process, the more committed they will be," says Smith. "Maybe they can come up with the list at the beginning of the semester; then, selections are made based on the teacher's level of comfort."

Do choose music that's appropriate.

"With popular music, by design, the focus isn't necessarily on something we want to emphasize in a school setting," says Hanley. "But if teachers are careful and thoughtful,

are careful and thoughtful, you can find a song that has wonderful lyrics that will help you show a young person they can express themselves and tell a story. There are many wonderful things you can do with popular music that you can't do with other styles because the student doesn't make that personal connection instantly."

Don't be afraid to cut loose. "If you're not comfortable improvising, it's hard to teach other people to improvise," says Burstein. As part of its annual conference, Little Kids Rock offers jam sessions that encourage teachers to improvise. "One of the things that will lead to the biggest success in popular music education is the preservice teacher prep. If you feel comfortable doing it and practice doing it, you'll be better at working with your students."

Do make connections between this music and other subjects. Says Smith, "Pop music can be so useful in the classroom because it can bring in broader concepts of

Sample Lesson Plans

Ready to add pop music to your classroom? Darla Hanely, dean of the Professional Education division at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, offers these plug-and-play lesson plans that can be adapted for students in middle and high school.

1. "Happy" (Pharrell Williams) GUIDING QUESTION: How does music influence human emotions? How does your "happy" sound?
ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How does understanding the context and structure of music inform a response?
ACTIVITIES: Play a recording of "Happy," and ask the students to identify musical elements such as instrumentation, meter, and style (e.g., male vocalist, backup singers, hand clapping, keyboard, bass, drums, duple meter, pop).
THINK/PAIR/SHARE:

• Ask students to listen and describe how the mood of happiness is depicted in

this music.

• Distribute drumsticks and bucket drums. Ask students to imitate rhythm patterns (call-and-response style) and play them along with the recording. Vary the difficulty level of the rhythm patterns including steady pulse, subdivisions, rests, and syncopations. Vary how the buckets are played. Select student leaders to initiate the call and create patterns for the class to imitate.
• Review the vocabulary of verse, chorus, and bridge, and ask students to create and perform rhythm patterns that correspond with each section of the song.

2. "Lovefool" (The Cardigans), "Lovefool" (Kat Edmonson), "Lovefool" (Bria Skonberg), "Love Is for Fools" (Mint Condition)

GUIDING QUESTION: How does music change your mood? Why do we often express feelings like angst in song? ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How do we judge the quality of musical works and performances?

ACTIVITIES: Play a recording of "Lovefool" by The Cardigans, and ask students to identify musical elements such as instrumentation, meter, and style (e.g., female vocalist, back up singers, keyboard, bass, drums, duple meter, pop). THINK/PAIR/SHARE:

• Ask students to describe the problem

outlined in the song. How is this emotion (her angst) depicted in the lyrics? Play a recording of Edmonson's "Lovefool," and ask students to listen to the instruments. What instruments are used to accompany the singer (horns: trumpet, trombone, tuba)? How do the horns contribute to the expression of the problem (dissonant harmonies, moaning sounds, sustained)? How does the music change during the chorus (Latin style, prominent keyboard and percussion)?
• Play Skonberg's "Lovefool," and ask students to identify musical elements such as instrumentation, meter, and style. How does this version compare to the others? Which version do students prefer? Why? Write responses in journals.

> economics, why pop music is the way it is, the minimalism in the chords, [etc.]."

Do share ideas with your peers. "I would advise the young teachers to show some things to the veteran teachers in the same the way I want the veteran teachers to work with the new teachers," says Hanley.



Do tailor your lessons for the age and skill levels of your

class. "I can have younger children keeping the steady beat to any popular song. They can play rhythm instruments and sing the chorus every time it comes around," says Hanley. As for older students, "They can compare two versions of the song or more. Or, better yet, the teacher can stop the song at the bridge and have the students tell me what happens—they can finish it. No matter what age they are, you are engaging them in a way where they're part of an experience they can make their own."













José Antonio Abreu, the founder of El Sistema, has said that music is a social right. It has to be, because it is so important to a child's development. He likens the large ensemble to a society in and of itself. In the orchestra, budding musicians learn to listen to each other and work together, taking on an identity as both an individual and a member of a group. The experience of being in an orchestra translates seamlessly to being a productive local and global citizen.

What is El Sistema?

In 1975, Abreu started what would later become the Simón Bolívar Orchestra—with 11 students in a parking garage in Venezuela. His goal was to make high quality music education a reality for all Venezuelan children, regardless of their economic status. In order to do this, he had to revolutionize the way in which music education was being approached.

What sets El Sistema apart from traditional music education is its philosophy: Music is a vehicle for social justice. El Sistema is a social program that uses music to train students for success in school, their community, and the world beyond. The core of the program is the orchestra or chorus and, increasingly, other large ensembles as the program has expanded—which Abreu sees as a microcosm of the larger community housing the nucleo (i.e., a local El Sistema program). The focus is on working together and performing together, building a sense of pride in the individual, the

ensemble, and the community. Older students teach younger students, further strengthening the bond between them: fostering hope in the younger students that they can advance to leadership roles, and training the older students in leader-

ship skills that they can use in and out of the ensemble.

Intensity is a characteristic of El Sistema; students are taught in four-hour blocks, six days a week. The schedule can further intensify during a seminario, an all-day or multiple-day learning session when

"Rich and useful collaborations are the ones between children.

-ÁLVARO RODAS

a special teaching artist is visiting. This immersion technique further solidifies music as a skill and discipline rather than an activity or hobby, and also demonstrates a focus on artistic excellence. The quality of the work is a point of pride.

El Sistema is rooted in a desire to bring music education to the places where it is most neglected and most needed. According to the 2014 census report published by The National Alliance of El Sistema Inspired Programs (elsistemausa.org), a member of the Music Education Policy Roundtable, there are currently 117 Sistema-inspired programs in the United States serving an estimated 28,332 students. These programs vary widely in size and scope. Some programs are under the auspices of a local symphony orchestra, such as Youth Orchestra Los Angeles and OrchKids in Baltimore (see page 56 for more information

> on Marin Alsop and this program), while others exist independently.

rimeline of Els

- 1975: José Antonio Abreu starts a vouth orchestra. which would later become the Simón **Bolívar Symphony** Orchestra, with eleven students in an underground parking garage in Venezuela.
- **1976:** Abreu's orchestra performs at the Aberdeen International Youth Festival in Scotland; their success garners support from the government of Venezuela.
- **1979:** Abreu receives Venezuela's **National Music** Prize for his work with El Sistema.
- Mid-1990s: Abreu creates the National Children's Youth Orchestra, which later becomes the Simón Bolívar Youth Symphony Orchestra. When this orchestra aged out of the youth category, the word 'Youth" was dropped, and now uses the suffix "B' to distinguish itself from the original orchestra, which takes the suffix "A." (Note: Abreu's orchestras generally maintain their personnel, rather than graduating them into a more advanced orchestra. They start as children's orchestras, then grow to youth orchestras, and then in the case of Simón Bolívar B, become professional orchestras, with new children's orchestras forming as needed.)
- **1999:** Gustavo **Dudamel** becomes artistic director of the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra.





