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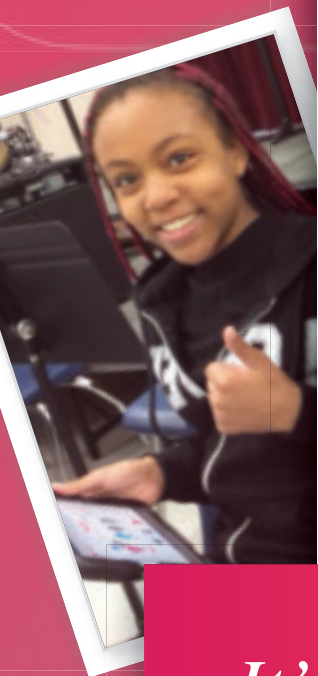
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contents

October 2017

Volume 25, Number 2

MUSIC EDUCATION • ORCHESTRATING SUCCESS

Music students learn cooperation, discipline, and teamwork.

Get ready for great performances at the next In-Service Conference!

26

HATS OFF TO THE 2017 NAFME IN-SERVICE CONFERENCE!

In Dallas this November, members will find ample opportunities for learning, performing, networking, and much more!

FEATURES

22

FIXING FUSSY FLUTE FAUX PAS

Are your flutists giving you fits? Here are some tips to help make life easier for everyone.

30

IT'S SHOWTIME!

From start to finish, here are some great ideas, both old and new, for creating the best musical ever with your students!

36

NAVIGATING YOUR PATH TO ENRICHMENT

NAfME offers valuable opportunities for music educators to pursue professional development, enhance their curricula, and investigate cutting-edge research.

42

RALLYING AND HONORING THROUGH MUSIC

When a young trumpeter passed away, director Jamie Clark led the student's bandmates through the grieving process.

Cover photo by Omar Sanders.
Photo this page by Victoria Chamberlin, victoriachamberlin.com.



14

Nicole Worzel



55

A happy herd of pool noodle ponies can bring musical horseplay to your elementary classroom.

DEPARTMENTS

CLASSROOMS

The mighty Drums of Thunder from Montclair, New Jersey **12**

ADVOCACY

A Rhode Island band director advocates for state-level change. **14**

RESEARCH

The results of Give a Note's demographic study **16**

TECHNOLOGY

Tools to help students sight-read and sight-sing **18**

PROFILES

7

The 2017 National Band Director of the Year, Emily McNeil ... Lauren B. Lewis, a highly successful Collegiate advocate ... Collegiate recruiter extraordinaire Vanessa Bliley



Vanessa Bliley

DISCOVERIES

The causes of—and solutions to—the “pops” and “thuds” that can plague beginning saxophonists **20**

WORKSHOP

General Music

Building and playing kalimbas in the classroom **48**

Brass & Woodwinds

Developing range in trumpet players the right way **48**

Strings

Teaching older beginners **49**

Percussion

The joys and pitfalls of elementary percussion ensembles **50**

Choral & Vocal

Planning the winter choral concert **51**

Alternatives

The ringtone composition project **52**

STAGES

Elementary

Hi-yo, pool noodle ponies! **55**

Secondary

Blueprint for a best-behaving band **56**

Collegiate

The benefits of forming a Tri-M® chapter at your school **58**

RESOURCES

New media and accessories for the music classroom **60**

BRAVA!

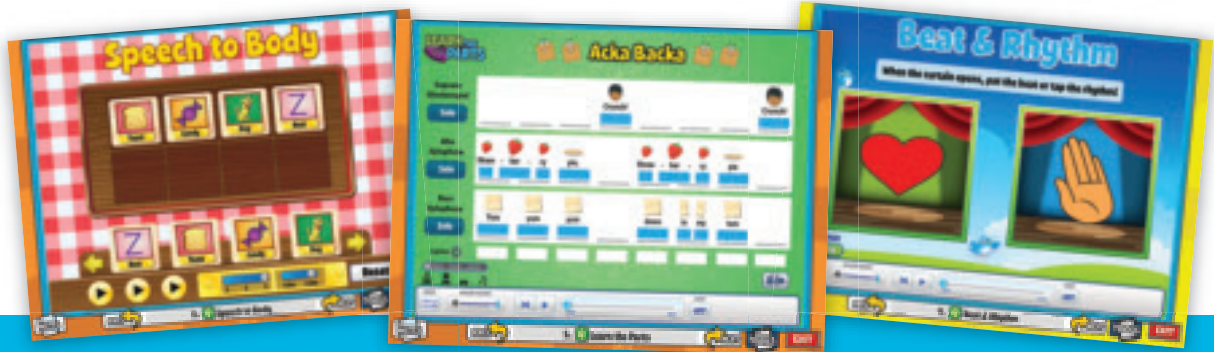
Teaching Music salutes classical/rock violinist Daisy Jopling! **64**

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IRWIN KORNFELD CEO

SUSAN POLINIAK Editor-in-Chief

JACKIE JORDAN Creative Director

BILL WHITE Advertising Manager

MICHAEL R. VELLA Production Manager

BARBARA BOUGHTON Business Manager

CONTRIBUTORS: Michael Adelson, Andrew
J. Allen, Andrew S. Berman, Chad Criswell,
La-Tika S. Douthit, Lisa Ferber, Stephen
Holley, Joanne Sydney Lessner, Cathy
Applefeld Olson, Adam Perlmutter, Susan
Poliniak, Lori Schwartz Reichl

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EMILY McNEIL By Lori Schwartz Reichl



Emily McNeil (far right) and the East Rowan High School Wind Ensemble

2017 National Band Director of the Year

Emily McNeil works to inspire students while improving the quality of her ensembles.

"THIS YEAR'S RECIPIENT of the National Band Director of the Year Award gives a lot of care to her program." These were the first words high school band director Emily McNeil heard echoing from the stage while sitting in the audience at the United States Army All-American Bowl Awards Ceremony. She was attending the ceremony as a participant in the Band Director Academy this past January in San Antonio, Texas. Not knowing who would receive this prestigious award, McNeil quickly figured out it could be her, as there were very few women present. To her astonishment, the

President of NAFME, Denese Odegaard, proceeded to recognize the winner by reading McNeil's biography to the audience. McNeil says, "I was shocked to be honored as the awards' recipient." She was recognized on stage with a plaque and celebrated with memorable words about her teaching career.

In March 2009, Emily McNeil was hired as the fourth band director during the 2008-2009 school year

at East Rowan High School in Granite Quarry, North Carolina. She realized the pressure this particular situation brought to the students, community, and her. McNeil's goals for the band program were simple: She hoped to care for the students, inspire them to audition for more honor bands, and build a high-quality program. Nine years later, she

continues this progress by maintaining a strong relationship with the middle school band director and encouraging the younger musicians to participate in the high school band program.

The band program at East Rowan High School consists of the Concert Band, Jazz Band, Marching Band, Wind Ensemble, and 75 energetic



EMILY McNEIL
Band Director,
East Rowan High School,
Granite Quarry,
North Carolina

“I see my strengths as an educator as caring for each individual student and their successes as a growing adult—not just as a musician.”

members. McNeil was present at the bowl events in San Antonio because her student, Katie Howard, was performing on trumpet in the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band (USAAAMB). McNeil proudly states that during her tenure, “In addition to Katie, East Rowan has had two previous students and one current student selected as USAAAMB members.” The program continues to flourish under McNeil’s directorship, and along with the annual performances and trips she plans for the band, the Wind Ensemble has earned consecutive superior ratings in the district’s music performance assessments for the past several years.

McNeil says, “I see my strengths as an educator as caring for each individual student and their successes as a growing

adult—not just as a musician.” She encourages students to reach their full musical potential by auditioning for as many ensembles as possible, both in and out of school, and she is thrilled when former students return to support the band program and attend a performance. These former students are often in awe of how the program continues to grow. McNeil says, “I also find it significant when former students recall a musical selection they performed with the band and can recall exactly how the music made them feel.”

When she is not busy with music activities, McNeil enjoys watching baseball games with her husband, John,



Denese Odegaard presents the Band Director of the Year award to Emily McNeil.

as well as cheering on the team he coaches. She also enjoys running, fishing, and traveling, and looks forward to another inspiring year of making musical memories with her students.

LAUREN B. LEWIS By Joanne Sydney Lessner

A Collegiate Advocate

An undergraduate music student in North Carolina is involved in advocacy, professional development, and more.

LAUREN B. LEWIS, a music education and applied clarinet major at East Carolina University (ECU) in Greenville, North Carolina, is one of this year’s recipients of NAFME’s Shannon Kelly Kane scholarship. Now a senior, Lewis joined her school’s NAFME Collegiate chapter as a sophomore and was elected its president last January. In addition to maintaining the chapter’s focus on service, advocacy, and fundraising, she has made professional development a priority, incorporating advice and training sessions into regular meetings in response to member feedback.

“We had students talk about an international choir conductor who came

to the university and how that experience gave them a new perspective on educational conducting and vocal techniques,” Lewis says. A retired school principal who works with nonprofit after-school programs visited and conducted a mock job interview. “That wound up being a really great time,” recalls Lewis. “She picked 10 people, and we each had to answer a question. Then she would tell the group how we could have improved our answers.” Adding a dance social fundraiser to the usual round of bake sales has



LAUREN B. LEWIS
Music Education and
Applied Clarinet Major,
East Carolina University,
Greenville, North Carolina

made it possible to cover hotel fees for members attending the upcoming North Carolina Music Educators Association Professional Development Conference. “They have collegiate sessions, so we’re able to network and understand a little of what’s coming as a professional,” Lewis says.

Under Lewis’s guidance, the chapter has reached out to local music teachers and responded to their requests. “We were able to do several instrumental petting zoos, taking out different woodwind and brass instruments and a few strings, just to let the kids try to make sounds on them. Hopefully, this piques their interest and helps them in choosing an instrument as



Lauren B. Lewis with her Shannon Kelly Kane Scholarship plaque, alongside the North Carolina Music Educators Association executive leadership

they go into middle school.” They also participated in a science and music day at an elementary school, using jump ropes to demonstrate the properties of frequency and pitch.

After experiencing the power of advocacy firsthand at NafME’s Hill Day in June, Lewis and her fellow chapter members plan to approach local legislators with the hope of securing more funding for music and the arts. “We’re thinking about reaching out to our North Carolina general assembly and maybe even our national representatives. Hopefully, we’ll have more people tell their stories about why music education was so pivotal to their lives, which will help

“One of the greatest decisions I made was coming to East Carolina University. I really love the scholarship group, and they do a lot of great things for us to become future educators.”

the cause in gaining more funds via the Every Student Succeeds Act.” As a Maynard Scholar at ECU, Lewis is committed to teaching in the North Carolina public school system for four years after graduation, and she looks forward to gaining valuable field experience before selecting a focus for graduate school. “One of the greatest decisions I made was coming to East Carolina University. I really love the scholarship group, and they do a lot of great things for us to become future educators.” Lewis shares her enthusiasm for her major when recruiting prospective freshman. “We tell them how fun music education and a music degree in general can be.”



Lauren B. Lewis with students

nafme COLLEGIATE

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Advocacy: University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg, Missouri

Recruitment: Central Washington University, Ellensburg, Washington

Professional Development: New Jersey City University, Jersey City, New Jersey

2016–2017 NafME COLLEGIATE PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENTS

Vanessa Bliley: Central Washington University, Ellensburg, Washington

Lauren B. Lewis: Eastern Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina

William Yates: University of Montevallo, Montevallo, Alabama

Emily Brumbaugh: Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania, Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania

Joshua Schmidt: University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Oshkosh, Wisconsin

SHANNON KELLY KANE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Vanessa Bliley: Central Washington University, Ellensburg, Washington

Lauren B. Lewis: Eastern Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina



Vanessa Bliley (center) with her Kelly Kane Scholarship plaque, surrounded by WMEA leaders

VANESSA BLILEY By Lisa Ferber

A Recruiter of Excellence

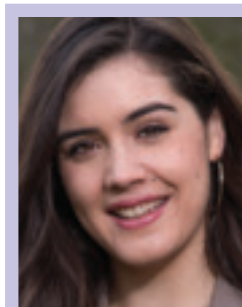
A student at Central Washington University looks back at her Collegiate successes and forward to student-teaching.

VANESSA BLILEY started playing oboe in her freshman year of high school when her band director made a request of this then-clarinetist. Bliley recalls, "My teacher said, 'We don't have a lot of oboists. Would you like to play oboe?'"

And then I started taking lessons, got more involved in band, and all the magic happened."

Bliley is in her fifth year at Central Washington University (CWU) in Ellensburg, and she wants to re-create her incredible public school music experience for other students. "I truly believe that music is essential for a well-rounded education.

It's magical, and I think every student should have the opportunity to try it." She is a recipient of a Shannon Kelly Kane scholarship, is the Washington State Collegiate President for the Washington Music Educators Association (WMEA), and is an advocate for music education on the local and national levels. She won a Professional Achievement Award, and CWU won a NafME Collegiate Chapter of Excellence Award for Recruitment. She notes



VANESSA BLILEY
Music Education Major,
Central Washington
University, Ellensburg,
Washington

"The lessons I have learned through music can be applied to all other areas in my life."

that there are more than 150 NAFME members in her CWU chapter, out of about 400 music members in the school.

One effort she cites as having led to CWU winning the Chapter of Excellence award was their beginning-of-the-year social event. After marching band rehearsal, the officers set up a rotunda with laptops, handed out informational brochures, and provided free pizza. Students could join or renew their membership and ask questions about the organization.

Bliley notes that one event that led to her Professional Achievement Award was a Hill Day project in January 2017. Bliley

assembled 23 music students from five Washington state universities to advocate for music education. They met with 33 Washington state representatives, and each Collegiate participant explained how music changed their lives

and why they chose to go into music education. NafME holds a yearly Hill Day in Washington, D.C., where they advocate for music at the national level; Collegiate members have been invited to participate since 2014. After attend-

ing the 2016 Collegiate Advocacy Summit, Bliley wanted to do this at the state level. She took what she learned from the D.C. Collegiate Advocacy Summit and created the first annual WMEA State Hill Day. "I would like to see more involvement across the state and have it grow bigger every year."

She gives a giant shoutout to Mark Lane, music education professor at CWU, and looks forward to student teaching in the Seattle area in 2018 with music educator Mariko Lane. "She just exudes happiness, love, and what music is really all about. She is everything I want to be as a music teacher and I have never been more excited for anything in my life," notes Bliley.

"The lessons I have learned through music can be applied to all other areas in my life. It has taught me the importance of work ethic, communication skills, leadership, and overall how to be happy. It's pretty powerful."



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Drums of Thunder at a Penn vs. Villanova basketball game at the Palestra in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Drums of Thunder!

An elementary school percussion ensemble in New Jersey plays high-profile performances in the community, on television, and more.

THE TODAY SHOW, Madison Square Garden, Giants Stadium: These are the sorts of venues where you would expect to find rock stars performing. Drums of Thunder has played all three and many more, yet the group is comprised of musicians who are all third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders.

Louis D'Amico, a longtime music educator at Hillside Elementary School in Montclair, New Jersey, formed Drums of Thunder 35 years ago. When he began teaching, his school was arts-based, and the principal requested a parade of all of the school's different disciplines. Naturally, the percussion section from D'Amico's band class played a leading role. "I wrote a little drum cadence to keep things moving along; my drummers loved playing it, and so I ended up developing a whole

percussion class around it."

That class grew into Drums of Thunder, which today boasts more than 30 members. It's a wildly popular offering—and highly competitive. Usually, over 100 students audition for it. "Some families have actually moved to the town of Montclair because they want their kids to have the chance to be part of Drums of Thunder," D'Amico says.

