The Vermont Music Educator

December 2009

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The UNIVERSITY of VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
Twas the weekend before Thanksgiving, and there on my Mac
Was the latest edition, complete from front to back.
I dashed off a copy at home, then to the printer it went,
And I affixed all the labels showing to whom it would be sent.

Once delivered, I hoped it would fill recipients with joy,
Like a oboe playing in tune or a great singing boy.
The goal, as always is help those who teach,
by sharing ideas and great things within reach.

I hope you’ll excuse me for writing this silly little rhyme;
but this is what happens when there's space to fill and no time!

May you enjoy whatever holidays you celebrate at this time of year. Best wishes.

-Denis

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President’s Message

Are You New At This?

Pat Roberts
VMEA President

One of the perks of VMEA presidency is that there is no shortage of reading material. In fact, as president, I am sent copies of MEA journals from many or all other states. I couch that statement in those terms because the journals arrive one at a time, from zero to four in a given day, and I don’t have all of the states’ journals yet. I read them as time allows, and they are wonderful publications. Ours, I’ll have you know, compares very nicely to those of other states, and we can all be proud of this. Thanks, Denis, and thanks to all who contribute articles - past, present, and future.

I mention other states’ journals because in scrolling through one of them I saw an article title much like the one that I just used, “Are you new at this?” I was alone in the room (I hope) so I responded verbally used, “Are you new at this?” I was alone in the room (I hope) so I responded verbally.

For those of you who ARE new teachers, you might be preparing to give your first concert ever. I hope that you and your students have the time of your lives. I also hope that all of you first-year teachers have found something of a support network. I know from experience that this can be difficult, especially if you happen to be the only music teacher in your school. Encourage all of you to reach out to colleagues and ask every question imaginable.

In closing, I offer a “thank you” and a “welcome”. To Carrie Kohl and all who worked so hard to put together a fantastic conference, THANK YOU. Your professionalism and your enthusiasm are truly inspiring. I extend a very warm thank you to Andrew Parker and the 2009 Conference Chair, Carrie Kohl. I also extend a warm thank you to the 2008 Conference Chair, Emily Bresnahan, and Robin Clary. They worked so hard to put together a “welcome” . To Carrie Kohl and all who worked so hard to put together a fantastic conference, THANK YOU. Your professionalism and your enthusiasm are truly inspiring. I extend a very warm thank you to the 2008 Conference Chair, Carrie Kohl, and Robin Clary.

In my former state of Montana, I had the pleasure to meet one of the most respected high school band directors in that part of the country. He told me a story of a recent epiphany. Although this director was highly successful, he felt as though he just wasn’t able to achieve quite what he wanted, and he was starting to burn out. His epiphany came in the form of a question to himself, “What did I want from my high school music experience when I was seventeen?” He told me that everything changed for him when he began viewing his program through the lens of this question. He got to be a new teacher again. Good for him!

I really do have lots of things figured out: things that I should do, and more importantly, things that I shouldn’t do. Still, every year I find new ways of approaching this or that, and inspiration often comes from the most unlikely sources. As you veteran teachers might agree, it’s this constant phase of rediscovery that makes our profession so wonderful. Really, can any of you even imagine having a job for 30 years that you completely figured out in your second year? Thank goodness I’m still new at this.

To all, a happy holiday season full of family, friends, food, and music.
Music History

The (Short) Rise of Female Swing Bands During World War II

Lindsey W. Hammack

This article originally appeared in the Spring 2008 issue of Bluegrass Music News, Kentucky’s journal of music education. Reprinted with permission.

When we think of the “Swing Era” of the 1930s and ’40s, the names of some great musicians—Ellington, Basie, Miller, Goodman, Shaw, the Dorsey-spring to mind. If we try to summon from memory the names of great female musicians from that time, the few that we are most likely to recall are those of singers, such as Lena Horne or Ella Fitzgerald. Seldom mentioned are the female instrumentalists who dominated the American music scene during the years of World War II.

Other than as singers who “fronted” them, women were rarely, if ever, to be found among the members of the famous “big bands” of the Swing Era. However, as recounted in Sherrie Tucker’s book, Swing Shift, the numerous “all-girl” bands that managed to gain a tenuous foothold prior to the war were to become a significant cultural force during the years of that conflict.

Prior to the United States’ entry into World War II following the Pearl Harbor attack of December 1941, the all-girl bands faced great difficulty in obtaining steady work due to the preference given to bands of male musicians. Although there were many women around the country practicing, rehearsing and performing at a high level in many cases as proficiently as that of the more famous male musicians—the prevailing social attitude precluded them from being taken seriously. They were seen as pursuing something akin to a hobby, one that served as a distraction from their domestic responsibilities. Nevertheless, many women persisted in their musical ambitions.