Crescendo Detroit

When it comes to defining an El Sistema program, Richard Mukamal, co-founder and chairman of Crescendo Detroit and vice chair of El Sistema USA, says, "That's still something we're debating." Mukamal is an amateur trumpeter who became interested in alternative music education programs via the director of his community band, Damien Crutcher. Mukamal and Crutcher founded Crescendo Detroit in 2013 after attending a symposium led by El Sistema USA chairman, Stanford Thompson.

"We put the kids first," says Mukamal, demonstrating an awareness that the underprivileged children of Detroit have needs that trump music. Crescendo Detroit incorporates nutrition, literacy, and life skills into its four-hour afterschool program. First- and second-grade students start with a snack and homework help, and then receive music and dance instruction. They're then given dinner and a ride home in the van provided by the church that hosts the program. The dance aspect of Crescendo Detroit provides a cultural connection to the community. Mukamal says that Crescendo Detroit is inspired by El Sistema, "but we're kind of doing our own thing." Some of the children in the program are homeless. "What can we do to remove barriers from these kids, so they have the same opportunities that, say, my kids had? Let's see what we can do."

Juneau Alaska Music Matters

"Sistema-inspired programs in the United States reflect the communities that they serve," says Lorrie Heagy, founder

and program director of Juneau Alaska Music Matters (JAMM) and an elementary music teacher in the Juneau School District.

JAMM was founded in 2010 and now serves 600 students in three schools, boasting a growth of 100 students per year. Heagy learned of El Sistema via the TED network, and the Sistema

Fellowship at New England

Conservatory (NEC). El Sistema

made an impression on Heagy because "it acknowledges the role of music education in a broader, social context."

While most Sistema-inspired programs are after-school, JAMM begins during the school day. Kindergarten and first-grade students receive 90 minutes of violin instruction per week in the classroom; the program moves to after-school sessions in second grade, but retains a Friday in-school rehearsal. Heagy feels that even an after-school program

"We put the kids first."

presents a barrier to access; during the day, "they're awake, and you have the support of their kindergarten teacher." Heagy was able to achieve this scheduling by framing music instruction as an intervention for school readiness skills. She reviewed the goals of the

school and the district, and noted that music helps with resilience and language acquisition. JAMM is a win-win for everyone involved.

Every community presents unique challenges, and one of Juneau's is that it's accessible only via plane or boat, which makes it difficult for the program to provide teaching artists and volunteers. Heagy looked deeper into the resources she already had at her school. For example, by asking around, she found a preschool teacher who minored in dance. "JAMM has been successful because of its interconnectedness," says Heagy. The partnership with her school district has been vital. In JAMM, there is always a certified teacher paired with a community artist, each gaining from the other. The students received the ultimate benefit of their combined expertise.

- 2007: Inter-American Development Bank finances the construction of seven regional El Sistema Centers in Venezuela; the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra (B) debuts at the BBC Proms and Carnegie Hall under Gustavo Dudamel; and Abreu speaks at a public symposium on El Sistema in Boston, thus laying the groundwork for the program's proliferation in the United States.
- 2009: Abreu is awarded the TED Prize, leading to the development of the Sistema Fellowship program at New England Conservatory in Boston, Massachusetts.
- 2010: Abreu creates the Teresa Carreño Youth Orchestra, replacing the Simón Bolívar orchestra B as Venezuela's national youth orchestra.
- 2011: Take a Stand is formed as a collaboration between Longy School of Music of Bard College (Cambridge, Massachusetts), the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Youth Orchestra LA (YOLA), offering a Master of Arts in Teaching MAT program and an annual symposium.
- ▶ 2015: University of Alaska Southeast in Juneau, the Juneau Symphony, and JAMM develop a MAT degree program; 400 El Sistema music centers exist in Venezuela, serving 700,000 students; and El Sistema USA recognizes 117 Sistema-inspired programs in the U.S. serving 28,332 students, according to their 2014 census.

El Sistema Resources

BOOKS

- Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, and the Transformative Power of Music by Tricia Tunstall (W. W. Norton & Company) is a history of El Sistema using maestro Dudamel's achievements as an entry point. See changingliveselsistema.com.
- El Sistema: Music for Social Change by Christine Witkowski (Omnibus Press, expected publication 2015/2016) explores the adaptation of El Sistema in the US and abroad through essays from teachers, leaders, parents, and experts from related

OTHER MEDIA

- The Power of Music: P-5 Teaching Inspired by El Sistema, produced by WNET/New York Public Media, is one of the most comprehensive teacher-training video series on El Sistema in the United States. The program also includes a plethora of downloadable PDFs on curriculum building and more, an online interactive ear training game for students, and many other valuable resources. Several of the programs mentioned in this article, such as JAMM and UCMP, are featured in the series. See learner.org/workshops/k5music.
- TED2009: The El Sistema Music Revolution, in which El Sistema founder José Antonio Abreu articulates a wish to form what would become the NEC fellowship program, has inspired many. See ted.com/speakers/jose antonio abreu.
- Tocar y Luchar is a Spanish-language documentary about El Sistema, directed by Alberto Arvelo and produced by Cinema Sur and Explorart Films. It is available on DVD with English subtitles.

UNIVERSITY-BASED RESOURCES

- The University of Alaska Southeast recently partnered with JAMM and the Juneau Symphony to offer a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT). See tinyurl.com/UAS-MAT.
- Take a Stand has a partnership with the Longy School of Music of Bard College (Cambridge, Massachusetts), the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Youth Orchestra LA to offer a MAT program. They also hold an annual symposium. See take-a-stand.org.
- The New England Conservatory Sistema Fellows Program (2009–2014) prepared Thompson, Heagy, and Rodas to start Sistema-inspired programs in their own communities. NEC continues to run a Resource Center to support its fifty graduate fellows. See necmusic.edu/sistema-program.

SELECTED SISTEMA-INSPIRED PROGRAMS IN THE U.S.

- Corona Youth Music Project (CYMP, Nucleo Corona) in Corona, New York, nucleocorona.org.
- Crescendo Detroit in Detroit, Michigan, crescendodetroit.org.
- Juneau Alaska Music Matters (JAMM) in Juneau, Alaska, juneaumusicmatters.blogspot.com. You can also read more about Lorrie Heagy and JAMM in the October 2014 issue of Teaching
- Play on Philly! In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, playonphilly.org.
- Union City Music Project in Union City, New Jersey, ucmusicproject.org.
- UpBeat NYC in Bronx, New York, upbeatnyc.org.
- WHIN Music Project in New York, New York, whinmusicproject.org.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT EL SISTEMA ...

- Fundamusical.org.ve, the website of El Sistema in Venezuela (note that the website is in Spanish).
- Elsistemausa.org, the website of The National Alliance of El Sistema-Inspired Programs.





Play On Philly!