The group makes the most of basic band percussion instruments: five bass drums, 12 snare drums, five sets of tenor drums (low, middle, and high tom-toms), and crash cymbals. Owing to physical limitations, the kids play in a stationary arrangement. D'Amico explains, "The students are too small to carry the instruments, and we also do two kids per drum."

D'Amico has all of the students begin by learning the

rudiments from George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control*, and it can take third-graders more than a year of daily practice to achieve the control required of a Drums of Thunder performance. With this level of technique under their belts, the members learn a repertoire that totals about 40 minutes. "The music gets very involved," D'Amico says. "A lot of it is polyrhythmic, and the kids learn to play not just loud and with excitement, but quietly as well."

Drums of Thunder tends to do high-profile gigs—it's even played with the classic R&B group Earth, Wind & Fire—and, unlike many student ensembles, it is compensated accordingly. A performance at the U.S. Open, for instance, netted the group \$6,000, and the money went straight to Hillside's overall music program, as all proceeds do. This has its obvious advantages. "If a kid comes in to the school and wants to learn trumpet, no problem. We have the funds to buy it," D'Amico says. Another big advantage of these gigs is the fortitude that they build in Drums of Thunder's members, both in terms of their musical and personal development. D'Amico says, "They really learn to trust one another and do things together, and most important"—particularly when playing before upwards of 70,000 people—"it instills incredible confidence in them." ■

“They really learn to trust one another and do things together.”

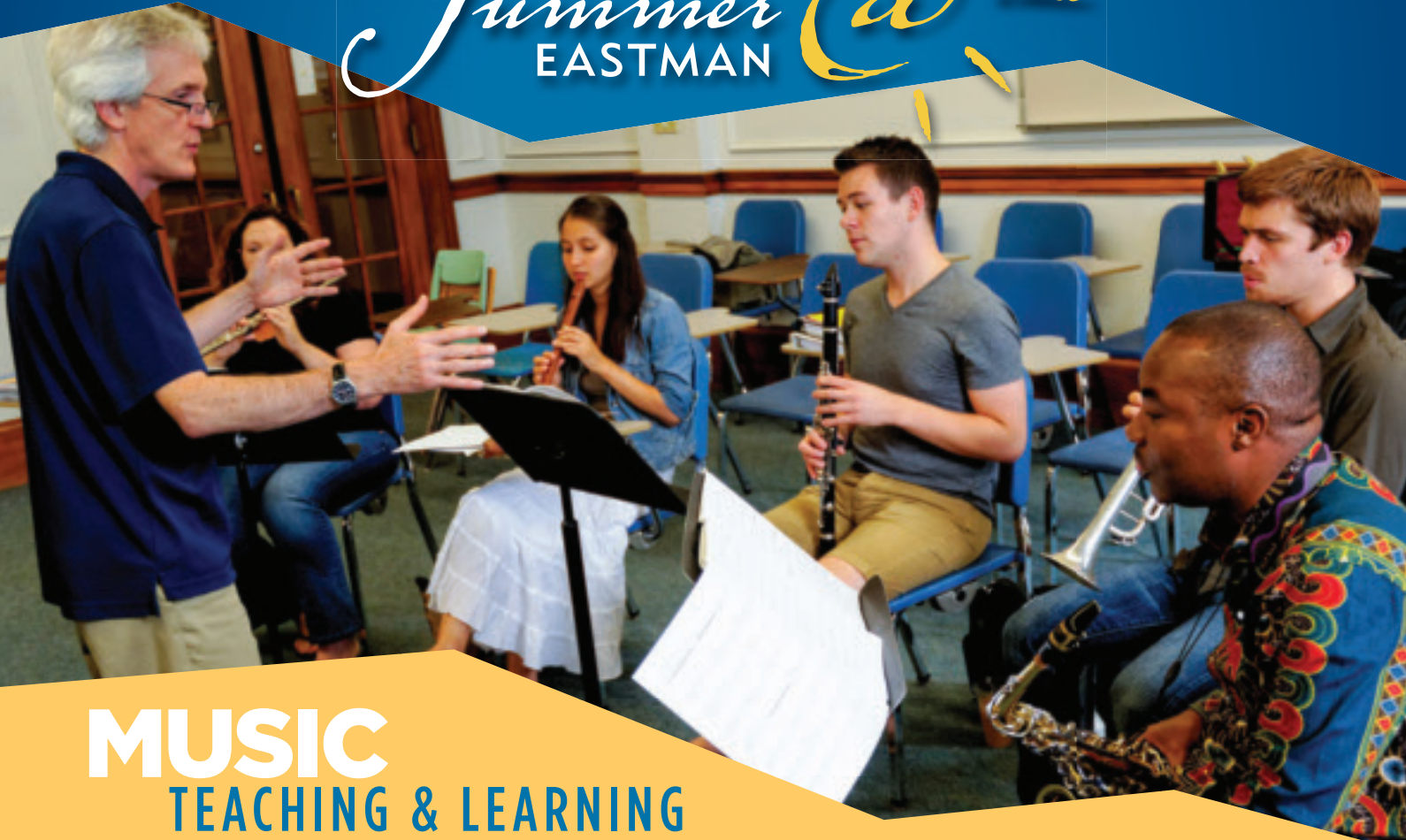


MOVEMENT IN ELEMENTARY PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES

Choreography and percussion go hand in hand, as anyone who's ever attended a drum corps performance can attest. Although Drums of Thunder plays on stationary instruments, Louis D'Amico still choreographs movement for the group's performances. "Whether it's something as simple as swaying in time with the music, it does add excitement," he says.

For the band's signature number, D'Amico developed a more elaborate routine in which the performers twirl red sparkle dance sticks—an effect made more exciting through the use of LED lighting. He carefully coordinated the movements to the rhythmic activity of the piece. "It works really well with one of the phrases I wrote. It's almost like a merengue," he says. "Plus, it's very entertaining, and it definitely always gets us attention."

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Nicole Worzel is a powerful advocate for music education in her state.

One Person Can Make a Big Difference

Nicole Worzel successfully advocated for a state law mandating music performance programs in public secondary schools.

WHEN NICOLE WORZEL—who is director of bands at Woonsocket Middle Schools and Advocacy Chair with the Rhode Island Music Educators Association (RIMEA)—was growing up on Long Island, New York, she developed traits that would help her in her future career. “My father taught me what I know,” she says, crediting him with the determination that led to her success in getting a music education bill through the Rhode Island state legislature.

Ten years ago, Worzel’s inner-city middle school had a robust music program with 650 students enrolled. Shortly thereafter, state-level cuts to education funding resulted in a reduction in the music faculty from 11 to three, and only 30 students in what became a

before-school music program. Worzel recalls thinking, “This is unacceptable.” Following a student letter campaign, she met with State Senator Roger Picard who advised that a law mandating middle school music programs was unlikely to pass. She replied, “That’s the point. We need to wake people up!”

Worzel spoke with teachers, lawmakers, policy analysts, professional musicians, and community members. During her quest to reverse these cuts to music education, she became Advocacy Chair of RIMEA. She formed an advocacy team that assembled and distributed folders with materials to help Rhode Island music teachers advocate for change. At times it was lonely work, but on reflection, Worzel imagines that many of her colleagues

throughout the state called their representatives.

In 2014, Worzel testified for her bill at the Rhode Island State House. It didn’t pass, but her public efforts led to an influx of people rallying to the cause. A policy analyst who lived in her district helped her rewrite the bill. A stronger delegation from RIMEA joined Worzel at the State House in 2015 and, with its revised wording, the bill passed.

Worzel’s efforts at the Rhode Island State Legislature underscore why music teachers do what they do. The ensemble is a place where students can go to feel that they are part of a team, and to see the tangible results of hard work. “Programs that made them feel accepted were being cut,” she says. “I saw so many students cry.” In a poignant moment, her students staged a mock funeral for the music department at her school. The cuts were having observable effects on the kids in her district; this was the impetus for her fight.

To fellow music educators who want to help bring about change in their district, county, or state, Worzel says to remember that it’s about the children. Keep the fight about them, about giving them the best education possible, which is what they deserve. Plus, a little fierce determination doesn’t hurt: “When somebody says, ‘You can’t do that,’ look at them and say, ‘Watch me,’ and then walk away.” ■

“When somebody says, ‘You can’t do that,’ look at them and say, ‘Watch me,’ and then walk away.”



TIPS FOR WORKING WITH LEGISLATORS

“Really listen to them,” says Worzel of legislators. “I learned a lot from them; I learned patience from them. I just couldn’t understand ‘Why is this not happening?’” Just as in music, listening is a key skill when advocating for a cause. If you fail to listen, “you’re going to miss the big picture,” she says. So, be aware of what’s going on in the room. Pay attention to who says what, and their body language. This will help you craft careful responses.

When it’s your turn to speak, “Have a clear picture of what you’re looking for,” advises Worzel. Knowing what you’re asking for down to the last detail will be helpful when it’s time to negotiate—and, by the way, “Be willing to negotiate,” says Worzel.

In more general advice, Worzel also suggests going through the representatives for the district where you teach, not where you live, and to “make friends with policy analysts.” Lastly, be ready to take on a lot of work by yourself. “You have to be the one who does it,” she cautions. “No one hands you anything.”

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“We believe the best investments in music education are done with intention.”



Charles Kelley (of Lady Antebellum) with Ron Samuels and Sarah Trahern on the stage at the grant presentation for the research

The State of Music Education

A research study has been undertaken to create a profile of music education in the U.S.

WHAT IS THE STATE of music education in this country? To answer this question, Give a Note Foundation, supported by NAFME, recently conducted demographic research. “This study is a nationwide survey of music teachers. We wanted to create a focused profile of music education in the nation by asking music teachers about the work that they do and the context in which they do it,” says Kenneth Elpus, associate professor of music education at the University of Maryland School of Music in College Park, and one of the researchers on the project. “We complement the survey results with onsite visits to 16 school districts from across the nation.” He further notes that the survey was not limited to only NAFME members.

The study was undertaken by Give a Note Foundation

thanks to a grant from the Country Music Association (CMA) Foundation. “Give a Note’s mission is deeply rooted in expanding and increasing music education opportunities for all children (especially those in low-wealth and underserved areas of America), and we need a deep understanding of the status of those opportunities if we are to make progress,” says Beth Slusher, Give a Note Foundation President and Board Chair. “The research has shed significant light on both the extent and the makeup of our nation’s music programs (what type of instruction is occurring and for whom). It has also helped us better understand what professional development and other resources are needed by music teachers to make an even bigger impact on our

schools and our students. This in turn will help Give A Note (and potentially other foundations) make more intentional, effective grants to schools and will help our partners at NAFME develop more effective programs to help teachers help kids.”

“We believe the best investments in music education are done with intention,” remarks Tiffany Kerns, director of community outreach, for the CMA. “We know this research will support the financial decisions we make throughout the country, based on understanding the needs, gaps, inequities, etc. Without the evidence to support why we do this work, it can be a challenge to show our artist community, who participate annually at CMA Fest for free, the importance of continuing to support the CMA Foundation’s mission. This research confirms what we know to be true: Children deserve the opportunity to participate in music, but there is still a great deal of work to be done to achieve that.”

Elpus notes that the results can also benefit music educators themselves. “Some of the results regarding teacher professional development can help music teacher educators and state music educators’ associations plan better and more worthwhile professional development opportunities for music teachers. The music education research community, too, always benefits from descriptive ‘status studies.’” ■

A SNAPSHOT OF THE RESULTS

Most music educators work within subfield specialty areas. In particular, middle and high school music educators were likely to be specialists, whereas those in elementary school programs taught across a variety of areas.

Traditional, ensemble-based music education is by far the most common form of music education in America. This applies across elementary, middle, and high schools, albeit the non-ensemble, general music class is the most common offering in elementary schools.

The 2014 Music Standards have begun to influence music teaching and learning. The 2014 Standards are currently being referenced more often than those from 1994.

Fundraising is an important part of being a music educator, especially in urban districts and in secondary schools. In urban settings, it is generally seen as necessary for a quality music program.

Professional development for music teachers varies considerably. Elementary music educators were more likely to attend professional development within their districts, while secondary school educators were more likely to do so beyond their districts. Additionally, music educators had fewer professional development opportunities within their districts than their non-music colleagues.

Music teachers want to invest in musical instruments. In the event that music educators were provided with additional funds to improve their programs, 79% responded that they would spend the money on instruments for their students.

Local leadership is key. Music education offerings were often determined locally. For instance, a principal’s desire to support—or not support—a music program can make a difference between an excellent music program and one that is less-so, or nonexistent.



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Love at First Sight-Read

Here's a rundown of some of the latest and best apps and more to improve your students' sight-reading and sight-singing skills.

HELPING STUDENTS to become proficient in complex skills such as sight-reading and sight-singing can be challenging for both the student and the teacher. Yet today we have myriad options available to us for teaching, practicing, and assessing these essential musical skills through apps and more that can track student progress and adapt to their ability levels. To discover what's out there and how to use it, we spoke with Joseph Brennan, orchestra director at Haverford Middle School and Haverford High School in Havertown, Pennsylvania, and Joseph M. Pisano, associate chair of music and director of bands at Grove City College in Grove City, Pennsylvania.

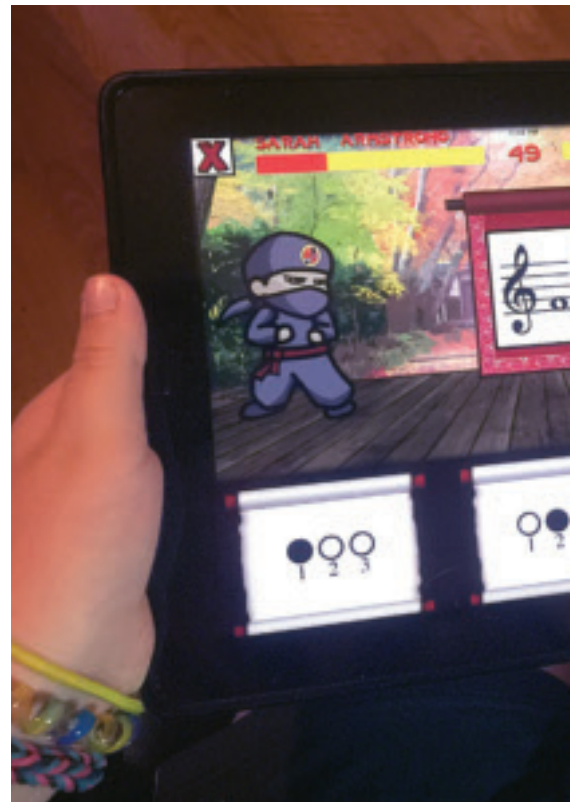
"Today's music students have a serious advantage over the students of even five or 10 years ago," says Pisano. "Today there are many substantive music programs to help them become better vocalists. These apps take much of the guess work out of self-assessment and provide a fun and interactive way for students to build upon their practice." Pisano recommends options such as *sightreadingfactory.com*, Auralia, and Voice Lessons by Erol Singer's Studio in his clinics and classes. For advanced students looking for work beyond sight-singing, Auralia can provide a very challenging experience in multiple ear training areas.

On the orchestral side of things,

Brennan has some very specific criteria in mind when integrating sight-reading or sight-singing apps into his curriculum. His contact with his students is limited to mostly large ensemble settings. Because of this, his selection of apps centers around three main criteria. "First, the apps need to be able to be used effectively in a rehearsal with everyone playing. Second, I need to be able to use them in multiple ways to develop ensemble skills. Finally, the programs need to be able to quickly and readily bring up new examples for the group. If the program isn't easy to use and fast in that way, then the downtime can result in classroom management issues. A fourth criteria would probably be cost, but that goes without saying."