Stanford Thompson, founder and artistic director of Play On Philly! and chair of El Sistema USA, has an extensive history with El Sistema. He learned of it through Simon Reynolds of the Curtis Symphony, became a Sistema Fellow at NEC, worked with El Sistema in Venezuela, and developed a music program in Kenya before establishing Play on Philly (POP) in Philadelphia in 2011. POP started with 110 children ages 6-13, and grew to 250 students after expanding to a second school in 2012. Thompson has conducted symposia on El Sistema in this country, inspiring individuals, such as Mukamal of Crescendo Detroit, to bring music and social change to their communities.

POP mirrors Abreu's model of intensive training, with three hours of after-school instruction five days a week.

Although POP has the support of The "Sistema-Philadelphia Orchestra and the city is full of resources, getting everything to function in harmony is still a struggle. "The biggest challenge was getting people to change their perception," Thompson said. Parents were skeptical at first: The idea appealed to them, but they weren't convinced POP was going to do all the work. After five years, POP has

inspired programs in the United States reflect the communities that they serve.

-LORRIE HEAGY

built a lot of credibility in the community (92% retention rate), but getting stakeholders to understand and buy in remains a challenge. El Sistema has become a well-known name in the classical music community, but it is still largely unheard-of among parents in this country.

Corona Youth Music Project

Public awareness of El Sistema in the U.S. skyrocketed in 2007 when Gustavo Dudamel conducted the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. Concertgoers, reviewers, and musicians were amazed at the proficiency of this Venezuelan youth ensemble, but by this time El Sistema was over 30 years old. Álvaro Rodas, founder and CEO of the Corona Youth Music Project (CYMP) in Queens, New York, says that El Sistema spread to Latin America before it came to the U.S. An orchestra full of Venezuelan youth playing standard repertoire at a professional level was groundbreaking and inspiring to fellow Latin American



communities. Rodas was living in Guatemala in 1989 when he went to a youth music festival in Puerto Rico. There, he met musicians from the impressive Venezuelan "Youth Orchestra

Movement," and found out that Venezuela had multiple thriving youth orchestras, whereas Guatemala could hardly maintain one. Eight years later, when the Guatemalan youth orchestra was nearly defunct, Venezuelan musicians came to reactivate it and did a seminario, playing Beethoven's Symphony No. 5. Rodas was amazed. He learned bass and played music he never imagined he could play. After completing an arts administration degree and the Sistema Fellowship, he came to New York in 2010 to start CYMP with the goal of bringing opportunities to Guatemalan and other Latin American immigrants.

CYMP serves 200 children in three orchestras, divided by age and proficiency, with a staff of five teachers and anywhere between one and five volunteers. Corona is home to some of the most overcrowded schools in the country, and Rodas has seen school music programs deteriorate. Programs like CYMP, and its sister groups in the metro area—UpBeatNYC in the Bronx, WHIN Music Project in the Washington

Heights/Inwood section of Manhattan, and Union City Music Project (UCMP) in New Jersey, among others—strive to fill the gaps. Students in these groups learn the same repertoire, and there is a lot of collaboration and exchange between them. "Rich and useful collaborations are the ones between children," Rodas says. Children playing together and organizers learning from each other have helped El Sistema evolve organically in the United States.

Sistema-inspired programs aim to work with school music programs, not replace them, but Rodas feels the New York City school system could be doing more. "It is the public school system's responsibility to provide high quality music education to all children," Rodas says. "We are just filling a need."

Starting Your Own Program

El Sistema is a huge paradigm shift from traditional music education. You may feel inspired to start a program in

your community, but there are also smaller steps you can take. **STUDENTS TEACHING STUDENTS:** Foster an environment in which more experienced musicians teach their peers. This is already ingrained in most school marching band programs. Rodas cites a popular El Sistema mantra: "If you know how to play two notes, you can teach one of them to another person." **EMPHASIS ON PERFORMANCE:** Find additional opportunities for your students to perform outside of the winter and spring concerts.

RESEARCH THE GOALS OF YOUR DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY:

See if there are any gaps between your district's goals and what is offered the students, and see if any of them can be filled by music.

VOLUNTEER WITH A LOCAL EL SISTEMA PROGRAM: Review the list of Sistema-inspired programs at elsistemausa.org and volunteer if there is one close by. If not, research the needs of your own community and start a conversation about how they can be addressed. El Sistema is about bringing music education to those who don't have it. Your call to help may be outside of the classroom.

LEARN MORE: Look into the Sistema Fellowship at NEC, and some of the MAT programs co-offered by universities and Sistema-inspired programs, such as JAMM/University of Alaska Southeast and YOLA/Longy School of Music. II



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By Cynthia Darling

SPENCER-VAN ETTEN Middle School's band program attracts an enviably high student membership in its performance groups. How has this small but mighty middle school in Spencertown, New York, achieved this feat? NAfME member Alexandria Hanessian, director of concert and jazz bands, speaks candidly about her middle school's growth to success. Along the way, the program has met its challenges head on, and she and her colleagues have much wisdom to share.

Hanessian notes that many strides led to S-VE's success, but there is one that has been perhaps the most crucial in laying the groundwork for thir flourishing program. "One of the biggest steps we've taken as a department (and this was in place before I arrived nine years ago) to ensure every student was able to participate in band was to provide instruments to 100% of our student population. Every student has the option to join band completely free of charge, and without having to worry about buying or renting even the smaller instruments. Combined with our collaboration between the elementary and middle school portions of the music program, this helps enormously in getting students through the door."

One challenge of working within a rural school district

such as hers, according to Hanessian, is the "high number of socio-economically disadvantaged students. There are some obvious challenges that arise from this, but there are some beautiful advantages as well. Because we are able to provide a quality music program to our students free of charge, our numbers start very high. However, maintaining those high numbers when class sizes are so small becomes crucial in a small district," she notes. "Most of our students also lack the resources to seek private instruction, which makes the instruction we provide even more crucial to the musical success of our students. We also have to concentrate a lot on retention due to the small class sizes within our district."

The middle school's band program boasts robust student participation. Says Hanessian, "Our class size ranges from about 50 to 80. NAfME member Laura Voorhees—our choral director and sixth-grade general music teacher—and I teach roughly 95% of the fifth grade in our performing ensembles, 85% of the sixth grade, and 75% of the seventh- and eighthgrade population. We offer before-school jazz ensembles, send many students to honors bands and festivals each year, and take our students on performance trips (to parks) every other year." Hanessian notes that her teaching load includes the

Photos courtesy of Alexandria Hanessian

following: "fifth-grade band, sixth-grade band, seventh- and eighth-grade band, jazz ensemble, group lessons for grades five through eight, and fifth-grade general music."

Hanessian herself is starting her 10th year at Spencer-Van Etten, and her work extends beyond the school district. "I'm also an active private teacher and clarinetist in the Ithaca area." She earned both her undergraduate and graduate degrees from Ithaca College, so she has been connected to this area for much of her musical career.

She cites many unexpected benefits to working within a small district. "Because of our small size, all of the programs draw from the same pool of students. We have students who can participate in any and all activities





WITH ALEXANDRIA HANESSIAN

What do you know to be true about teaching music that you didn't know when you started? I had no idea how thrilling it would be to see students fall in love with learning and performing. To have the privilege of watching students catch the "music bug" early in their lives is amazing.

If I weren't a music teacher ... Ql've always thought it would be fun to read and edit books for a living.

What advice would you give to a What advice would you give teacher trying to start a program similar to yours? Make connections with your community, administration, secretaries, parents, and colleagues, and recruit hard all the time.

What's the biggest lesson you want your students to learn during their time in your classroom? I want students to overcome their initial fear of failure and, by doing so, learn perseverance.

What have you learned about students and parents through your work over the past years? I've learned that communication is so important; treating others well and being proactive will take you a long way.



find success with

your teaching,

classroom

management, and

excitement in what

you do, they will stay and encourage

others to do

the same.

without having to choose between sports and music, for example. The leads in our musicals are often the leaders on the sports fields as well, and I think our students and programs

benefit from this diversity."

The advantages of this small program extend to the faculty. "Another benefit is the close collaboration we are able to achieve with a smaller music department. We work well together and consider ourselves one PreKthrough-12th-grade music department, and to that end we share time, resources, and ideas, which contributes to our success." So, collaboration between Hanessian and her music colleagues is quite intentional and conscious. "At Spencer Van-Etten, we work closely as a department as well. Laura Voorhees is our choral director for the middle and high school, but works with Kay Brown [elementary teacher and NAfME member] to recruit her chorus students. Dan Miller, our high school band director, and I work extremely hard to ensure the transition from middle to high school is as seamless as possible. All four of us are in constant communication as to the direction of our program and how we can provide support to each other. We are at one another's concerts and work as a unit, creating an atmosphere of stability for our students and program." Hanessian urges teachers to collaborate with those in the lower grades to create buzz and excitement for middle school and upper school programs. For programs that are currently struggling to grow, she draws on S-VE's experience in offering suggestions. "My advice would be to focus on the recruitment, especially at the younger grades.

> Our elementary teacher, Kay Brown, is a fantastic educator and actively promotes the music program at the middle school level. Your colleagues

can be your best resource in promoting and building excitement for what comes next!"

in the elementary school

Hanessian identifies several definitive components of a successful smaller music program. "I would say the most important part of growing a program is to try to hire effective and vibrant teachers. If students find success with your teaching, classroom management, and excitement in what you do, they will stay and encourage others to do the same." S-VE also looks beyond the students to promote its program, "Inviting non-music teachers and parents on music trips is also a great way to get them involved in your program. The more they value what happens in your classroom, the better advocates they will be for your program."

Still, there's nothing more valuable than simple face time with students on a daily basis. "Keep talking to the students who aren't yet in your program. Be visible in the hallways, at dances, at sporting events. If students form a connection with you, they will be much more likely to join your program. This is especially true for the students who have dropped your program; If you'd like them back, keep the relationship alive and always keep the door open." The music department

also practices an open-door policy when it comes to the administration of the school. "As a music department, we maintain active lines of communication with our school principals and superintendent every day—discussing our program, our needs and goals as well as sharing our success stories. This is extremely important to the sustained success of any program: The decision makers need input from their minions in the classroom! We know that keeping records and maintaining data on our program is important, but we've also found that sharing our data with administration and the Board of Education at the right times will help them in their decision-making processes." In this same vein, Hanessian offers the following advice: "Get yourself on committees! Every person in our department serves on the planning team in their building, and we also are present at scheduling meetings and curriculum meetings, and if there is any other way to be involved, we usually figure out how. We want to ensure we have a voice when decisions are being made."

The pride Hanessian feels as she describes her students is palpable, "Almost every year, we send a student from S-VE to college majoring in music, and very often we have alumni come back and relate to us how they have continued to perform beyond their high school years. Also, the fact that we have so many students who remain in the music program throughout their middle and high school years speaks to how successful our students are at S-VE. Being able to maintain high levels of membership and performing at an excellent standard of musicianship are things our students may be able to experience at bigger schools, but rarely at other schools our size. This is what makes a successful music program not just a pillar in the community, but an unforgettable experience for so many of our students." I■



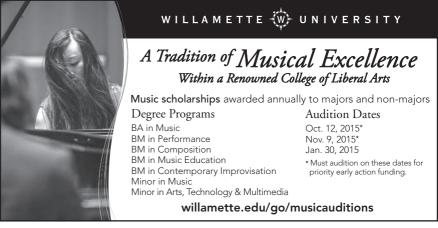


Photo courtesy of Debbie Degenhardt



Taiko drums, choral warm-ups, instrument-building, and more.



Words and Music— Interdisciplinary Reading

"When I was in elementary school, every kindergarten teacher used to be required to sing and play the piano, as part of helping kids learn how the English language is constructed," says NAfME member Debbie Degenhardt, who teaches music at Merrimack Elementary School in Holbrook, New York. "That's been lost. Many kindergarten teachers these days don't know what to do with a piano."

Degenhardt is one of a growing number of teachers who explore connections between literacy and music. It started for her a decade ago when her principal asked her to begin a program using music to teach verbal concepts, and vice-versa. When funds for the program were frozen, she created the materials herself. "I started running to all the classroom teachers, asking, "What are your students learning and how are you teaching it? Then, I began creating original songs to reinforce those concepts. I wrote one called 'Chicken Chunks,' teaching about the chunks that are used in reading and writing skills-for example, how to put different consonants in

front of the chunk 'at' to create other words, like 'fat' and 'cat.' The songs ended up being so catchy that teachers complained about getting the songs stuck in their heads." Degenhardt now has a collection of about 40 tunes, many of which are downloadable through her Literacy Through Music series on iTunes, CD Baby, and Amazon. The repertoire can be used to



bolster students' understanding of homophones, opposites, contractions, and rhyming, and also rhythmic units and other musical structures. "Kids use the songs to get a better sense of rhythm by fitting in with the natural cadences found in speech. They learn, for instance, that they can make eighth notes from two-syllable words."

Some of Degenhardt's songs require students to participate in their composition, in the style of the word game Mad Libs. She finds that this sort of student involvement is just as important as the connection between music and reading.

"Kids learn so much more when they're creating their own words and melodies than when they're sitting there listening passively. Rather than being spoon-fed, they're really learning to solve problems for themselves-something that's so important for their development in general." —Adam Perlmutter



Saxophone Tone

"When trying to improve a student's tone, it all begins with mouthpiece pitch," says Scott Turpen, professor of saxophone at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. Teaching this starts with building the proper embouchure, forming an "ewww" shape to the lips with the bottom lip slightly rolled over the teeth and the top teeth resting on the mouthpiece. As for the formation of the facial muscles, Turpen describes the mouthpiece within the embouchure as the hub of a wagon wheel. "The muscles in the facial mask form the spokes, and they are all gently pushing in toward the center of that wheel."

Once the embouchure is in place, he has the student blow the mouthpiece without the neck attached. If the muscles of the face are set correctly, the mouthpiece should sound a C for the soprano

saxophone, an A for the alto, a G for the tenor, and a D for the baritone. Once this pitch is stable without the instrument, he monitors intonation with it as well. "If a student is unable to produce the lowest or highest notes, they may not be producing the correct mouthpiece pitch. If they can maintain that mouthpiece pitch throughout the range, then many intonation problems will be solved."