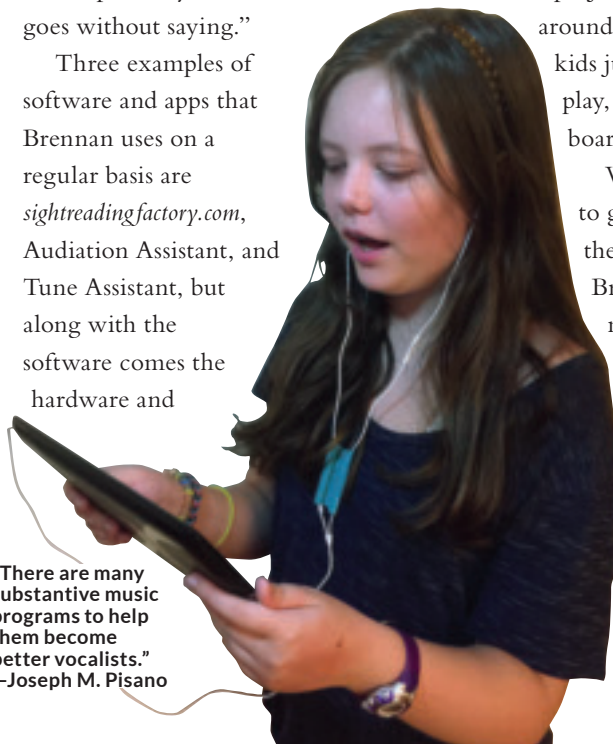
Three examples of software and apps that Brennan uses on a regular basis are *sightreadingfactory.com*, Audiation Assistant, and Tune Assistant, but along with the software comes the hardware and

**"There are many substantive music programs to help them become better vocalists."
—Joseph M. Pisano**



pedagogical techniques needed to make good use of it. While using an image projected on his whiteboard in the classroom, Brennan says that he will "often add bowings, counting, fingerings, and any manner of notations. I will often have a metronome going aloud, but I also like using the iPad apps SpeakBeat Metronome or MetroTimer. I also use a laser pointer to draw the students' eyes to the projection and allow me to walk around the room. It's so easy for kids just to watch their peers play, and not be looking at the board."

When he is actively trying to get the kids to sight-read the music on the screen, Brennan tries to keep things moving along quickly to prevent any classroom management problems. "I like to give the kids a chance to practice the sight-reading for a few seconds. While that is going on, I put my LCD projector on freeze to



Photos by Chad Criswell.



NinGenius

hold the frame, and then I'll go to my computer or iPad to bring up the next example," he notes. "When ready for the next example, I put the projector back on the computer source. The document camera can also be very helpful for just projecting a quickly written sight-reading pattern, something in the music, or even the score. I will often ask other sections to try to play the notes, or at the very least the rhythm of other parts by reading from the projected score. This broadens the ensemble's awareness of the other parts, and I truly feel that it builds a sense of respect, understanding, and camaraderie within the ensemble."

Technical Considerations for Success

To get the most out of whatever app you are using requires a modest investment in the hardware and time to get things set up in an optimal manner. Says Pisano, "One of the best things you can do when using vocal assessment software is to have high-quality headphones and use them

These apps take much of the guess work out of self-assessment and provide a fun and interactive way for students to build upon their practice. —JOSEPH M. PISANO

A SELECTION OF SIGHT-READING AND SIGHT-SINGING APPS, SOFTWARE, AND BROWSER-BASED OPTIONS

■ **AUDIATION ASSISTANT 2.0**
BY GIA PUBLICATIONS, INC.
(Mac and Windows, \$35) giamusic.com

Audiation Assistant is drill and practice software with which students can practice music theory, tonal patterns, and rhythmic patterns at various skill levels.

■ **AURALIA BY RISING SOFTWARE**
(browser-based, \$99–\$149)
risingsoftware.com

This full-featured sight-reading and sight-singing/aural training option provides drill and practice on pitches, intervals, chords, scales, and much more. It is also available as part of the MusicFirst suite.

■ **EROL SINGER'S STUDIO—VOICE LESSONS BY EROL STUDIOS INC.**
(iOS, \$44.99) erolstudios.com

This iOS app helps students sing with instant visual feedback on pitch problems. Provides 73 unique voice lessons and 60 ear-training exercises. The app focuses on breathing, tone, range, and vocal flexibility.

■ **NINGENIUS GAMES 4 KIDS, STUDIO GAMES, AND CLASS GAMES** by NinGenius Music (iOS, \$2.99–\$15.99) ningenius.net

For basic, single-note sight-reading practice and assessment, NinGenius is a fun, competitive app that helps students to memorize notes and fingerings on a wide variety of instruments. Student scores are recorded on a leaderboard and the results can be exported from the app for assessment purposes. All common woodwind, brass, strings, and keyboard instrument fingerings are included, or a student can simply practice note-naming with letters.

■ **NOTEWORKS BY AZATI CORPORATION** (iOS and Android, \$4.99) doremiworld.com

Focusing mainly on note identification as well as piano and guitar fingering skills,

NoteWorks allows students to practice sight-reading notes without rhythms and provides entertaining feedback. Also available is a free, "Lite" version with limited features.

■ **SIGHTREADINGMASTERY**
(browser-based, \$19–\$79 per month) sightreadingmastery.com

This option provides professionally-composed sight-reading passages (not randomly generated) that have been created specifically for each instrument. It currently has libraries available for piano, voice, guitar, flute, trumpet, clarinet, violin, and cello with other instruments coming soon. Students can practice online and take live, personal sight-reading lessons from a private lesson teacher via video conference. Subscriptions range depending on content use and the number of private lessons desired. The app also offers a time-limited free trial.

■ **SIGHT READING FACTORY BY GRACENOTES, LLC** (iOS or browser-based, price varies) sightreadingfactory.com

Available as a stand-alone subscription or as part of the MusicFirst suite, Sight Reading Factory is flexible enough to use in ensemble and/or solo practice settings. Users can select from a large variety of instruments, and set note ranges, rhythmic complexity, the use of rests, size of interval jumps, dynamics, articulations, key signature, and time signature, and then have the system generate a page of music notation made to those specifications. The music can also be printed as needed for use in live assessment sessions.

■ **TUNE ASSISTANT BY GIA PUBLICATIONS, INC.** (Mac and Windows, \$35) giamusic.com

This Mac and Windows software app focuses on building and developing audiation skills. It is promoted as a comprehensive resource for playing, notating, and managing music for use in the classroom.

with the software. Not using headphones will result in the microphone picking up both the voice and any tone or pitch being assessed, resulting in a skewed assessment. While the built-in microphones of smartphones and computers tend to work adequately for

recording purposes, an external microphone of a decent quality will usually yield more accurate results. Also, the background noise(s) or room ambiance levels will also affect the software's ability to analyze properly what is being heard." ■



Stop the Pops: The Secrets of Saxophone Articulation

Here are some pointers for avoiding the pitfalls of popping sounds as your students learn to play the sax.



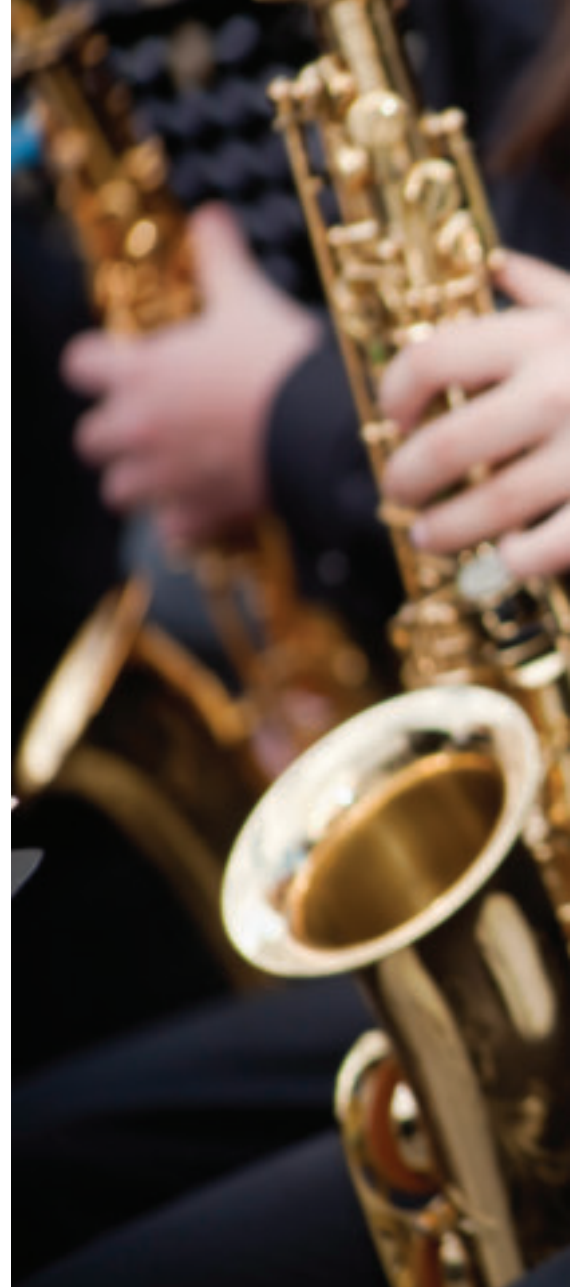
ANDREW J. ALLEN is a saxophonist and assistant professor of music at *Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas.* He can be contacted at andrew.allen@mwsu.edu.

ONE OF THE MOST common questions that I encounter when teaching young saxophonists centers on articulation. Even when a great sound and technique are present, many students exhibit faulty articulation. A “pop,” “thud,” or “slap” is a very common sound in band rooms throughout United States, and very likely elsewhere as well. What is the cause of this phenomenon, and what can be done to prevent it?

In short, the problem arises from the misconception that all instruments

articulate in the same manner. Brass players, especially, are fond of the “ta” articulation. This works well for most instruments. However, in the case of the saxophone (and, likewise, the clarinet), “ta” can cause other problems here.

The “ta” articulation is designed for those instruments on which articulation is achieved by the tongue coming into contact with a part of the mouth to interrupt the airstream. When playing single-reed instruments, the player will notice that a large part of the tongue comes into contact with a large part of the reed. In addition, it usually results in a sloppy articulation to begin with. This contributes to a slow, “thuddy,” or “poppy” start. “Ta” is ineffective as an articulation syllable for the single reeds.



I prefer a “teh” or a “ti” articulation syllable for clarinet and saxophone. The result is much more consistent and effective. In addition, the resulting tongue position yields an even more characteristic sound for both instruments.

While the introduction of this new syllable will prove to be the most important factor for the elimination of poor articulation, other factors may also be at play. If a poor articulation results at the beginning of a phrase while internal tonguing is fine, the student may not be preparing his or her airstream in advance of the articulation. Students should understand that their air should be pressurized behind their



Andrew Allen with a student

Top photo by percds/Stockphoto.com. Headshot and photo left courtesy of Andrew J. Allen.



tongue so that the reed can begin to vibrate freely and a full sound can be achieved from the first moment the individual begins to play.

Another common problem for young saxophonists is that of incorrect neck-strap height and position. Any potential problem in this area can alter the airstream or relationship of the tongue to the reed. The neck strap should be adjusted so that the mouth-piece will directly enter the student's embouchure while he or she is sitting or standing with a natural posture and head position with no "holding" or "lifting" by the hands. A student's hands should bear no weight whatsoever from the instrument.

Even when a great sound and technique are present, many students exhibit faulty articulation.

In terms of instrument carriage, the common practice of holding the saxophone away from the body should be avoided. While this is necessary in marching bands, it should be made clear that it is detrimental in all other situations. While standing, alto, tenor, and baritone saxophones should come into contact with the student's hip. For the larger instrument and for smaller students, it should make contact on the side of the hip. For smaller instruments and larger students, the front of the hip will be most effective. While sitting,

the same rules apply: For tenors and baritones (and altos for smaller students), the instrument makes contact with the right hip. For taller students, the E-flat key guard will make contact with the inside of the right thigh.

If you and your students can follow these few words of advice, many common articulation problems with saxophones and clarinets can largely be avoided. Instead of "pops" and "thuds," players will be able to create beautiful, noise-free articulations. It will be one more step to excellence. ■



Fixing Fussy Flute Faux Pas

Are your flutists giving you fits? Here are **10 tips** to make life easier for everyone!



LA-TIKA S. DOUTHIT, *NAfME* member, is adjunct professor of music and assistant director of bands at Winston-Salem State University, adjunct professor of music at Forsyth Technical Community College, and flute instructor at Catawba College, all in North Carolina. She can be reached at tikadouthit@gmail.com.

AFTER 19 YEARS in music education, I've observed that even though students come from a variety of musical backgrounds, many have similar issues. I recently compiled a list of the most common problems I've encountered in intermediate and advanced level flute players. While this certainly isn't a definitive list of challenges that students face while playing the flute, I have captured those that are often the most prominent that are most likely to get in the way of successful performances. This check list is designed to assist band and orchestra directors and anyone else who is working with young flute players, who are not flutists themselves, to quickly identify some of the common problems of student players not producing a characteristic clear and beautiful tone.

1. INSTRUMENT ASSEMBLY: With young flute players, poor alignment is often the source of problem. Many students either disregard the proper alignment or never learned it. Make sure that it resembles the picture provided in the band method, which means aligning the tone hole with the first key of the middle joint, and aligning the post of the foot joint rod with the middle of the last key of the middle joint.

2. INCORRECT HAND POSITION: This usually creates problems with balance, affects the clarity of the tone produced, and hinders the facility that usually reveals itself when a student is trying to play technical passages—or even the simple changing of C to D on the staff. The flute should rest at the base of the left index finger, allowing the fingers to naturally land on the centers of the keys. The thumb should be comfortable resting on the B-flat key and the B-natural key. The right-hand fingers should rest naturally in the center of the keys, and the thumb should be positioned beneath the index and middle fingers of the right hand underneath the



"Even though students come from a variety of musical backgrounds, many have similar issues."

body of the instrument. Young students often allow the fingers to hang way over the keys and place the right thumb in an unnatural position. Also, the flute can be slightly less than parallel with the floor. Because of the unique posture required for flute players, it is a good idea to assign only one flute player per music stand.

3. PLACEMENT OF THE LIP ON THE LIP PLATE: The roll-down method is an age-old technique, but it not foolproof. Sometimes this causes the placement of the lip plate to be too high or too low. Students should place the edge of the lip where the skin changes to the edge of the tone hole on the lip plate. I call this "edge-to-edge," and it works very well. Students often produce a clear tone right away.

4. "SMILEY-FACE" EMOUCHURE: This results in an okay sound, but focus is

Photos courtesy of La-Tika S. Douthit. Headshot by Jonathan Collin Greene.



When the equipment is iffy, you will never be able to truly assess the student's talent.

thumb B-flat allows students to avoid contrary motion and provides better facility when playing flat scales and requires only one finger when changing from B-flat to C. The B-natural left-thumb resting position on the flute is best used when playing the chromatic scale or in sharp keys where B-natural is most often used. Advanced students may also begin experimenting with the lever B-flat as well. This is, again, a better option than the one-and-one B-flat.

8. INCORRECT TRILL FINGERINGS: This is an issue that many woodwind instrumentalists encounter. When nothing is indicated, assume that the trill is to be executed from the main note up one diatonic step. Newer music often will indicate whether another note is to be trilled—for instance the half-step—or if the trill should be downward. Most trills are simple, but some can be a little bit tricky, particularly in the third register. A trill chart can be found online for very tricky or awkward trills. Either refer the student to a fingering chart or to a reliable trill chart. (*wfg.woodwind.org/flute/fl_tr2_1.html*)

9. GENERAL EQUIPMENT PROBLEMS: When the flute is not producing any sound or is emitting a really strange noise, there is probably something wrong. So often with a young player, it is easy to blame the student. Flutes have so many keys and rods that it is easy for a screw to come out or for a key to go

lost in the middle and low register, and tends to produce a pinched sound in the upper register. There may also be a complete loss of tone production altogether in the lower register. The best embouchure is produced by relaxing the corners of the embouchure downward, keeping the lower lip tissue relaxed, and tightening only in the center. The tightening is controlled by the upper lip.