Turpen also notes, "Once the basic tone is achieved, having some sense of the oral cavity is also important. The tongue should generally be low and slightly to the back of the mouth. The tongue is not going to stay locked in place all throughout the instrument's range. As you go lower in the saxophone range the tongue goes lower, whereas when you go higher the tongue will need to arch slightly: An 'oh' shaped position for lower notes versus an 'ee' position for the higher ones." To help develop this concept, he recommends that the student "play broken scales in the form of long tones ascending, then returning to low B-flat and overtones. Low tones are often more challenging on the saxophone, and developing oral cavity flexibility allows a student to play all notes with a good tone and in tune." Turpen continues, "Once their mouthpiece pitch is established, I have students play scales on the mouthpiece by changing their tongue position. Once the correct mouthpiece pitch is established, the

changing their tongue Once the correct mou pitch is established, the facial mask does not move, and any change in pitch can be accom-

plished by moving their tongue from 'oh' to 'ee.'" — Chad

Criswell

STRINGS

Assessment in the Strings Classroom

Assessment of young string players can be tricky, particularly when a teacher is trying to balance the needs of students with those of the school or district. "We need to move away from thinking that individual assessment is the only way to go," says NAfME member Winifred Crock, director of orchestras at Parkway Central High School in Chesterfield, Missouri. "In order to assess a musician in 20 categories, you need 20 minutes or to hear their performance multiple times. If we have 50 kids in a class, there's no way to adequately assess the individuals in the time we have."

Group assessment, although often perceived as flawed, can be effective if handled correctly. "You can look at group assessment as a larger part of what you're doing: You can see poor posture and so forth. I also stand in front of four to six players and assess them. So, if I just assess bowing, I can have the full orchestra playing 20 bars, and I can assess the first six players, and then the second violins, etc. After six repetitions, I can get through a fairly

large orchestra, assessing six students at once with a single-point assessment," says Crock. "For you to teach the group and then only assess them individuals—it's oxymoronic. This other

way allows them to practice as the assessment is going on."

Regardless of method, it is vital to provide timely feedback to students. "They need the feedback on the same or next day. If you assess 150 children and take a month to grade and give them



feedback-a month later, it doesn't really matter any more. We should realize that there's a 'loop.'" One method of delivering timely assessment is to engage students to help each other via peer assessment. "If we say 'play that with your stand partner—now switch,' that's an absolutely positive, formative assessment that gets the kids involved with one another. They're not grading each other: They're watching and helping each other. It's a much healthier point of view in education than saying 'she's going to give me my grade."' For this and assessment in general to work, the rubric must be clear and integral to the lessons. "A student should be able to see and know that a player has their elbows in the wrong position. With really good teaching, that's where it goes: The points are so clear that it's not something that only a highly trained musician can notice." —Susan Poliniak

DEVELOPMENT TOOL

One helpful professional development tool for music educators interested in assessment is the Workbook for Building and Evaluating Effective Music Education in the School Ensemble, which offers teachers/administrators a means of evaluating ensemble programs (available from the NAfME Store, shop.nafme.org).



Building a Taiko Drum Ensemble

Japanese taiko drums are a relatively recent addition to classrooms in the U.S. "We are very proud of what we have going on here," states John Theine, director of the River Ridge Taiko

Top photo by Christopher Futcher/iStockphoto.com. Bottom photo courtesy of John Theine

Ensemble at River Ridge High School in Lacey, Washington. "As far as we know, we are the only taiko ensemble in the school system in Washington State."

In taiko technique, the primary stroke motion comes from the body and full arm. This helps create a sound that is extremely robust and strong. Motion and choreography are very important in taiko ensembles, and members traditionally learn their parts by rote.

"Written music is one of the major impediments to this type of ensemble," states Theine. "You can't just go to your local music store and order music. Taiko is an oral tradition where songs are passed down from one generation to another within a group. There are some common taiko songs, but very little is notated on manuscript and available for purchase. We have been writing our own music and researching traditional taiko pieces for years to help build our library."

When purchased new, taiko drums can range from \$700 to \$2,000, which is a hefty monetary commitment for any public school budget! "We made 13 of our drums at a total cost of about \$5,000. We built multiple drums side-by-side, but it can take up to a month just to put the heads on one drum," Theine adds. "In the ensemble,



we use three different types of drumsticks. For our medium to large drums, we use Bachi drumsticks that are purchased for about \$20-\$25 per pair from Japan. These sticks tend to last much longer than anything we've made ourselves. For the smaller, rope-tied drums, the students use marching band

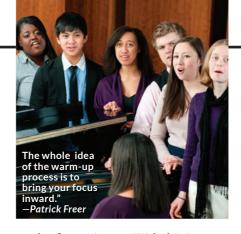
snare drum sticks. For the two largest taiko drums, we use oak sticks that are lathe-turned and approximately 2.5"-3" in diameter." Traveling with this equipment can also be a challenge. "We use a 7'x14' enclosed cargo trailer to transport the drums. It can take upwards of an hour to pack the full ensemble as well as unpack and set up. The trailer ends up looking like a Tetris game, and our equipment has to break down in order to fit properly." —Steve Fidyk



Effective Warm-Ups for High School Choirs

In choir rehearsal, the warm-up may be seen as something to get out of the way to make way for the "real" work, but the it is a valuable opportunity to work on vocal technique. "The warm-up needs to be tied to voice education and technique," says Patrick K. Freer, professor of music at Georgia State University in Atlanta. "At the same time, as we are preparing for the repertoire of that rehearsal, we're building the skills and techniques for future repertoire. We should pay as much attention to the warm-up sequence as we do to repertoire selection and sight-singing skills."

Repertoire, vocal technique, and warm-ups should, therefore, be seen as interconnected. "It's the repertoire that guides the rehearsal design," notes Freer. "But what guides the repertoire should be your vocal technique curriculum. So, you know where the kids need to go vocally, you choose repertoire to get them there, and you build the warm-ups on that. In other words, the planning of the vocal skills and voice education comes first, the repertoire comes second, and the warm-up design supports all of that." Because of the connection between repertoire and technique, it can be a good idea to ensure that the warm-ups evolve over time to meet the changing educational



needs of your singers. With this in mind, it is key to define the vocal technique goal of any warm-up. "If you know what your goal is at any particular activity point in the warm-up sequence, it is less easy to be distracted by anything that doesn't line up with that." He notes that there are five stages to the warm-up process itself: "relaxation, focusing on alignment or posture, breathing (inhalation and exhalation), random vocalizations (e.g., sighing on "oo," singing an exercise on whatever pitch the singers choose), and then exercises that are pitch-specific. The whole idea of the warm-up process is to bring your focus inward."

So, are there any types of warm-ups that directors should avoid? "Problematic warm-ups are those that are too fast or too cutesy (rhyming melodies, etc.). They can be extraordinarily difficult to sing and create more tension than they resolve." Additionally, middle school singers and students with voices at a similar level of development may have problems with certain pitch-specific vocalises. "Their composite unison range, especially in octaves, is only about six notes. If you're doing any kind of vocalise that spans a fifth, you're going to run out of the unison range in three repetitions. You may need nonpitch-specific vocalises that get to your goals without singing the exact same note at the same time."

Further suggestions from Pat Freer may be found in his article "Choral Warm-Ups for Changing Adolescent Voices" (Music Educator's Journal, March 2009). —Susan Poliniak

ALTERNATIVES Building

Instruments with Your Students

Iconoclastic composer and theorist Harry Partch was known for inventing his own instruments using found objects such as hubcaps and glass bottles. Students, too, can build their own instruments in the classroom to explore their own radical repertoire, as Jason Lee Bruns (jasonleebruns.com) has his students do in his classrooms.

Bruns—who teaches world music. music theory, and recording arts at Campbell Hall school in North Hollywood, California—has explored making instruments with his students for different reasons, including restrictive budgets and supply issues. For instance, he explains, "I was teaching folkloric Cuban music to my world drumming class and needed to have some instruments that were not sold in the U.S., so we made them ourselves."

For making percussion instruments, Bruns found a website, rhythmweb.com, with instructions on how to build drums from coffee cans, radiator hose clamps, and goatskins. After a coffee company donated cans, the cost of making the instruments came to \$3.04 per student. For the Cuban lesson, to make four catá instruments, which are held between the knees and struck with sticks to produce clucking sounds, he headed to a garden store. "I bought several large bamboo poles, borrowed some power tools, and voilà!"

In making the instruments, Bruns explains to the students how they were or are originally made using whatever materials and tools may be available in a given community. "I think the best way to integrate inventing and making instruments in a classroom setting is through a cultural context." He finds

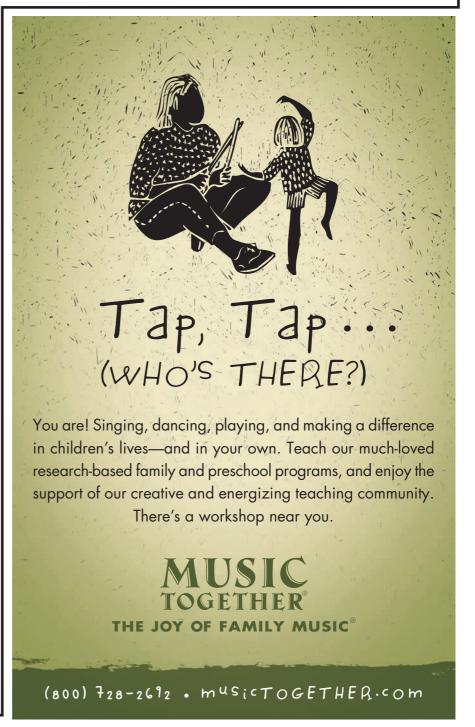


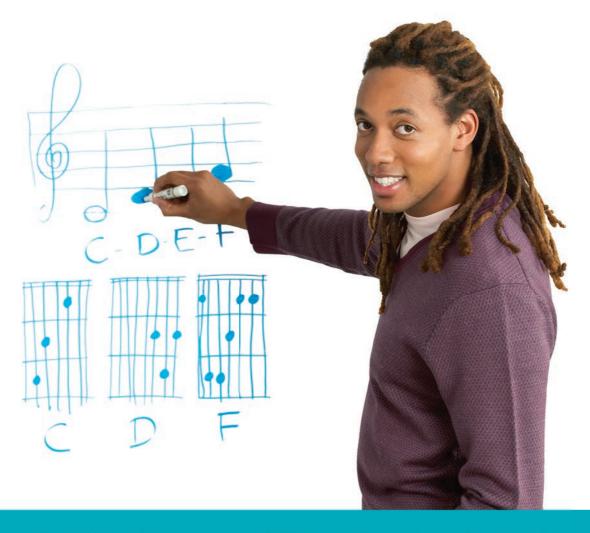
that students' musical understanding is improved with instrument-building. "With that comes a more intimate connection to the instrument, which ultimately leads to being able to

manipulate its sound to better communicate musical ideas."

Bruns also sees a pride of ownership among his students, as they treat their instruments with great care. And, he and the students agree that their creations

sound quite good. "If someone were to offer me a substantial budget to purchases commercially-made drums, I'd still have the students make their own instruments." —Adam Perlmutter





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Native American Music in the Classroom

Cultural context and outside sources can help to provide valuable experiences.

SHOULD NATIVE AMERICAN music be taught in the classroom? Absolutely! For excellent suggestions on how to do just that, we've turned to J. Bryan Burton, a prolific author in intercultural music education with his own Native American roots, and professor, chairperson of music education, and program assessment coordinator at West Chester University of Pennsylvania in West Chester.

"In early childhood, my grandmother taught songs, dances, told stories at family reunions and gatherings that, unknown to me at the time, were Native American." He developed his interest further "through family connections and searching for my musical and cultural roots. After attending several pow-wows and 'Indian fairs,' I began more actively seeking reliable information free from stereotypes."

"Knowledge

understanding

and respect."

-J. BRYAN BURTON

builds

Native American communities teach traditional music to their school-age children. "Most traditional songs

are learned by participat-

ing in them and gradually mastering. Instruments are much the same but some do seek out master players to serve as mentors. Mostly oral tradition. In some contemporary reservation schools, time is set aside for cultural studies including music." There are benefits to be gained by teaching this music in other classrooms, too.

"Knowledge builds understanding and

An assortment of Native American instruments, including (top center) a hand drum, and (left to right) clapping sticks, Apache violin and bow, cedar rattle, horn rattle, flute, gourd rattle, and cedar flute.

respect. If properly addressed instead of manipulated for methodology or curricular purposes, teaching at this level encourages growth of cultural and

> musical acceptance and overcomes generations of stereotypes and misconceptions."

> Dance, too, "is an essential element of Native American music and should

be included." Burton suggests that "teachers may choose to enlist aid of a Native American rather than make up movements or use stereotypes from movies."

Should a teacher present this music in a specific context? "Historical context is important for all music, not just Native American. I prefer the term 'cultural context': Why is the music

performed, when, by whom, and under what circumstances? For example, Native American flute may be used for courtship, healing, and meditation in the historical sense, but contemporary practice includes popular and social music. Of course, any discussion should be succinct and accurate." He continues, "Native American music should be introduced with respect (as should all music) with reminders that this is a living, evolving musical culture and not something from a museum. Preachiness should be avoided."

For those music educators who wish to explore Native American music, Burton recommends Louis Ballard's American Indian Music for the Classroom and his own Moving Within the Circle: Contemporary Native American Music and Dance (2nd edition). II

BY DEBBIE GALANTE BLOCK

High School Band Students—Compose!

Teaching composition to your band can make them better musicians.

MANY HIGH SCHOOL band directors feel that they can't fit composition into their rehearsal schedules, as perfecting performance is usually the overriding goal. However, NAfME member Elizabeth Menard, assistant professor of music education at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, says that composition can help band students to be better musicians.