5. PLAYING SHARP ALL THE TIME: First, make sure that no pads are compromised: If they're all intact, the head joint could be pushed too far into the middle joint (beginners are notorious for pushing it all the way in) or the head joint itself can be rolled too far out, preventing the airstream from going into the tone hole. Also, overblowing can cause sharpness, coupled with clenched teeth.

6. PLAYING FLAT ALL THE TIME: Again, if there are no instrument issues, the head joint is pulled out too far or is too far rolled in—in which case, the lip is covering the tone hole, preventing proper airflow.

7. INCORRECT FINGERINGS: So many students do not vent the left-hand index finger on D and E-flat in the staff, and many students begin using some alternate fingerings rather than the primary. For instance, for F-sharp in the staff, many students use the middle finger of the right hand instead of the ring finger. If the third-register F-sharp is prone to crack, then using the middle finger is acceptable. An alternate fingering that is encouraged but is often overlooked is the thumb B-flat. It is recommended that students use the thumb B-flat rather than the one-and-one B-flat that is normally taught. The



out of adjustment. Some of these are easy fixes but others are more complicated. If you do not have a lot of repair experience, do not guess or assume. Take it to the shop, and let a professional diagnose the problem. Even when it is a young player, try to provide the best possible instrument available. Investing in good equipment will assist in providing a good beginning experience. When the equipment is iffy, you will never be able to truly assess the student's talent.

10. TRANSITIONING TO OPEN-HOLED FLUTES: There comes a point in most flute players' journeys when they outgrow the closed-hole model. The closed-hole model limits the ability of mature students to be competitive when intermediate and advanced players are still playing on beginner-model instruments. If students have committed to playing the instrument in high school and are competing in All-County, -District, or -State settings, it is safe to assume that the student is ready for an open-hole model. To reinforce proper hand position, all plastic plugs should be

discarded when the flute is purchased. When students acquire an open-hole flute and still use the plugs to compensate for tone hole coverage, chances are that the hand position needs adjustment, or the flute itself is not a good fit for the student. There are many models of open-hole flutes with several different specifications. Consult a flute professional to assist in

finding the best instrument for the student. Remind parents that students who play well can get scholarship assistance for college for participating in band and majoring or minoring in music. This is an investment with a probable return if the student is serious about practicing. It can offer a distinct advantage to the young musician. ■



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DR. JACQUELINE KELLY-MCHALE / Director of Music Education





HATS OFF TO THE 2017 NAFME IN-SERVICE CONFERENCE!

By Cathy
Applefeld
Olson

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERFORMANCE, NETWORKING, AND MORE AROUND AT THIS YEAR'S EVENT IN **DALLAS**.

HATS OFF TO THE FIFTH ANNUAL

National In-Service Conference—November 12–15 in Dallas, Texas—which includes Directors' Ensembles and more opportunities for intra-NAfME networking, among other new additions.

THE MORE THE MERRIER!

Aside from its must-attend tracks, the conference for the past several years has featured a popular Band Directors' Academy led by conductor Peter Boonshaft. This year, the experience will be offered in

triplicate as the Directors' Ensembles, which are open for orchestral and choral directors. Boonshaft will direct the band, Christopher Selby will lead the orchestral ensemble, and Jo-Michael Scheibe will helm the choral counterpart. Interested parties can register for the ensembles at no additional fee when they register for the conference.

"The Band Directors' Ensemble has had overwhelming success, so we've opened it to have more Directors' Ensembles so that other directors can



participate," says Kristen Rencher, NAFME Director of Member and Student Programs.

The ensembles place the baton in the other hand, so to speak, Rencher notes. "Instead of just watching students perform, they get to be the performers themselves. They really enjoy the community and get to switch positions." The experience will also arm teacher participants with practices they

Illustration by Big.Ryan/istockphotos.com. Photos by Victoria Chamberlin, victoriachamberlin.com.



Scenes from the 2016 In-Service Conference



can implement in their own classrooms when they return. “The idea is these educators can walk away with new teaching [methods]—that there are practical implications for their own classrooms,” she says.

Not to be overshadowed, student performing groups will have a greater presence than ever this year. A total of 10 performing groups will entertain and inspire conference-goers on a pop-up stage between sessions. Rencher notes that attendees can expect a vibrant mix culled from entrants. “The council went through the selection process and found some really different ensembles, so it’s not just the traditional sounds.”

SO HAPPY TOGETHER

Setting the tone for the entire conference is the uber-networking opportunity: Jam Session Happy Hour at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday. This event for the first time ever brings together all conference

delegates, no matter which conference track they’ll be attending.

“We’ll have educators there, collegiate attendees—all active members and staff in one area together,” Rencher says. “We haven’t had that opportunity previously. It’s been go-go-go with so many sessions, so this is a way of taking time so they can all come together as NAFME members from across the country in an organic space and create this kind of community feel instead of segmenting everything into tracks.”

The happy hour will lead into the opening night performance, which this year features Presidio Brass. “We were looking for something very high-energy and exciting,” Rencher says. “They are loud and engaging, young and fresh—just great entertainers.”

Sponsored by Jupiter/XO Brass, the Presidio Brass performance kicks the conference into high gear. “We’re trying to do a mix every year,” she says. “Some years it’s more choral groups and

strings. This year, it's more of a brass band that will continue the high energy of the networking event and carry into the conference."

In another new element, NAFME is offering attendees the chance to get a "micro-credential" in a specific area of music education. The credentialing results from attending specific sessions,

some with required three-hour workshops, plus supplementary reading material and/or webinars. Areas of concentration include Advocacy, Standards and Assessment, Teacher Evaluation, and Composition—with more to come, according to Lynn Tuttle, NAFME Director of Public Policy and Professional Development.

If an attendee has completed all of the requirements, "we're offering the opportunity to take a brief assessment on site, and then we'll grade it and provide a credential," says Tuttle, who notes that NAFME has launched a new online community platform so that educators can receive their credential in digital form. ■

PRESIDIO BRASS

THE HIGH-SPIRITED ENSEMBLE LOOKS FORWARD TO PERFORMING FOR NAFME.

WHEN ATTENDEES EMERGE from the In-Service happy hour on November 12, they're in for a real audio treat: The opening night of this year's event concludes with a performance by Presidio Brass, presented by KHS America.

The performance will feature "our very own fresh arrangements of classic movie scores presented in a fun and high spirited way," says Steve O'Connor, a trumpet player with the genre-bending brass quintet. "This is not your traditional brass quintet. Your audience will

leave inspired and smiling."

The group's genesis dates back to 2006, when members converged to provide an antidote to the silencing effect of budget cuts on school music programs. "California state budget cuts decimated middle and elementary school band programs throughout Southern California. Several younger band programs simply closed their doors," says O'Connor. "As many kids were left with no outlet for music education, Presidio Brass was formed alongside our non-profit, Musicate the Mind, in an effort

to provide a musical experience to inspire these young children."

A member of the KHS America Academic Alliance performing exclusively on XO Professional Brass Instruments, Presidio Brass combines brass quintet with piano and percussion instruments and employs fresh arrangements. The five-member ensemble hails from San Diego and features trumpeters O'Connor and Miles McAllister,

"This is not your traditional brass quintet. Your audience will leave inspired and smiling."

Josh Bledsoe and Geoff Durbin on trombone, and tuba player Mike Frazier.

Perhaps not surprisingly, each band member began his music career in school band. The inspiration provided by the dedicated school music educators they encountered joined them in the primary mission to promote music education and appreciation. As such, Presidio Brass couples master classes and other school programs with their performances at every opportunity.

"We are really excited to work with an ensemble that brings youthful excitement and a high level of passion to their performances and educational outreach," says Rick DeJonge, KHS America artist and educator relations manager. "The group sounds fantastic on their XO horns and will be a natural draw for the next generation of student musicians."

So, what are the Presidio Brass members most looking forward to about performing at the In-Service this fall? "We're looking forward to working with KHS America and connecting with people that are as passionate about music education as ourselves," says O'Connor. "We're also looking forward to surveying the current landscape of music education from band directors' perspectives to help us more effectively inspire and shape kids' love of music."



Photo courtesy of Jupiter/XO Brass.

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IT'S SHOWTIME



Students from the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts in Seussical

BY ANDREW S. BERMAN

TIME!

From start to finish, here are some great ideas, both new and old, for selecting the show, recruiting students to participate, working with parents and faculty, and so much more.



Littleton High School's 2017 production of *Bye Bye Birdie*



Left photo by Kelly Johnson. Top photo by Brian O'Neill.

If you were involved in a school musical theater production growing up, it was probably a formative experience for you, and perhaps you reflect on it fondly. That is the case for the writer of this article, and it is also the case for Laura Muller, instrumental music director at Union High School in Union, New Jersey, where she was once a student herself. Muller's participation in her school musical had a hand in her choice to become a music teacher, although she says it "prepares students for any job," as students learn discipline, time management, and how to break a daunting undertaking into smaller, achievable tasks. Steven Bergman, NAFME member and music and drama teacher at Littleton Public Schools in Massachusetts, concurs. He became involved with Littleton's musical theater department 12 years ago, and it has grown to include multiple



SOME OF THE BEST SCHOOL MUSICALS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

Muller is a big fan of revues for school musicals: They're malleable, and they tend to have small casts and instrumentation, which you can augment as your school's talent base allows. She recommends:

- *And the World Goes Round*
A revue of songs by John Kander and Fred Ebb
- *A Grand Night for Singing*
A Rodgers & Hammerstein revue
- *Sophisticated Ladies*
A revue based on the music of Duke Ellington

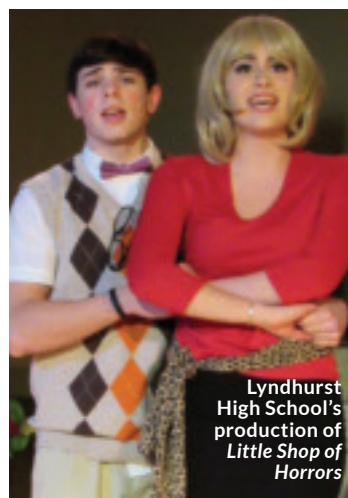
Chwalyk warns that "by choosing an obscure title you're making more work for yourself in terms of marketing." If you want to try something different but still take advantage of name recognition, then it might be a good idea to try a new show. Van Wyk says that Rahway High School was one of the first in the area to put on *Big Fish* earlier this year. Ruiz says that *The Wedding Singer* wasn't yet well known in their community when Lyndhurst High School did it in 2013.

Bergman is a playwright and a composer, so his schools in Littleton have performed some of his original works, including a middle school musical called *Reigning Cats & Dogs*, (winner of the 2015 Jackie White National Children's Musical Theatre Award), along with adaptations he's created.

shows a year. He says that the school musical provides a supervised environment in which to develop organizational and mechanical skills and positive relationships. "Oh yeah, and they get to sing, dance, act, and have fun!"

A Place for Everyone

The musical theater program extends the bubble of acceptance and affirmation that exists around most music programs. "It gives every kid a role to play, even if not in the cast," says NAFME member James Chwalyk, Jr., middle school band director and assistant high school band director at Lyndhurst Public Schools in New



Lyndhurst High School's production of *Little Shop of Horrors*

Jersey. Students can also play in the pit, build sets, work on the stage crew, run

sound or lights, stage-manage, and even try their hand at directing. Chwalyk's colleague at Lyndhurst, English teacher Cheryl Ruiz, who directs and choreographs their shows, says they try to "make everyone feel as important as the lead of the show." Chwalyk has seen crossovers such as cast members who are inspired to switch to pit orchestra because of how

great the music sounds. NAFME member Robert Van Wyk, band director at Rahway High School in New Jersey, has seen this happen in the other direction: a trumpeter in the pit who was moved by the acting and singing on stage went on to play the lead in *Big Fish* the following year.

"We try to give our students as broad an understanding of the production

"What can we cast easily? What shows off the students' talents? What will be well-received by the community?" —Daniel Galliher



process as possible,” says Muller.

Daniel Galliher, band director and drama club adviser at Germantown Central School District in New York, notes that it’s an opportunity for kids to “feel successful, valued, a part of something.” The hours get longer and longer as the rehearsal process goes on, and everyone’s in the trenches together. Students learn “how to work respectfully with people when you’re running on a small amount of sleep,” he says. “It makes you more forgiving.”

Choosing the Show and Recruiting Students

Selecting a show for your school’s musical theater production is “the most difficult and important responsibility,” says Van Wyk. “It’s not so different from programming for a concert.” He says you have to look at your talent pool and see where it leads you: “If we don’t have great singers, no *Candide*. If we don’t have great dancers, no *42nd Street* or *Crazy for You*.” Galliher meets with the students in the drama club to pick their brains for ideas. A short list is developed from that input and ideas

from the teachers involved in the production, and the list is edited down further based on suitability: “What can we cast easily? What shows off the students’ talents? What will be well-received by the community?” Galliher and his team ask. They look for a show that will be a good experience for everyone. Input may be taken from students, but show choice always belongs to the teachers in charge, “Although [students] have plenty to say,” adds Ruiz, who likes to keep the show choice a secret from the students until it is officially announced—“They have their guesses”—as it drives up interest and excitement about the production.

Acknowledging the parameters for your search doesn’t mean shying away from a challenge. Last year, Van Wyk did *Once on This Island*, which is a sung-through musical with a nontraditional orchestra. The aforementioned production of *Big Fish* was also a challenge with its wide range of musical styles. Van Wyk says that the choice of show must “give them experiences to make them the best they can possibly be.” Bergman looks to give the students a variety of experiences: “One year light and fluffy, next year something with some edge to it.” Littleton High School did *Bye Bye Birdie* last year, so

.....
“I want to make the audience wonder, ‘Are those kids back there?’”—Laura Muller

BUILDING A PIT ORCHESTRA

Pit orchestras range from a single piano to a small rock band to a sizeable symphonic ensemble, and—depending on the school’s budget and student talent—can be composed of professionals, students, faculty, alumni, or (often) a mix. “It’s a huge undertaking to learn a musical,” says Muller. Pit books are written for professional musicians, and alterations to make the parts easier are prohibited by contract. Chwalyk approaches his more serious high school music students—those who are studying privately—for the pit. Some of these students play in the middle school pit as well, showing those students that the pit is an opportunity for them when they get to high school. At Rahway, Van Wyk and the rest of the instrumental staff evaluate applicants for the pit based on their midterm performance exam. Reed books, which contain parts for multiple instruments, he splits up among multiple students. “Students are trying to get good at one instrument,” he explains. Van Wyk also says that playing in the pit alongside a professional musician is a great experience for an aspiring music student.

Muller’s pit orchestra, along with other aspects of Union High School’s musical theater program, has won multiple Rising Star Awards from Papermill Playhouse, a regional theater in Millburn, New Jersey. Her pit orchestra is well-known in the community as a high-quality ensemble: It’s composed of the strongest musicians in her music program. Muller says, “I want to make the audience wonder, ‘Are those kids back there?’” Pit orchestra rehearsals are a major time commitment for her students, starting at eight to 10 hours per week at the beginning of the eight-week music rental period, and culminating at 20–25 hours per week during tech. Muller uses her rehearsal time economically, taking advantage of repeated thematic material. “If you learn the recurring theme, even if it comes back in another key, the student’s like, ‘Oh, I already learned that.’”



Rahway High School’s Mary Poppins pit orchestra

they'll probably choose something more contemporary for 2018. Muller looks four years back and four years ahead, ensuring that her students are exposed to a broad sampling of the musical theater repertoire over their time at Union High School.