As a first step, Menard notes tht musical examples of varied styles can be introduced, followed by time spent exploring. "I like teachers to talk about a technique and then allow 30 minutes for the students to explore the concept. Don't put up any roadblocks for students: They don't have to know much about music theory to begin the process. Of course, in a perfect situation they have a little bit of knowledge, but the knowledge they gain through exploration is really powerful." Explorations can take place via notation software or manuscript paper. Menard believes that exploration can provide pathways to future learning, so when musical concepts are introduced later, students may find them easier to comprehend.

Within learning how to compose, students should be exposed to both tonality and atonality, and encouraged to create musical questions and answers. For one exercise, Menard suggests that students choose three notes, compose a creative arrangement with only those notes, and share their ideas with their peers. "It could be a G, an F-sharp, and a D-flat. Consider what kinds of sounds

they can make using just those three notes. The idea is that students are exploring what an instrument can do musically." She also notes that students need not compose at a keyboard: "If

they happen to play a saxophone, then they should compose on a saxophone."

From hearing works by their peers, students can learn about texture, form, and other compositional building blocks. They can also learn how to listen to and assess others' work

with respect. "It's important for other students to evaluate each others' ideas as well as to understand and respect what all of the other composers in the room are doing," Menard explains. "It's good morale building as well."

Students should feel free to bring in musical ideas from elsewhere. "They may be trying to imitate pop music. They just need a musical idea in their head, and they need the opportunity to

> get that shared and remembered by people in their classroom."

Menard notes that composing can bring forward talents in students who may not be your band's star players. "Good composers may often be the students who are not the best performers.

Composing can free them from the printed music on the stand. Sometimes students can achieve musical success they might not achieve if all they are offered the opportunity to explore music in this way." I■



"Good





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Nonverbal Communication on the Podium

Facial expression, posture, and more can deliver strong messages.

THE ENTIRE BODY is involved in the act of leading an ensemble, and a conductor who masters the art of nonverbal communication connects more deeply with the students, holds their attention. and instills confidence.

Nonverbal communication begins as soon as the teacher enters the room, and it goes both ways. "During the warm-up session of a rehearsal, look at the entire ensemble, make eye contact with every single member," says NAfME member Mary Carlson, professor of music and director of graduate music education at Nazareth College in Rochester, New York. Making connections in this way sets the tone for the rehearsal and gives a glimpse into each student's mind.

We all know that eye contact is important. "We as humans do this all the time: Look at each other and figure out what's going on," says Carlson. The eyes can deliver a message more clearly

and efficiently than the voice, particularly when cuing. "As conductors, we want our ensemble members to play correctly and with confidence. Providing appropriate cues helps them." The eyes give vital, immediate feedback.

Facial expressions also serve to connect the conductor, ensemble, and music and to each other. "We must convey emotions appropriate to the

music," advises Carlsonin particular, the six distinct emotions that can impressions be registered with the face: anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise. Doing this encourages the proper mood from the ensemble and shows congruence between conductor and music, conveying an air of by ease." knowledge and confi-

dence that transfers to the students. A smile from the podium can also set the tone of a rehearsal with a reminder that music-making is supposed to be fun.

Accurate nonverbal communication can also improve rehearsal pacing. "It's a time-saver," says Carlson. "Nobody wants to hear the conductor talk: They just want to make music." Giving direction without stopping the music

> puts more responsibility on the students to rehearse attentively.

Posture indicates a conductor's state of mind: Slouching and looking tor from the students. and a desire for involvement," Carlson says.

downward detach a conduc-"Upright stance projects an air of authority, confidence, "Positive impressions are

usually formed if body movement is natural and characterized by ease." She suggests recording and reviewing your conducting, as it can be hard to know in the moment what message you may be unwittingly sending to the students.

Carlson counsels that good preparation can help to produce proper posture and body language. When the conductor doesn't know the music well, "It's a confusing experience for everyone." Internalizing the music is can help a conductor to remain engeged throughout a rehearsal. "There is nothing worse than playing or singing for a conductor who is not engaged." I■









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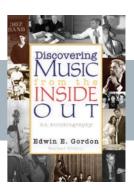
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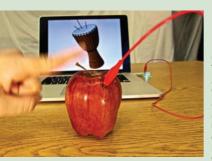






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(\$199.00-\$299.00) With its three strings, the Electric Loog Guitar can make it easier and faster to play, allowing children to make music right from the start. The constraint of fewer strings can also act as a trigger for creativity and rediscovering new ways to play. The body of the instrument is interchangeable, so different color bodies may be purchased and swapped in for a customized look. In fact, the Electric Loog arrives unassembled (no special tools required, and assembly takes an estimated 15 minutes). It includes an adjustable-height bridge—for low string action, enhanced playability, and comfort—a lipstick-style pickup, D'Addario strings, and a printed playing guide. Loog Guitars, LLC, loogguitars.com



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This kit paired with a computer allows you to create, among other things, a piano keyboard using everyday objects. You can load up a program or webpage with a

piano and, instead of using the computer keyboard to play, you can hook up the MaKey MaKey to, say, bananas: The bananas become your piano keys. Or you can make an apple into a drum. Other applications involve converting objects into a joystick, computer keyboard, or mouse. Anything that can conduct at least a tiny bit of electricity can work: pencil graphite on paper, finger paint, plants, people and animals, water, most foods, Play-Doh, and so forth. The kit, which is extremely simple to use, includes the MaKey MaKey unit, a USB cable, seven alligator clips, six connector wires, 20 stickers, and graphic instructions. JoyLabz, makeymakey.com

BOOKS ▶

Composer Songs: Meet 12 Famous Composers Through Song

Arranged, with New Words, by Sally K. **Albrecht Recording** Orchestrated by Alan **Billingsley and David** Hagy (2014, 88 pgs., paperback with CD \$59.99, paperback only \$29.99, CD only \$39.99) Composer Songs features music of the masters with words that teach about their lives. It includes unison arrangements of well-known works, composer caricatures, biographies, and activities. Teachers can also create a 25-minute program with the optional rhyming script. The CD includes reproducible PDFs and accompaniment and performance tracks. Alfred Music, alfred.com

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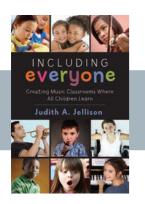
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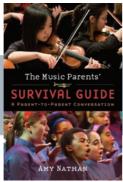
Developing Musicianship By Paul Hondorp; **Edited by Denise Eaton** (2015, 64 pgs., softcover with CD \$34.99) This text can be used for choral pedagogy, ear training, integrated listening, and score study. It develops audiation at the simplest level for new students of conducting by isolating single lines and improving listening skills. Included are examples from the Carl Fischer Choral Music. BriLee Music, and Theodore Presser Company repertoire representative of many voicings, textures, time periods, and difficulty levels. The CD has a performance of each excerpt with mistakes included. Carl Fischer Music, carlfischer.com

Discovering Music from the Inside

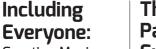
Out: An Autobiography (Revised Edition) By Edwin E. Gordon (2014, 154 pgs., hardcover \$26.95) Edwin Gordon has made major contributions to the study of music aptitudes, music audiation, music learning theory, and more. In this autobiography, he tells the tale of his early life, his careers as a working musician and researcher, and the founding of the Gordon Institute for Music Learning. Discovering Music also lends perspective to the experiences that informed his understanding of music education pedagogy. Gia Publications,

giamusic.com









Creating Music Classrooms Where All Children Learn By Judith A. Jellison (2015, 266 pgs., hardcover \$99.99, paperback \$27.95, eBook price varies) The perceived impediments to successfully including the wide diversity of children in schools in meaningful music instruction often stem not from insurmountable obstacles. but from a lack of imagination. Including Everyone equips music teachers with five principles of effective instruction for mixed special needs/traditional settings that are applicable in both classroom and rehearsal rooms alike. Oxford University

Press, oup.com

The Music Parents' Survival Guide

By Amy Nathan (2014, 282 pgs., hardcover \$99.99, paperback \$19.95, eBook price varies) This book of parentto-parent advice includes experiences, reflections, warnings, and helpful suggestions for how to walk the music-parenting tightrope, written by the parents of several top musicians, as well as music educators and over 40 professional musicians. The topics discussed span a wide range of issues, from how to get started and encourage effective practice habits, to how to cope with the cost of music training and deal with college and career concerns.

Oxford University Press, oup.com

Tonal Counterpoint for the 21st-Century Musician:

An Introduction **By Teresa Davidian** (2015, 260 pgs., hardcover \$85.00, paperback \$45.00, eBook \$44.99) Students today, having grown up in the age of digital technology, like their information fast and consider visual images as important as textual content. In this single-semester introduction. Davidian provides students with a textbook that is a direct reflection of the age in which they live. Throughout, the author explains how the techniques of 18thcentury counterpoint still readily apply to how music is composed today. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

rowman.com



APPS ▶

Steve Reich's Clapping Music

(Available for iPhone and iPad, free) This game app, which is part of a research project led by Queen Mary University of London, aims to improve your sense of rhythm by challenging you to play Steve Reich's groundbreaking work that is performed entirely by clapping. Tap in time with the shifting pattern, and progress through all of the variations. Players can rehearse in Practice Mode, learn the history of the piece, find out more about Steve Reich and his work, and even submit their high scores for a chance to perform "Clapping Music" on stage with the London Sinfonietta (see app for details and deadlines). Touchpress, touchpress.com



CDS

On the **Bright Side**

By The Bazillions (2015, 12 tracks, CD \$11.99, digital download \$9.99) Inspired by Schoolhouse Rock, The Bazillions have fun musically while helping kids pick up interesting information along the way. Their educational songs present narratives and paint pictures for listeners to visualize as they hum along. Their third release defines "bright" on multiple levels, ranging from wacky and hopeful songs describing the life of an elementary school age child to songs that explore the intricacies of grammar—all upbeat. jangly pop tunes infused with brainy lyrics and clear learning goals. Tracks include "Superhero Rock Band," "Family Tree," "Use a Contraction," "Ed (Been There, Done That)," "My Teacher's an Alien," Personification, Water Cycle," "Outside," "Q and U," Bad Haircut," Favorite Book," and 'Sons and Daughters." The Bazillions. thebazillions.com









WEBSITES ▶

Take Me to the River **Education Initiative**

(Free) The film Take Me to the River explores the Memphis music scene in the face of discrimination. Its director/producer, Martin Shore, has partnered with Berklee College of Music to develop a curriculum (intended for K-12, but can also be used for college students) based on his film. This



education initiative, which was piloted in New York City schools, includes related lessons and lesson plans, and is available online for teachers completely free of charge (teachers who sign up on the site can also get a code to watch the film online for free). Take Me to the River, tmttreducation.com

The Singing Classroom

(Subscriptions for \$12.95 per month and \$139.95 per year) In this ever-growing, searchable database of songs and music games for music educators of grades PreK-6, teachers can search for items by grade level, genre, topic, type of game, cultural origin, materials used, and more. Each song is presented with video, audio, a printable score, links to any puppets or toys used in a lesson, and often pictures and posters to print out. The videos include suggestions for educators as to how to introduce and teach the songs to help quickly engage students. There are also animations of bunnies demonstrating games and dances. The Singing Classroom, thesinging classroom.com





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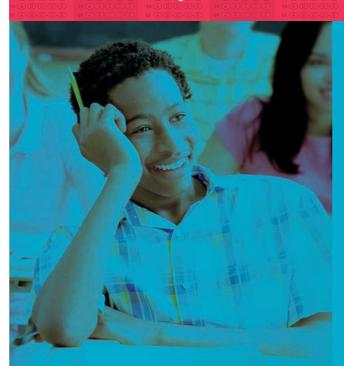
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brava!

MARIN ALSOP

CONDUCTOR Marin Alsop is recognized throughout the world for her innovative approach to programming and her commitment to education and to the development of audiences of all ages. Her success as music director of the Baltimore and São Paulo Symphony Orchestras has been recognized by extensions to her tenure, until 2021 and 2019, respectively. Alsop has guest-conducted most of the world's great orchestras and, in September 2013, made history as the first female conductor of the BBC's Last Night of the Proms in London. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including many for her extensive recordings. As a protégé of Leonard Bernstein, she was awarded the Koussevitzky Conducting Prize and is the only conductor to date to receive a MacArthur Fellowship.

Could you tell us about your OrchKids program? One of my proudest achievements as music director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra is the OrchKids program. We started with 30 first graders in 2008 and welcomed 1,200 kids in September 2015. OrchKids is an afterschool, intensive instrumental program that uses music as a vehicle for social change by creating opportunities

and a climate of possibility for youth in Baltimore City neighborhoods. Funded privately, it collaborates with several community partners, including the Baltimore City Public Schools, and provides music education, instruments, academic instruction, and meals, as well as performance and mentorship opportunities at no cost. My goal is for OrchKids to reach 10,000 kids, thereby impacting all 80,000 BCPSS children.

You come from a musical family and began instrumental studies at a young age. What do you remember from your earliest days as a musician? I have my parents to thank for my first musical experience. My father, who was concertmaster of the New York City Ballet for 30 years, and my mother, who was a cellist with the orchestra, could never imagine a life for their child that was not filled with music! My first instrument was piano, which I started at a very early age, and then I started violin when I was five or six years old. At seven, I began studies at the Juilliard Pre-College Division and, when I was in my early teens, I studied classical guitar for a few years. My father took me to hear Leonard Bernstein conducting a Young People's concert when I was nine or ten years old, and that was it for me! I absolutely knew that I wanted to become a conductor and never

Why do you think music education is important? I personally know the transformative power of music. By providing a strong foundation and developing the whole individual, we can position students for lifelong success – success not limited to music, but applicable to all areas of their lives.

Do you have any words of encouragement for music educators? I never really set out to be a music educator but have always been motivated by a strong desire to share my love for music with as many people as possible. I grew up with tremendous advantages because my parents gave me the gift of music and playing an instrument. Every child should have the same opportunity that I was given: to express themselves and feel the self-esteem that comes from mastering a phrase of music. After seeing the transformative effect music has had on the kinds in our OrchKids program, I am thrilled to call myself a music educator. There is no greater

privilege than being able to share the joy of music-making with young people.

There is no greater privilege than being able to share the joy of music-making with young people.

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