Careful show choice can prevent a lot of trouble when it's time to recruit students for the production. Generally, the same students return for the musical year after year, so choosing a show based on who is expected to audition means less beating-the-bushes for possible cast members. Even the relative unknown element that is the incoming freshman class can be demystified by close contact with the middle school music program (or musical theater program, if it has one). "You can monitor their progress," says Chwalyk. The middle school team can "pass a note to the high school so they know what talent is coming." Galliher has older students perform scenes for the younger students at an assembly, and Germantown also has a fifth- and sixth-grade drama club that gets kids interested at a young age. "Kids already want to be in the show when they get to high school," he says.

A good musical theater program recruits for itself, notes Van Wyk. "It has to be fun," Chwalyk adds. Of Ruiz, he says, "She has expectations but makes the process fun." When kids are having a great time, they spread the word, and bring their friends. "It's one thing when you hear a teacher tell you how cool it is to be in the school musical, but it carries more weight when the students say it," remarks Chwalyk. Most of the solutions to the

"It's one thing when you hear a teacher tell you how cool it is to be in the school musical, but it carries more weight when the students say it." —James Chwalyk, Jr.



"The priority is that they graduate having had these experiences, and become better people as a result." —Steven Bergman

perennial challenge of recruiting boys to the cast of a school musical are long-term ones that include planting the seeds when they are young. Bergman has found that going to the source can also help. For example, if you manage to recruit one student athlete, others may follow. For Lyndhurst High School's production of *Guys and Dolls*, Ruiz and Chwalyk needed students with a particular look, so they approached those students directly. Ruiz says this results in a diverse cast; students interact with people they ordinarily wouldn't outside of the musical. "It's not a fantasy world," she clarifies, but "they do become a family" by the end.

Collaborating with Parents and Other Faculty

Most school productions don't succeed without the help of involved parents and teachers. Galliher begins with a parent night where he shares the areas that need volunteers and asks parents what skills they have to offer. At

Germantown, parents paint the set and help with costumes. In Littleton, Bergman assigns a parent liaison to recruit fellow volunteers. In addition to sets and costumes, Rahway parents assist with fundraising and communication. "Without their efforts, we wouldn't be able to do what we've done," acknowledges Van Wyk. He attributes the longevity of his parent volunteers to the fact that they feel that they're a part of something special.

"In a public school, you have to wear many hats," says Muller who, in addition to being the music director, builds a lot of the scenery for the shows. The production team is a small number of teachers doing a large amount of work. The choreographer for Union High School's shows is a woman who works in the district central office and does a lot of publicity for the shows. In Rahway, all of Van Wyk's music colleagues help with the pit, and the elementary school art teacher helps with painting. Chwalyk counsels not to take on more than you need to yourself.

“When it’s musical time, the community comes out and supports us.”

—Robert Van Wyk

“You’re still the director, but why would you try to do all of these things yourself when you have a specialty, and so do others?”

“I can’t be backstage during the show,” says Bergman, so he finds parents to be a big help in that area. “If at the end of the night no one’s hurt, crying, or injured, and everyone made their entrances, [the parents have] done their jobs,” he summarizes. Bergman shares that a fun way to include parents, teachers, and particularly administrators is with onstage cameos. Chwalyk has done this as well, using a faculty member as the Building Superintendent in *The Drowsy Chaperone*. “This definitely brought in audiences that wouldn’t usually come to see the musicals,” reflects Bergman. “Sometimes they’re the most hilarious

part of the show,” agrees Ruiz, who used faculty for the Mutants at Table Nine in *The Wedding Singer*. Students and faculty working together in this manner makes for a great experience for both, says Ruiz. “Backstage, they’re all the same at that moment.”

“What do you get?”

“When it’s musical time,” says Van Wyk, “the community comes out and supports us.” Former teachers, alumni, and parents of alumni come out in

Robert Van Wyk’s students in *Footloose* (far left), “Telephone Hour” (left) and “What Did I Ever See in Him?” (below) from Littleton High School’s *Bye Bye Birdie*



droves to see the musical. Galliher says you get to “take an audience, for two-and-a-half hours, somewhere they weren’t before.” Chwalyk says, “It gives a sense of district pride.” Bergman recalls a father who was unaware of all the work that goes into a musical theater production until he saw his son singing and dancing on stage. “Your son or daughter is becoming comfortable performing in front of people, gaining collaborative skills, and improving their public speaking abilities.”

Among Rahway’s musical theater alumni is Shanice Williams, who starred as Dorothy in NBC’s 2015 broadcast of *The Wiz Live!* “To be able to see her start as a freshman and then see her on TV was unbelievable,” boasts Van Wyk. That’s an impressive credit, but Van Wyk says the rewards are in the growth that every student, teacher, parent, and community member takes from the experience. Bergman concurs: “The priority is that they graduate having had these experiences, and become better people as a result.” ■



A performer in *Big Fish* at Rahway High School

By Joanne Sydney Lessner

NAVIGATING YOUR PATH TO

ENRICHMENT

NAfME MEMBERSHIP affords access to a variety of professional enrichment resources. Some, such as NAFME Academy and the Library of Congress's "Teaching with Primary Sources," are accessible

from the comfort of one's home. Others, such as the 2018 Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference, require travel but offer a wealth of information and in-person networking opportunities.

NAfME ACADEMY

NAfME Academy is an online learning platform for music educators that currently houses over 80 hours of webinars and is available to members for a yearly subscription fee of \$20.00 (\$100.00 for nonmembers). Each webinar runs approximately 45–60 minutes and is followed by a five-ques-

tion quiz. A score of 75 or higher will return a certificate of completion valued at one contact hour. NAFME Academy, which evolved from a more traditional, pay-per-view structure, launched in November 2016 and is on track to surpass 100 webinars by its one-year anniversary.

JJ Norman, NAFME's Professional Development and Collegiate Program Manager, describes the enthusiastic response that NAFME Academy has received. "Music educators love the fact that NAFME is offering professional development that's relevant to their classrooms. The webinars are archived, so you can watch them on your own time and apply what you're learning the very next day."

Some of the most popular videos include "Top Ten Tips to Energize Your Rehearsal" by Angela Ammerman, "Essential Time Management Strategies for Teachers" by Emily

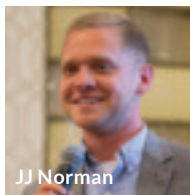
Schwartz, and "Fostering Independent Musicianship in the Choral Classroom" by Karla McClain. Webinars listed under "Beyond the Classroom," such as "How to Land Your First Job" and "How to Prepare for Retirement," have proven just as popular as those pertaining specifically to the classroom.

"NAfME is made up of 66,000 music educators across all facets of music education, and everyone who opts in to NAFME Academy has access to everything on the learning platform,"





NAfME offers several valuable opportunities for music educators to pursue professional development, enhance their curricula, and investigate cutting-edge research.



“NAfME has 66,000 music educators across all facets of music education, and everyone who opts in to NAfME Academy has access to everything on the learning platform.”

—JJ Norman

says Norman. “Despite the fact that you’re a band guy and aren’t interested in the choir content, it’s in there for the off-chance that your administrator comes down the hall at the end of the school year and says, ‘Hey, guess what? You’re teaching the beginning choir class next semester. Have a great summer!’”

Over 1,900 educators have subscribed, earning over 2,500 hours of professional development recognition. While the academy is an approved provider, accreditation is an ongoing process because of requirements that differ by state, district, or even by school.

“Anytime someone comes to me and says, ‘You’re not approved in my state,’ I get on it that day,” says Norman. Some states have stringent requirements for certification and review applications infrequently, but others move within weeks. “There’s a handful of states that come to mind that, as long as you’re doing professional development, the state doesn’t get in the way.” Norman is also hoping to engage district arts supervisors and allow them to opt in for their teachers all at once. “The vast majority of educators have come to the academy on their own,” he explains. “This way, we’re reaching anywhere from 50–250 educators all at once with support from their district.” *Music Educators Journal* offers another way to get contact hours: Educators can read any of the featured

“I think of all these resources as something that helps teachers become more facile at working in these different processes. More tools in the toolbox.”

—Johanna Siebert

articles since the June 2016 issue and then follow a link to a quiz, successful completion of which returns a certificate of completion.

At the 2017 National In-Service Music Education Conference, November 12–15 in Dallas, Texas, NAfME will be offering over 150 sessions, and teachers will be eligible for 17 hours of professional development. “When people come, they attend everything from the keynote to the concerts, and there’s something to be learned in all of them,” says Norman.

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS: “TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES”

Also present at the In-Service Conference will be Johanna Siebert, Project Director for NAfME’s Library of Congress grant, and her writing team chairs. This year, the grant funded the creation of curriculum modules for general music education and chorus, using selected materials from the Library of Congress online archives.

“We’ll be presenting a session on the teacher resource units, and we’ll also tell a little bit about the new ones we’re writing for band and orchestra,” Siebert says. She notes that the Library of Congress “Teaching with Primary



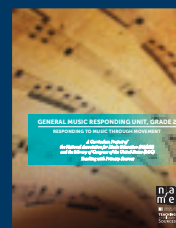
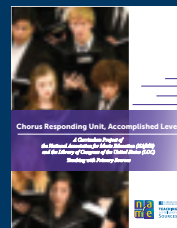
Briana Nannen, one of the writers of the NAfME/LOC Choral Units, at the Library of Congress

SAMPLE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CURRICULUM RESOURCES

CHORUS RESPONDING UNIT, ACCOMPLISHED LEVEL

This four-lesson sequence is intended for students with seven to eight years of choral experience. Employing inquiry methods such as Observe, Reflect, and Question, students use the song “Go Down, Moses” as the basis for an overview of the African-American spiritual. They explore the song’s historical and cultural significance by comparing recordings, analyzing sheet music, and reading contemporaneous documents about Harriet Tubman, known as “Black Moses.” Students develop their own criteria to evaluate the song and performances of it, presenting their conclusions in the form of a pre-concert lecture or program notes. The lessons can be linked to performance practice during a concert cycle and can be completed sequentially or extracted separately within a flexible time frame.

“I found that the length of time allotted for activities was reasonable and made the unit doable in a class where the pressures of performances/assessments really drive the content/type of instruction.” —Choral Music Pilot Participant



GENERAL MUSIC RESPONDING UNIT, GRADE 2: RESPONDING TO MUSIC THROUGH MOVEMENT

These lesson plans contain musical exploration and response activities for selected

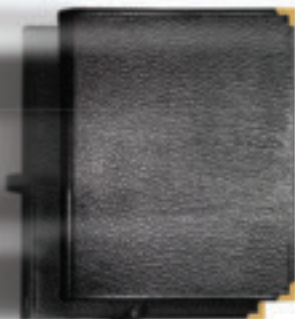
recordings, as well as images that suggest movement or depict dance. The recordings include well-known songs such as “Moon River” and “The Blue Danube Waltz,” to which students can invent their own movement. They can also learn dances such as the Russian “Kamarinskaia” and the Swedish “Gustafs Skål” by watching videos. When looking at artwork, students are asked to imagine what they would hear and see if the picture could move. In response, they create music that expresses the elements of dance they observe. They also self-evaluate their own videos and examine how their movement relates to the music. By listening, analyzing, relating, and answering questions, students develop tools to apply their knowledge to new musical experiences.

“I was pleasantly surprised as to how it met the different needs of all my students, including my special needs students.” —General Music Pilot Participant



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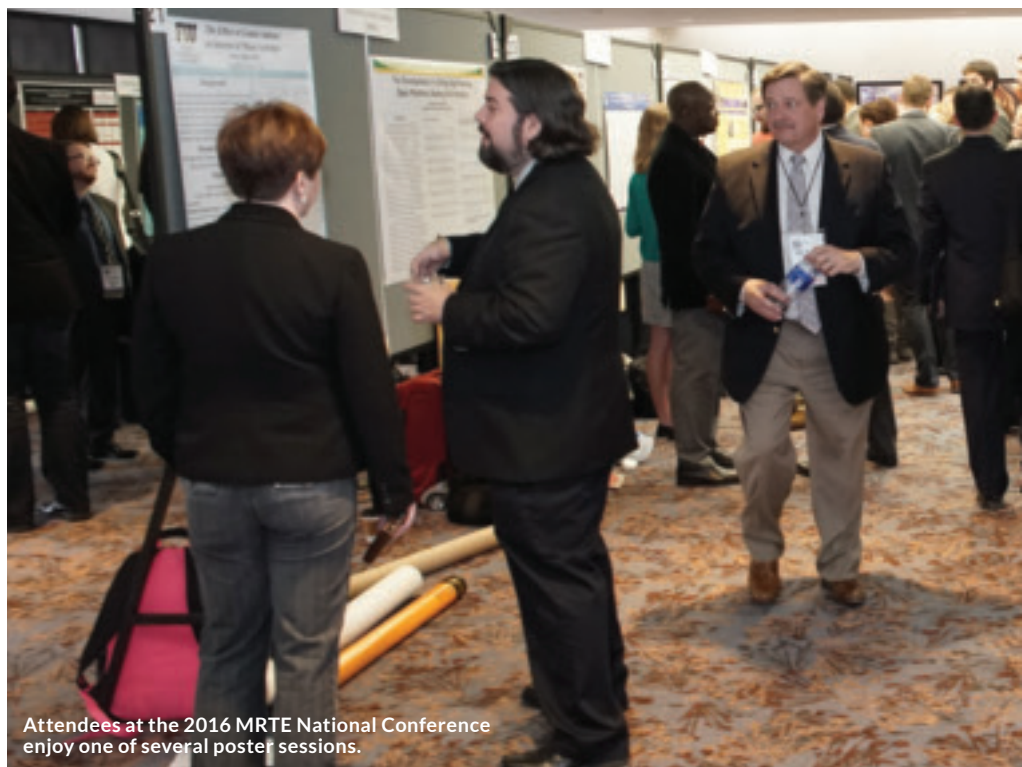
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Sources” (TPS) offers enrichment for teachers beyond the prepared modules (see loc.gov/teachers/tps). “TPS is a whole area online that can give you resources for your own development, as well as for your students. There are so many different digital collections with hundreds of options in each file. You can get recorded music, documents from the times—those are the kinds of things we utilized in coming up with the units, and they’re available to everyone.”

Using the TPS resources to link composers and their work to historical events helps teachers incorporate the Connecting strand of the National Standards by deepening their knowledge base and personalizing it for students. “We often ask students to interpret the composer or creator’s intent, and when we look at periodic times, this brings it into a bigger relationship,” says Siebert. “What were the influences on composers that made them write the way they did? The resources can help with that. Not just music’s relationship to music—but to the world. If you’ve never done this before, those aligned resources can help bring it home for the kids.”

Lynn Tuttle, NAFME’s Director of Public Policy and Professional Development, notes that using the curriculum modules “changes your practice to think about an inquiry-based process and not just getting to that final product of performance. It makes me



Attendees at the 2016 MRTE National Conference enjoy one of several poster sessions.

think, ‘What would I do differently and why?’ With any module, I’m always going to riff off it and change it for my classroom.” Tuttle encourages teachers using the resources to do just that. “Maybe the content in that module isn’t a fit for your class right now, but you can still pick up those inquiry methods and use them with whatever you’re working on.”

Tuttle and Siebert are looking for ways to showcase and share the ideas embedded in the writing and piloting of the modules, which is, in itself, a form of professional development. “Not only did we learn back from the teachers how to make the modules

better, but they also gave us great feedback about how they changed their practice,” reports Tuttle. “All the writers for the general music and chorus units are willing to do webinars talking about how they changed their practice or how they engaged kids in the classroom, and those will be available on the NAFME website.”

“We’re about process, not product,” Siebert adds. “I think of all these resources as something that helps teachers become more facile at working in these different processes. More tools in the toolbox.”

THE MUSIC RESEARCH AND TEACHER EDUCATION NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Another tool available to NAFME members is the biennial Music Research and Teacher Education (MRTE) National Conference, which returns to Atlanta, Georgia, in March 2018.

“The conference is a forum for all music education researchers, music teacher educators, music administrators, and curriculum specialists,” says Adriane Darvishian, NAFME’s Director of Governance Constituencies. “It’s a



Wendy L. Sims accepting the 2016 NAFME Senior Researcher Award at the MRTE National Conference

“The MRTE conference is a great opportunity for a wide array of attendees to access the latest research in music education along with the pedagogical innovations that will shape the future.” —Adriane Darvishian

Photos by Robb Cohen Photography & Video/www.RobbPhotos.com. Headshot courtesy of James Byo.



INFORMATION ON THE 2018 MRTE

The 2018 Music Research and Teacher Education (MRTE) National Conference at the Westin Peachtree Plaza in Atlanta, March 22–24, 2018 welcomes educators, researchers, program leaders, music administrations, and curriculum specialists. Members of the Society for Research in Music Education (SRME), the Society for Music Teacher Education (SMTE), and the Council of Music Program Leaders (CMPL) will present research on topics including, but not limited to, the conference focus of diversity, equity, inclusivity, and access. Registration information will be available on the NAFME website in early October 2017, with a detailed agenda to follow in mid-January.

The conference draws primarily from the higher education community, including graduate students in music education. “It affords opportunities and exposure not only for seasoned researchers but also for developing researchers who aspire to make important contributions to music teaching and learning,” says James Byo. “This conference appeals to the research community, yes, but much of its content is relevant to PreK–12 music teachers and students, because this is what so many of us are interested in.”



James Byo

All research must be original and can be delivered in several ways: 20-minute presentations; 90-minute symposia featuring several research papers unified by a common theme; and 90-minute poster sessions, which are always very popular. “During the multiple poster sessions, attendees have the opportunity to directly interact with the researcher to discuss their research findings and conclusions. In 2016, over 250 posters were presented, providing a dynamic and interactive professional development experience,” says Adriane Darvishian.

One researcher will receive NAFME’s Senior Researcher Award at the end of the conference. Two past award winners and experts in diversity—Patricia Shehan Campbell of the University of Washington in Seattle, and Judith Jellison of the University of Texas at Austin—are helping the planning committee organize five sessions around the conference focus, including a plenary session to open the conference in place of the customary keynote speech. “Pat and Judith and a diverse array of other voices will get us more closely connected with what needs to happen in order to be culturally responsive,” says Byo. “We as a music-teaching body must strive to provide real access to more heterogeneous bodies of music students in grades PreK–12 and in college. We need to understand how to make music education work for more students and, by extension, how to plant seeds to develop a more diverse music teacher workforce.”

“This should prove to be a very interesting event,” says Darvishian. “It’s also a great opportunity for networking in a manageable setting, with multiple opportunities for professional development.”

great opportunity for a wide array of attendees to access the latest research in music education along with the pedagogical innovations that will shape the future.”

The conference typically draws over 600 attendees, mostly from higher education, although the conference attracts K–12 teachers interested in music teacher education as well. “This is professional development maybe at its best for the folks in higher education. It provides an opportunity for meaningful interaction among the attendees,” says James Byo, director of the School of

Music at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, and SRME Executive Committee Chair. “There is a lot of talking going on, perspectives being shared, and that human interaction is just great. That’s what becomes the feed for new ideas, new perspectives, and the furthering of those ideas.”

The MRTE Conference is often the first phase for research that appears subsequently in professional journals, where those who can’t attend the conference can catch up. “Reading is the best form of professional development for teachers,” Byo points out. ■



Poster session

Following the loss of a bandmate, Jamie Clark helped his student musicians to grieve and come together to commemorate their friend.

Rallying and Honoring through Music

BY STEPHEN HOLLEY

HOW WOULD YOU REACT if you lost a student? How would you respond if one of your students, a seemingly healthy 12-year-old boy, passed away in his own bed? As directors, we've all dealt with our share of pain, drama, and emotional situations—but the unexpected death of a 12-year-old? The students at Trottier Middle School in Southborough, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston, experienced this tragedy in 2012. Thanks to a new book titled *Mr. Clark's Big Band* by band parent and author Meredith O'Brien, we can appreciate how the community, the school, and parents rallied behind the

students and their director, Jamie Clark, to begin the healing process.

Clark is known as “the guy who tells jokes about his house cat, his girth, and his bottomless affection for doughnuts,” notes O'Brien. “One way I connect with the kids is to be genuine at all times—if they're not playing well I'll tell them,” says Clark. He would lean on this character trait of being “genu-

ine” in the coming days and years after heartbreak struck his small town.

“Eric was a kid who played trumpet in the top Big Band: super smart, athletic, talented musically, but pretty quiet—he wasn't the jokester!” recalls Clark. He goes on to note that both Eric's older sister and brother had been in the band—as a flautist and a percussionist, respectively—so he knew the



Photo top by Robert Holland.
Photo right by Melissa Shaw.

"A lot of our focus was getting us and the kids through that year." —Jamie Clark



family well. He recalls Eric as "a vibrant and healthy young man who had played in a basketball game the night before. The entire thought of Eric not being there was mind-boggling, to say the least."

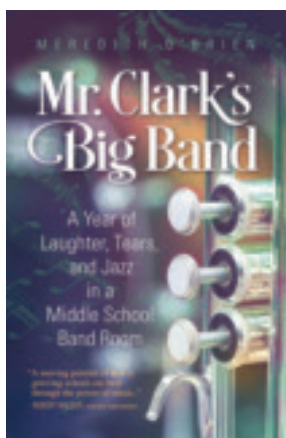
On a cold, winter's day in January 2012, their middle school world was turned upside down. O'Brien relates,

Jamie Clark

“My son was a seventh-grader, a drummer in his middle school’s Big Band. That day, he learned that his friend, 12-year-old Eric, died in his sleep. The passing of this generous, kind boy sent ripples through the small town of Southborough. Students at Trottier Middle School were plunged into mourning, particularly in the band room, where Eric’s music stand stood empty, his silver trumpet silenced.”

That morning, Clark began his Big Band rehearsal at 7am and noticed that Eric was not in attendance. He asked the other band members if they knew where he might be and, upon receiving no additional information, made a note in the back of his mind and moved on with the rehearsal. After his first period rehearsal, the administration asked the members of the faculty crisis team—which Clark was a member—to meet in the faculty room. He recounts, “I knew it was going to be bad news when I noticed they were putting out tissue boxes,” but he was not prepared when the principal, ashen-faced, told the faculty that Eric’s mother had called the school to let them know young Eric had passed away in his sleep.

While the school decided how to best convey the news to the students and the school community, Clark had to teach the next period: his 7/8 band of which Eric was a member. “We played every piece of music they had—I just had to get them through this rehearsal,” notes Clark. He goes on to recall that because Eric’s siblings attended the local high school, word quickly spread among students and parents. “I was getting calls and texts, but we were told not to communicate yet—I couldn’t even tell my wife.”



The book *Mr. Clark's Big Band* by band parent and author Meredith O'Brien



After rehearsal, all students were called to their homerooms where their teachers expressed the heartbreaking news. Clark recalls, “After the announcement, the schedule was scrapped. The entire school of 600 was

weeping—students and teachers openly crying in the hallways, the school filled with grief counselors and parents just wanting to see their kids. Kids who thought they were immortal suddenly realized they weren’t. The kids wanted answers and we had none to give. They’re used to having adults explain things, but we couldn’t.” The school community would find

out months later that Eric had an undiagnosed heart condition, but this knowledge did little to calm the fears of the kids or parents. One parent related a story of how she would go into her child’s room late at night, just to check on him and feel his heartbeat.

Clark recalls, “Later in the day we had sectionals, and I didn’t know what to do. I told the kids ‘We can play if you want to, talk if you want to—

whatever would be good for you.” In light of the situation, Clark knew he had to be honest and genuine about his feelings. “I had to show the kids how I was feeling—I couldn’t be disingenuous, so I just began to cry. It made them feel like they could be upset and show their feelings, too—that it was OK for them to cry. A lot of our focus was getting us and the kids through that year.”

“Clark took risks—big ones,



Top Photo by Deidre Secrist. Bottom photo by Robin Boucher.



Headshot by Melissa Shaw.

especially of the emotional variety,” remarks O’Brien. “He thoroughly threw himself into his teaching, holding very little back from his students. If they wanted to meet with him in private to cry about the loss of their friend, to express their worries about their own lives, their playing, their parents’ divorce, he gave them the time, he gave them an audience, he gave them a hug. If the students needed to be pushed in order to achieve what

he knew they could, he pushed. I was thoroughly impressed with how Clark led the students through treacherous emotional terrain.”

By June of that year, the Big Band was preparing for their final performance of the year at Jazz Night, a concert of 14–16 tunes with a featured guest artist. Before the concert, the students were worried they’d make a mistake, in their minds dishonoring Eric’s memory. Clark reassured the band, telling them “doing your best is the best way to honor Eric.” As Clark began to speak and reminisce, he heard crying and sniffing throughout the crowd; emotions were still raw.

O’Brien describes the evening – “Green neckties, emerald hair ties, and bright memorial ribbons pinned to apparel were seen on all of the Big Band members. They were so raw, that I couldn’t imagine them successfully performing ‘Swing Shift,’ the last jazz piece Eric played, a recording of which was played at his funeral. But they did; and with tremendous heart and precision. The children delivered a powerful rendition of Carl Strommen’s jazz chart, especially the boy who

played Eric’s part, the trumpet solo.” O’Brien continues, “I thought about that performance for days afterward. ‘How did they get through it without crying? How were they able to play so beautifully?’ I knew first-hand that the kids remained shattered—haunted, really. Then it hit me. It was him, it was Mr. Clark.”

That same month, a committee was



WITH JAMIE CLARK

Q What do you know to be true about teaching music that you didn’t know when you started?

My years of teaching have confirmed that all students—regardless of their innate talent, stage of development or challenges they face—have a fundamental love of music (even if they don’t know it!) and a need for music in their lives. I see it as my responsibility to help them discover that love and help them become life-long lovers of music.

Q If I weren’t a music teacher I would ... I don’t think I could actually do it, but if I weren’t a music teacher I’d love to be a writer of historical fiction or fantasy novels.

Q What’s the biggest lesson you want your students to learn while in your program? To believe in themselves, trust themselves, and know that through hard work and dedication they can accomplish great things and make the world a better place.

Q The music education profession would be better if ... music teachers had more time to develop connections with their students. I have found that better connections lead to more profound learning and more joyful music-making.

Q What have you learned about students and parents through your work? Students have an almost unlimited potential to achieve amazing heights both personally and musically. They just need teachers to believe in them, push them, and support them. Today, parents are more worried about their children than they ever have been—worried about their children’s safety, development, and futures. I have found that if parents know that you genuinely care about their children, you will have incredibly loyal allies.

Q What advice would you give to a teacher trying to start a program similar to yours? Be authentic and see your students, treat your students, and expect your students to be the best possible versions of themselves.





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formed of several parents, teachers, and students to consider how to best celebrate the life and memory of Eric. His family decided that donations should be made to the music program in Eric's honor. Clark met with the committee to determine how to make best use of the funds. The group decided to commission two pieces: one for the concert band ('A Kind and Gentle Soul' by James Swearingen) and one for the jazz band ('Kaleidoscope' by Erik Morales). Clark adds, "The pieces are performed around the world. When you look at the top of the piece and read the dedication, they wonder who Eric was—that's what we wanted."

As educators, there isn't a class that touches on the subject of one of your students dying. There isn't a curriculum, a 12-step process, or a pamphlet that helps guide you through the process. "If you teach long enough, something like this is going to touch you. I want this story out there to remember Eric and, hopefully, teachers will have some example of what do," adds Clark.

Clark continues to direct the bands, and the two commissioned pieces have been performed every other year in memory of Eric. Eric's mother still attends several performances each year, and on his angel-versary (the day he passed), she brings baked goods to school.

Clark notes, "Those pieces have been enormously helping in remembering Eric." Clark mentions a section at the end of 'A Kind and Gentle Soul,' as the trumpets play the final notes of the melody and fade out, a single flute echoes the trumpet, which is quickly followed by a cymbal scrape. He and Swearingen never discussed Eric's siblings, and Clark prefers to think of it as a serendipitous moment. "The pieces were a really good idea for the community. They help to place a nice, final chord." ■

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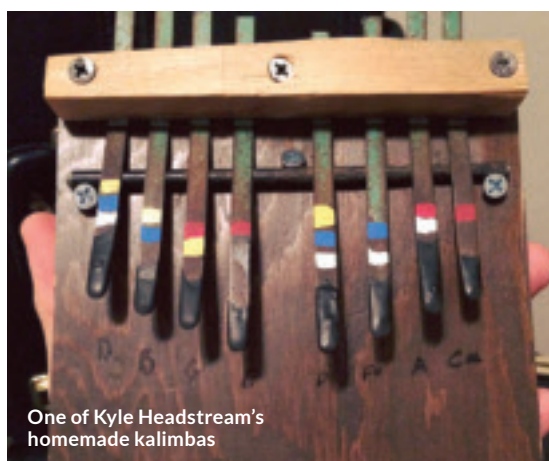
Kalimbas, winter choral concerts, ringtone composition, and more.



Building and Playing Kalimbas in the Classroom

When Kyle Headstream was hired as a music teacher and band director at Payson High School in Payson, Arizona, he had only a few weeks to decide what to do with an open-ended course called “Music Exploration.” “There wasn’t much of a budget for the class and, as it was held in the library, there weren’t any instruments to explore with,” Headstream says. “So, I just started Googling and YouTubing ways to make instruments in a hurry.”

One of the videos that Headstream stumbled on demonstrated how to fashion kalimbas (thumb pianos) from bobby pins. This seemed like a good idea, but Headstream realized that the instrument would be hard to hear on account of the pins’ small size. So, he checked out the website Kalimba Magic (kalimbamagic.com) to study examples of kalimbas and began to experiment with building his own. “I used some wood—an old shelf from the choir room—to make the box, a rake for the tines, and some screws to put it all together,” he says. This homemade instrument performed quite well, so



One of Kyle Headstream's homemade kalimbas

Headstream had his students make their own kalimbas, whose materials he estimates cost 50¢ apiece. The kids brought in old rakes, and he helped them cut the tines to different lengths for specific pitches. “I also used a plastic tip to finish the tines, so that they would be easy on the students’ fingers.”

As the class was a general elective, not all of the students had musical experience. However, due to the kalimba’s simplicity, everyone was able to make music pretty quickly by using solfège or a number system found on Kalimba Magic. “I picked simple songs that they already knew—just the melody—so that I wouldn’t have to spend too much time focusing on rhythm.”

As the students progressed, Headstream brought the concept of harmony into play. He had the students paint their tines certain colors for chords: For

instance, the notes of the I triad were white. He also taught the kids some fuller arrangements. “One of the songs that went over really well was the ’60s song ‘Stand by Me.’ I was able to adjust the original recording [from the key of A major] to D—the key that the kalimbas are in—and the kids just had a blast playing the bass line.” In the end, the class was a great success, and tied together music-making with instrument

history and a little woodworking. Headstream was glad to see how positively his students responded. “They were thrilled to be able to keep their instruments and play with them during the summer.” —Adam Perlmutter



Developing Range in Trumpet Players the Right Way

A common goal of trumpet students is to extend their high range. Left to their own devices, many students wind up teaching themselves bad habits that, in the end, can hold them back from reaching their full potential. Erika Schafer, associate professor of trumpet at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, remarks that she sees

players of all ages try to force things at first. “It is really counterproductive to have tension in the body when trying to play the high range. Students typically attempt too much too soon. The most important thing is to play in a relaxed manner with good breath support. Put this together with a solid, regular practice routine and you will find that the student’s range naturally increases over time. It’s almost like the right way to develop high range on trumpet is to not try to develop high range on the trumpet.”

A regular practice routine, proper breath support, and lack of body tension are key to a good high range, but beyond those fundamentals there are things that a student can work into their schedule to make things happen more quickly. “If we want to focus more on range, then I recommend a specific scale routine. We start with a basic low F# one-octave major scale at a moderate tempo, marcato-tongued, playing with a good sound, crescendoing up to the octave and then back down. We then continue with the next major scale, moving up by half steps. When they start to strain on the high note, they need to stop the exercise for that day. They should do this routine earlier in the day after warming up, and rest their embouchure in between each scale. Students who do this every day will find that the highest note that they can reach will vary from day to day, but eventually this will even out and become more consistent. Once they have that consistency and the highest note isn’t hard anymore, they should continue to the next scale upward.”

Contrary to popular belief, a student’s choice of mouthpiece makes very little difference in the long term. Schafer notes, “Students should not switch mouthpieces just to play high. This can be detrimental. A Bach 3C is a great mouthpiece and is what most high school students should be using.



“Remember that playing with a good sound and with great air support should be your primary goal.” —Erika Schafer

Practice is what builds your high register, not a different mouthpiece.”

Schafer also recommends several method books to help develop range and flexibility. “Lowell Little’s *The Embouchure Builder* is a great place to start even for beginning students.” She also recommends Jean Baptiste Arban’s *Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet*, Max Schlossberg’s *Daily Drills and Technical Studies for Trumpet*, and Bai Lin’s *Lip Flexibilities* to help build strength and technique.

“Remember that playing with a good sound and with great air support should be your primary goal,” notes Schafer. “If you have a regular practice routine, you will slowly be able to play higher notes. It’s when you devote a lot of extra time forcing yourself to play the higher notes that causes problems. A trumpet player’s range should develop naturally over time.”

For more information or to contact Schafer, visit utc.edu/trumpet.

—Chad Criswell



Teaching Older Beginners

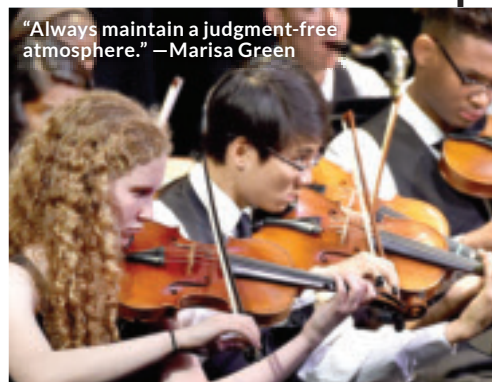
Most beginning string players are very young, but others begin playing as teenagers. How can instructors help these students to be engaged and enthusiastic?

Marisa Green is the director of vocal music at Peddie School in Hightstown,

New Jersey, but she also has a strong background in strings, having begun studying Suzuki violin at age three. At Peddie, approximately one-third of the student population is involved in the school’s extensive and active music program. Students do not audition to join the orchestra, although they do audition for placement once

they have joined. As a result, Green and instrumental music director Alan Michaels found themselves with more than a few older beginning string players.

Around 2014, Green and Michaels created “String Lab,” an ensemble designed to help these students. Based on placement auditions, anywhere between six and 10 students are assigned to the lab. The ensemble meets once a week, and it provides students with more individual attention than they would get in the orchestra alone. “Most know they belong there,” observes Green, “so there is not a lot of self-consciousness.” She further notes that “String Lab is results-oriented. We’re not just practicing scales; a big part of the mission is to get them through orchestra parts as well as possible. We do start each session with scales and warmups. We do use method books. We focus on posture, tuning instruments, bow holds, bow strokes, intonation, and rhythm. We try to avoid bad habits that would have to be



“Always maintain a judgment-free atmosphere.” —Marisa Green

unlearned later. All of this, though, is based on the needs of the orchestra music. That gives a good way to frame things; it puts the technical work into context. Moreover, playing in orchestra is fun, so the goal-directed technical work becomes enjoyable.” Working on orchestra excerpts constitutes the second half of the period. “Here we teach them how to practice, how to put their technical work to use.” String Lab has turned out to be quite successful.

By the spring term, weekly sessions give way to more sporadic meetings, as the students are more capable of handling the orchestra music.

Green offers advice to those who want to start such a program. “Remember that scheduling will be difficult. For example, we make sure our String Lab sessions coincide with Chamber Orchestra (our advanced, auditioned ensemble) rehearsals. This way, we avoid overlap. In general, the time must work for all

involved. Pay attention to what you get on the first day in terms of everyone’s individual skill levels, and remain flexible and practical in terms of the music you choose. In the sessions themselves, choose warmups carefully to make them relevant; always have an eye toward context. The skills you work on should relate directly to the orchestral excerpts. And always maintain a judgment-free atmosphere.” —*Michael Adelson*



The Joys and Pitfalls of Beginning an Elementary Percussion Ensemble

You’ve decided that a percussion ensemble would be a great activity for your fourth- and fifth-graders: Congratulations! So, now what?

For starters, how can you tell that your students are ready for this? “Respect for the instruments and a sense of initiative and autonomy in the music classroom,” says Vanessa D’Aconti, a music educator at P.S. 151 Mary D. Carter in Woodside, NY. “Drumming ensembles involve a lot of setup and movement of instruments, chairs, and bodies. If you don’t have kids that can put the room together and strike it with minimal assistance, you’re going to waste precious class time.”

There’s also the question of whether to make the group all-inclusive or selective. D’Aconti prefers the former approach, “Even if you have a student that struggles, the beauty of the ensemble is that you can find a part for your weakest kid to find success and you can find a part to challenge and engage your stronger kids.” For the instrumentation, she recommends “a mix of high and low skins with some metal and wood thrown in. If you have money to spend, Remo sells a few different drumming packages that have an amazing mix of instruments. The smallest

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one is good for about 25 kids, and I use many of the instruments to supplement my general music classes as well, so it is definitely a worthwhile investment.”

In choosing repertoire, D’Aconti recommends a happy medium for all. “If you’re starting a new program, it is important to get the stakeholders and kids on your side from the get-go. If that means you’re going to have to add drumming to a Bruno Mars song, do it! However, there are skills and concepts to be learned in every genre of music, so you might find it useful to choose well-balanced repertoire first, and then back up to find the different concepts you will focus on in each.” Resources she recommends include World Music Drumming (worldmusicdrumming.com), *Plays Well Together* by Margaret Jerz, and *Peanut Butter Jam: An Introduction to World Music Drumming* by Tom Anderson.

The management and organization of the classroom and the instruments can be tricky with a young percussion ensemble. “I encourage each student to learn or at least experience all of the parts of the ensemble, so there needs to be a way to ensure they are not always playing the same thing,” says D’Aconti.

Once you have the ensemble up and running, it is important to search out and create performance opportunities for your little drummers. “Drums are loud, impressive, and are always well received, and you truly don’t need to do anything complicated, especially when you are building your ensemble,” remarks

D’Aconti. “I remember at one concert, we were still in the process of teaching the community about audience behavior. The crowd would not stop talking so that we could get started, so I went into the call-and-response that I used to get the kids’ attention in class, and then segued into about five echo patterns. The audience silenced immediately and after the last echo pattern they clapped. They were impressed just with our regular old classroom warmup!” —*Susan Poliniak*



CHORAL AND VOCAL

Planning the Winter Choral Concert

The end-of-first semester concert is a long-held tradition in many schools, but changing times have brought new challenges for today’s choral director. For example: What to name this performance? Many parochial schools still call it the “Christmas concert,” but

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“Even if you have a student that struggles, the beauty of the ensemble is that you can find a part for your weakest to find success.”
—Vanessa D’Aconti

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"I think about what concepts I want my students to learn and choose literature that exercises the skill." —Sarah Giordano

many public and other schools are encouraged to avoid this terminology. "Our middle school choirs and bands share a concert that we call the 'Winter Concert,' but colloquially many people in the community still refer to it as our 'Christmas Concert,'" says Sarah Giordano, a NAFME member and music teacher at Jackson Middle School in Villa Park, Illinois.

Since this is often a major performance for the singers, planning for this concert may be in the back of a director's mind throughout the year. "Concert planning for me is continual. I am always on the lookout for quality repertoire, and I attend reading sessions and festivals," says Giordano. "I have a file full of repertoire ideas I keep to use

in the future." As the month of December contains significant holidays for several religions, each with their own rich traditions of vocal music, choral directors have much repertoire upon which to draw that is of a high level of quality, both musically- and pedagogically-speaking. However, because of the religious content, cultural sensitivity is called for. "When we are learning a piece that is sacred, I am sensitive to review with my students why we are singing this: educational and aesthetic value rather than devotional content. It has never been an issue," notes Giordano. "A typical choral set list may include a 'classic' winter song/carol with an encouraged audience singalong ('Winter Wonderland,' etc.), a

foreign-language piece that is sometimes a Christmas carol or Hanukkah song, and a lovely ballad with gorgeous text." She further ensures that the music is that which she can use to teach solid musical content. "I have learned to look for music with a skill-based perspective. I think about what concepts I want my students to learn and choose literature that exercises the skill."

Rehearsal of the repertoire for this concert should, ideally, begin early in the fall semester. "This year our winter concert is on December 1st. My beginner ensemble rehearses once a week before school, and we will start our music (a little at a time) in late September. Winter concert music will not be the sole focus of rehearsal until November," remarks Giordano. "I have found that giving students all (or most) of the music for the semester at the beginning of the school year is beneficial. My leaders take it upon themselves to learn the music ahead of time, and if there is five minutes left in a rehearsal it is easy to ask students to take out a certain piece and learn a little section. We learn our pieces a little at a time and go into great depth. Final decisions on performance pieces will be made about two weeks before the concert so that the program can be completed." —Susan Poliniak

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The Ringtone Composition Project

The work that students do in music classes is often removed from that which they are drawn to beyond class. Chris Lee—who teaches music theory and technology at Newtown High School, in Sandy Hook, Connecticut—recently guided his students through a project that addressed this disconnection: composing cell phone ringtones. "As a composition teacher, I liked the idea of students creating musical pieces that are both

Photo by courtesy of Sarah Giordano.

concise and compelling—a challenge that is fun and also very authentic to the field of music production,” Lee says.

In preparation for the project, he had the students do an aural analysis activity in which they described and categorized sample ringtones. “This allowed us to discuss, hear, and identify musical attributes such as texture—monophonic versus polyphonic—and timbre—acoustic versus electronic, and dry versus processed,” says Lee. “I love that students were digging in to these professional ringtone examples with active ears and minds.”

He organized the ringtone project into distinct phases. In the first, which was an aural cognition exercise, he presented a collection of Apple iOS ringtones and asked the students to recreate them accurately or similarly. “Whether they found exact pitches and rhythms or approximated the general gesture of a ringtone, students were

engaged in a form of ear training appropriate to their musical level and keyboard skill. They also absorbed valuable techniques from professional composers.”

Next, Lee had the students create their own ringtones, whether modeled on the iOS examples or created from scratch. Though he encouraged the students to let their ears guide their work, he sometimes suggested basic source materials such as a pentatonic scale. “I wanted the project to maintain flexibility and allow students to imitate or create according to their own comfort levels,” Lee says, adding that the final step was for students to give catchy and evocative names to their ringtones.

As for the equipment used to compose these ringtones, Lee assigned the students to work in GarageBand or Logic Pro, rather than with paper and pencil.

“Students could use as many tracks as needed, and I encouraged them to explore a variety of software instruments and/or effects settings.”

At the end of the project, students exported their ringtones as MP3 files, which they then uploaded to their smartphones. “They engaged with music they literally carry around in their pockets,” Lee says. “And sure enough, their engagement and enjoyment of the experience was clearly revealed through diverse and often captivating results.” —*Adam Perlmutter*



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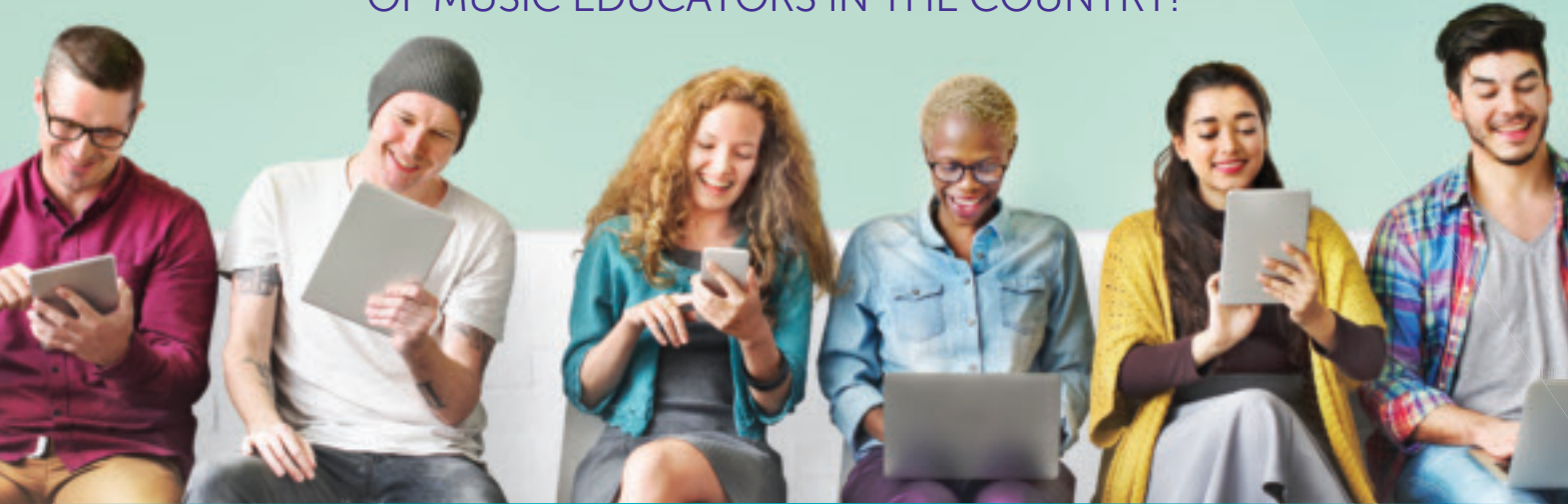
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Carnival of the Animals. The possibilities for music choice and choreography are seemingly endless. “Using manipulatives in music class just makes sense,” says King. “It addresses various student learning styles, helps make abstract concepts more concrete, and sometimes is just the hook needed to keep students engaged.”

King’s use of pool noodles in the classroom doesn’t stop at ponies. For an activity called “Noodle Notes,” she slices noodles into different sizes representative of note values,

drawing the appropriate note on each, and has the students group the pieces together to make four-beat measures. King also makes noodles into swords for an activity she calls “Steady Beat Swords” (you can learn about these ideas

and more on her blog).

Pool noodles are a versatile material with which to work.

King’s readers have really taken the pool noodle pony idea and run

with it (or galloped?). She receives photos and videos from all over the country of ponies made with different materials, and gets a kick out of how many teachers and students her pool noodle ponies have reached: “It’s delightful that other people look at my weirdness and say, ‘Oh, my gosh—that’s a great idea!’” ■

“AS ELEMENTARY EDUCATORS, many of us tend to be crafty and a bit thrifty,” says NAFME member Tracy King. King teaches music at Fredericktown Intermediate School in Fredericktown, Missouri, though many know her as “The Bulletin Board Lady,” or from her blog, “Mrs. King’s Music Class” (mrskingrocks.blogspot.com). Her craftiness and thriftiness senses were tingling when she came upon a photo of pool noodle ponies on Pinterest. King “immediately knew that I could use them in my classroom.” Combining the ponies with an activity she recalled from Artie Almeida’s *Parachutes and Ribbons and Scarves, Oh My!* that used stick ponies, she was off on a trip to the 99¢ store to stuff her car full of pool noodles.

King makes pool noodle ponies for her classroom using felt, duct tape, and

wiggly eyes. She says that having the kids make them is a great activity for a summer music camp, but time is limited during the school year so she brings completed ponies into her classroom. “They are not only an inexpensive movement prop: Their novelty keeps students engaged and really ignites their imagination,” she explains. King has children act out horse-themed songs, dancing around the room with their colorful ponies. In addition to classroom favorites adapted for the equestrian theme (“This Is the Way We Walk Our Horse,” “Ten Little Horses”), students can be exposed to classical pieces such as Rossini’s “*William Tell Overture*” and “*Wild Donkeys*” from Saint-Saëns’ *The*

“Their novelty keeps students engaged and really ignites their imagination.”

secondary

BY LORI SCHWARTZ REICHL

Blueprint for a Best-Behaving Band

Management of band rehearsal and performance behavior requires consistency.

NANCY DITMER, professor of music at The College of Wooster in Ohio and Past President of NAFME, has conducted hundreds of secondary school bands. However, the summer of 2016 was the first time she served as conductor for a particular youth band camp. Upon taking up her position on the podium, she was astonished at how much chatter was present amongst the musicians. She knew she had to find a fine line between productive rehearsals and camp fun, so she returned the following summer better prepared.

“The concert is an important musical aspect, but it shouldn’t be as important as the process,” says Ditmer, who insists that classroom management and discipline must be forefront in a conductor’s plan. She notes three aspects of teaching this behavioral process.

1. DECIDE HOW YOU WANT STUDENTS TO

BEHAVE. What are your expectations for students? Do you want the students to be silent during rehearsal? Will you allow for free talk? Will you permit meaningful discussions in the large ensemble or smaller sections? If so, what are the expectations for respecting each speaker?

Ditmer realizes that she can’t expect students to remain silent for an entire 90-, 60-, or even 45-minute rehearsal. She expects silence during rehearsal,

“If my students haven’t met my expectations, 95% of the time I haven’t clearly articulated those expectations.”



“The concert is an important musical aspect, but it shouldn’t be as important as the process.”
—Nancy Ditmer

however, and encourages short moments of downtime between selections. When she steps off the podium, her musicians are permitted to briefly chat with one another while percussionists transition.

2. ESTABLISH A RAPPORT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

Ditmer once had a professor who said to her: “Don’t smile until Christmas.” She doesn’t follow this advice to the extreme, but instead recommends, “Whatever you want your expectations and classroom management style to be, then you must be stern to begin with and go slightly overboard with it.” She suggests that teachers review classroom management scenarios with

students before rehearsing music, and encourages teachers to show students what certain behaviors mean to save time throughout the year. “A cut-off is an invitation to listen, not an invitation to talk” she tells her students. Teachers can’t assume that all students know what to do. “We must articulate our expectations,” Ditmer says. “I’ve found over my long teaching career that if my students haven’t met my expectations, 95% of the time I haven’t clearly articulated those expectations.”

3. BE CONSISTENT WITH EXPECTATIONS. Expectations must be upheld every day—not just on certain days.

As each performance approaches, Ditmer encourages teachers to review concert etiquette, such as reminding students not to wave to parents or gesture to friends in the audience while walking onstage. ■



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The Value of Honor

A Tri-M® chapter can benefit your students with more than just recognition.

JUSTIN CAITHAML knows the value of having an honor society chapter at his school—in his case, one that is affiliated with Tri-M Music Honor Society. “I feel so strongly about Tri-M,” he says. “That’s the vehicle for advocacy, especially in the culture we live in now with high-stakes testing. We have to fight to be relevant in that culture.” Tri-M, which is sponsored by NAFME, welcomes middle school and high school students.

Caithaml is the director of Chapter 2522 of NAFME’s Tri-M honor society at his alma mater, Midview High School in Grafton, Ohio, where he teaches middle and high school choirs. “I was president of this chapter in high school,” he notes, “and now I’m back teaching and serving as an advisor.”

This Tri-M devotee would love to increase membership and awareness of the program. “It’s so important that schools have a Tri-M chapter. A lot of people don’t know that this exists.” He notes that there are currently 30 to 40 chapters across Ohio, and wants students to know it can benefit their lives without depleting their free time. “The biggest thing I’ve found is that it’s not a ton of extra work, and it rewards those students who are going above and beyond and allows them to be recognized for what they are already doing.”

Another reason to start an honor society, Caithaml says, is to help raise

“I am a firm believer in letting the students lead themselves.”



Members of Midview's Tri-M Chapter 2522 work the NAFME booth at Ohio's MEA Conference this past February.

awareness of the music department within the school. “Every year, a lot of schools have a recognition ceremony and recognize Tri-M along with other organizations such as National Honor Society. We are all on an equal playing field.” Caithaml notes that the Tri-M members get to wear pink graduation cords at the ceremony.

Caithaml remarks that his chapter produces the school talent show in March, to correspond with Music In Our Schools Month®. “We invite people from around the school that might not be in choir or band and are interested in making music.” About 350 to 400 people attend the event, and he remarks that the biggest challenge is to empower the students to make their own decisions. “I am a firm believer in letting the students lead themselves. I’m

in the room of course, but I’m not the one leading the meetings.”

He would like to draw more attention to the music department, and has a marketing idea for that. “At high schools, the sports teams have really nice-looking game schedules and posters, and I’ve always envisioned really nice music department posters. It would look professional. Not that we’re competing with sports, but we can take an idea from our colleagues.”

Caithaml offers a great tip for getting the students to come to the 6:45a.m. meetings before school: “I absolutely, 100 percent bribe them with doughnuts. I think we underestimate the simplicity of something like that. It tells people to get there quick, and they come at 6:45, and they want their glazed or frosted before anyone else gets it.”

For more information on starting a Tri-M chapter, see *MusicHonors.com*. ■

★ ★ *WHEN* ★ ★

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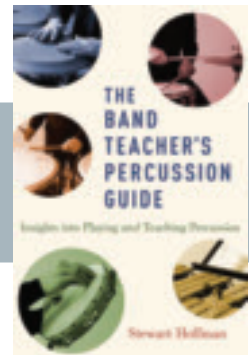
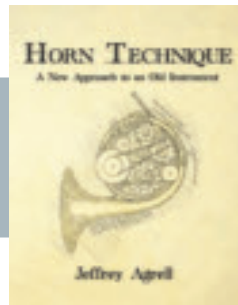
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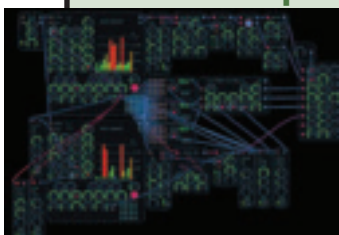
BOOKS ►

Children's Home Musical Experiences Across the World

Edited by Beatriz Ilari and Susan Young (2016, 198 pgs., hardcover \$70.00, paperback \$30.00, eBook \$29.99) This book offers a perspective on home musical activities of young children from countries including Brazil, Denmark, Greece, Israel, Kenya, the Netherlands, Singapore, Spain, South Africa, and Taiwan. Narrowing their study to seven-year-olds from middle-class families, the writers of the articles argue that home musical experiences provide new and important windows into musical childhoods as they relate to issues of identity, family life, gender, culture, social class, and schooling. **Indiana University Press**, iupress.indiana.edu

SOFTWARE ►

eMedia Music Theory Tutor Complete



(\$99.95) The software features over 430 lessons organized to teach the crucial musical elements of rhythm, melody, and harmony with the use of images, audio, interactivity, and practical music theory examples. This music

theory curriculum can take a student from basic music theory for beginners all the way to more advanced music theory, including work in ear training. Users can start with learning how to read music, chord theory, scale construction, and basic chord progressions, and advance to understanding the circle of fifths, chord substitution, chord progression theory, and cadence. The Intelligent Practice feature tracks progress and automatically selects questions to improve weak spots. **eMedia Music Corp**, emediamusic.com

Horn Technique: A New Approach to an Old Instrument

By Jeffrey Agrell (2017, 464 pgs., paperback \$19.9, eBook \$9.99) *Horn Technique* is a look at ways, old and new, to get from one note to another, and includes many musical examples and exercises detailing the most efficient ways in which to teach the instrument to students at all levels. It is a resource for teachers and a road map for serious students that encourages them to combine the book's approach with what they already do and use the book as a springboard to make new discoveries about the best ways to master the instrument. **Wildwind Editions/CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform**, horntechnique.com

The Children's Music Studio: A Reggio-inspired Approach

By Wendell Hanna (2017, 232 pgs., hardcover \$105.00, paperback \$36.95, eBook price varies) This book provides a manual for designing music studios that capture the imagination and creativity of children, and includes studio plans, examples of Reggio-inspired music studio explorations, and documentation of children's work in music studios. Early childhood and elementary music teachers may find this book useful as it provides ideas for Reggio-inspired music teaching and learning techniques that can be integrated into an existing curriculum. **Oxford University Press**, oup.com

The Band Teacher's Percussion Guide: Insights in Playing and Teaching Percussion

By Stewart Hoffman (2017, 256 pgs., hardcover \$105.00, paperback \$27.95, eBook price varies) This resource is for educators and band directors who want to learn more about percussion instruments and playing techniques, refine their percussion-teaching skills, or set the classroom stage for a more effective teaching experience. Hoffman offers this handbook to help set teachers and students on the road to classroom success, and presents a foundation in snare drum, timpani, keyboard percussion, drum set, and more. **Oxford University Press**, oup.com



When Music Goes to School: Perspectives on Learning and Teaching

By Danette Littleton (2015, 172 pgs., hardcover \$60.00, paperback \$30.00, eBook \$30.00) This text aims to disclose a deeper understanding of music's importance in children's lives, and their need to know, explore, wonder, and play. Directed toward music teachers, teacher educators, and scholars, it invites inquiries and provides insights into contemporary challenges to learning and teaching in an era of standardization. A compendium of essays, classroom voices and vignettes is supported by research in music education and companion disciplines. **Rowman & Littlefield**, rowman.com



Habits of a Successful Choir Director

By Eric Wilkinson and Scott Rush (2017, 256 pgs., paperback \$29.95) Wilkinson and Rush have created a guide that presents effective teaching principles and provides a practical approach to everyday issues choir directors face, including program organization and management, teaching the components of singing, rehearsal strategies and ensemble fundamentals, music literacy and repertoire selection, and strategies for assessment. Additional sections address musicianship, classroom management, working with parents and colleagues, the importance of warm-up time, and more. **GIA Publications, Inc.**, giamusic.com



AUDIO RECORDINGS ►

Mundo Verde/ Green World

By Mister G (2017, 11 tracks, CD \$14.99, digital download \$9.99) Mister G's eighth album is a collection of bilingual songs intended to unite people of all ages and ethnicities in support of global conservation and action. The album features collaborations with major figures in the Latin music scene performing an eclectic range of styles, from bomba and samba to reggae and bossa nova. The album's title track is a samba-inspired ode to the wonders of the natural world, and its final track, "Las Estrellas," inspired by the great Brazilian master Antonio Carlos Jobim, features Cuban/Mexican jazz legend Arturo O'Farrill. **Coil Records**, mistersongs.com



Trippin' Round the Mitten

By Randy Kaplan (2017, 18 tracks, CD \$14.99, digital download \$9.99) This album is a stream-of-consciousness collection where Randy raps and sings his way through songs and parodies about noses, mitten-shaped states, beach antipathy, doo-wop kings, food costumes, sugar traps, Mars missions, and more. Like his earlier albums, it contains skits and dialogue woven into the numbers. Songs include "Honk Honk," "Beach Song," "Mr. Bassman," "Sugar," "Every Second Counts," "Jungle," "Comb Your Ears," "Cat & Mice," "Sleeping Dog," "Mr. Spaceman," "Bye Bye Baby," and others. **Yellow Thing Records & Books**, randykaplan.com



INSTRUMENTS ►

Epiphone Les Paul SL

By Epiphone (\$99.00) The SL is an affordable two-pickup Les Paul that is available in six colors, and has a lightweight poplar body that's slimmer than a vintage model, making it easy to hold for new players. The bolt-on mahogany neck has a traditional 24.75" scale with an easy-to-play profile and pearloid dot inlays. The headstock has the look of a classic Les Paul with the "clipped ear" design and bell-shaped truss rod cover seen on vintage models. The neck and bridge pickups are ceramic single-coil, and were designed to provide a tight low-end response with a smooth mid-range and a slightly more pronounced top-end tone. Controls include volume and tone with traditional black ABS "top hat" knobs, as well as a three-way pickup selector. Other features include an adjustable truss rod and chrome hardware; an optional hard case is available. **Epiphone Guitar Corp.**, epiphone.com

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Audulus LLC, audulus.com

Informusic—Classical Music History & Composer App

By Informusic (for iOS \$2.99, for Android, \$0.99) This app provides in-depth information on Western art music's greatest composers and compositions, from the Medieval era, through the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic eras, with more expansions to come. Users can instantly access information such as composer biographies, quick facts, and complete works, along with program notes, sheet music, audio samples, and suggested further scholarship. The app also offers interactive timelines that enable users to scroll through the chronology of a composer's life and greatest achievements, helping to contextualize musical events with art, literature, politics, and beyond. Informusic LLC, informusic.com





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DAISY JOPLING

CLASSICAL/ROCK VIOLINIST Daisy Jopling, who was born in London and currently lives in New York, has played as a solo artist at London's Royal Albert Hall (at the tender age of 14!), toured the world with the Daisy Jopling Band and the creative string trio Triology, recorded eight CDs, and composed music that has been performed in major concert venues throughout the world. A documentary film about the *The String Pulse Experience* (see below) has aired on Mountain Lake PBS and is planned for a national PBS airing in 2018. Learn more about Daisy and her music at daisyjoplingband.com.

What is your most memorable moment as a musician so far? My most memorable experience is performing for 30,000 people at the opening of the Vienna Festival; it was an extraordinarily uplifting moment for me.

You have the capacity to be greater than your wildest dreams in every way.

What is *The String Pulse Experience*? *The String Pulse Experience* is an original show created by me in collaboration with rhythm specialist Michael Feigenbaum and flutist/composer/producer Brian Delma Taylor. The music is incredibly eclectic, spanning from gypsy, reggae, Irish folk music, and classical to rock and pop. It is scored for my band, soloists, and students to be able to play in string orchestras, wind and brass bands, and choirs. We also have a lighting design and projections made especially for the show. The students are mentored by world-class professional musicians for one to six months, and then perform alongside them on a major stage.

What's next on the horizon for you? We are creating a concert for the Earth at the Theater at Madison Square Garden, with a 1,000-child choir. I have already worked with 930 choral students, so we are pulling them together and adding a few more.

Can you tell us about your foundation? The Daisy Jopling Foundation (daisyjoplingfoundation.org) creates extraordinary musical experiences that enrich lives and empower youth to become more confident, creative, and empathetic human beings.

Why do you feel that music education is important for kids today? Music education is about self-expression and listening, which requires the student to be rooted in the awareness of the moment and to be in touch with what they are experiencing and feeling. We have also noticed our students empowered on many levels—more confident in everything they do, and in who they are.

What advice do you have for kids who want to follow in your footsteps—and music educators who want to help them? For the students: I want to remind each one of you that whatever dream you have, it is absolutely possible for you to create it. You have the capacity to be greater than your wildest dreams in every way. Stay open to help coming your way from the most unexpected places. It is there waiting for you. And for the music educators: Thank you. Please know that you are honored and profoundly valued by all professional musicians, and all whose lives you and your students touch.



Photo Credit: Bob Davidson

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