Unfortunately, due to the dismissive attitude toward women musicians, few primary sources are available from which to learn about the female swing bands. One of the most engaging is a short (30-minute) film about one of the best-known “all-girl” bands of the time, the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. When I first watched the film, I longed to know more about the women who made up what I assumed was a unique ensemble in its time. What I learned, however, was that as good as the International Sweethearts were, they were not unique; they were only one of many all-female bands. The lack of readily available information speaks volumes about the relatively low value placed on the music made by women during the Swing Era, not only in the eyes of the broader society, but in those of their male counterparts, even of those women who could, as some put it, “really play.” (Tucker, 204)

The growth in opportunity for female bands began even before the onset of American involvement in the war. The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 established the first peacetime military draft in the history of the United States, taking effect in December of that year, almost precisely a year before the Pearl Harbor attack. Musicians were not exempt from the draft, although white musicians—particularly well-known ones—who were inducted into the armed forces were likely to be assigned to play in a service band. Black musicians typically went into the general pool of troops, generally with domestic or other types of maintenance or manual duties.

With the commencement of the draft, men began leaving home for bases throughout the U.S. and abroad to fulfill their military responsibilities. The resulting shortage of male musicians created opportunities for women in the music business. As the nation became fully engaged in the war effort, the only remaining male musicians were those who were too old (or in a few cases, too young), or who were medically ineligible to serve. (Interestingly, such disabilities often did not insulate these men from speculation that they were somehow less than patriotic.) Some of the opportunities that were created for women musicians were not without a downside, as musicians, especially female ones, were often expected to contribute their services for free at War Bond rallies and other events in support of the war effort.

Despite their increased public visibility, however, women musicians, like the other working women represented by the iconic “Rosie the Riveter,” were perceived only as place holders for the men, “pitching in” as timely replacements “until the boys come home.” Little consideration was given to the possibility of allowing women to take a more active permanent role in any career field, including music.

Even with the openings created by the absence of so many male musicians, obstacles remained for the women striving to earn a living as instrumentalists. The most popular “all-girl” bands were those which emphasized beauty and glamour as a part of their presentation. In order to be accepted in what was considered a male role, women in bands had to look clean, polished, young and bright. For this reason, leaders of all-girl bands would usually only hire in person, and they based their decisions at least partly on personal appearance. The appearance of the members of the band was critical to the ability to book and keep steady “gigs.” The “glamour factor” remains an important factor in today’s musical culture, as evidenced by the appearance and behavior of the most successful female musicians.

It is challenging today to maintain a glamorous image while on tour, and it must have far more difficult in the 1940s, when all but the most famous and financially stable bands travelled by bus, train or automobile. During the Swing Era, touring was essential to professional survival. Although phonograph record sales and jukebox play were important factors in a band’s success, the word-of-mouth notoriety that a band could
Female Swing Bands

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generate was a more significant factor in stimulating radio play than is the case today. Bands counted themselves fortunate if they were booked every night of the week, and they often had engagements many miles apart on consecutive nights. The difficulty of mundane chores such as laundry and maintaining hair and makeup were magnified considerably by the challenges of life on the road. Further compounding the difficulty was the necessity of performing in dressy attire, often long evening gowns. Obviously, this would have been a much less significant burden for men, who generally wore tuxedoes, or sometimes business suits.

Despite the travails of touring, most women were excited about having the opportunity to perform and to travel more broadly than most people in those days had the chance to do. Some viewed their efforts as an expression of their patriotism in time of war. Others saw it as a “ticket out” of a difficult home life or a “dead-end” existence, or as an opportunity for adventure.

If maintaining a suitable appearance was an encumbrance for female ensembles in general, it presented an even more serious impediment for the African-American all-girl bands. In addition to the challenges faced by their white counterparts, African-Americans faced the additional complication -- and often physical dangers -- of racial discrimination. In the South, especially, the impact of the “Jim Crow” laws on obtaining food, lodging, and even restrooms that they could use added to the trials borne by African-American female musicians.

Of course, legally-sanctioned racial discrimination extended beyond the American South. American troops were completely segregated in every aspect of their lives: travel, living accommodations, unit assignments, and battle. This practice included the USO shows and other entertainment that was provided for them. Bands were expected to be either all-white or all-black, and each performed only for troops of their own race, with rare exceptions. From today’s perspective, the existence of such practices in the midst of a war against the practitioners of the ideology of a “master race” seems ironic, to say the least.

The Bands

As noted previously, while the war years were the heyday of female bands, many of them originated prior to America’s entry into the conflict. In 1937, Lawrence C. Jones organized a band of students at the Piney Woods Country Life School, an institution for poor and orphaned children near Jackson, Mississippi. These musicians, aged fourteen to nineteen, were known as the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. After establishing a local reputation, they broke with the school under circumstances that are still unclear and headed to Washington, DC, where they obtained the services of an agent and began to tour.

At that time, being identified as “International” did not necessarily carry a positive connotation with the public. This was especially an issue in the Jim Crow South, and particularly so in the case of the Sweethearts, whose primarily African-American membership included at various times women of Puerto Rican and Chinese heritage (baritone saxophonist Willie Mae Wong). This mixed racial makeup was tolerated until 1943, when two white women joined the band. In many places, these musicians would have to “get blacked up”—use makeup to darken their skin—to avoid arrest for illegal racial “mixing.” Police would approach the stage and examine the women visually to try to determine if any whites were among the group. This was a serious issue for the band as well as for the individuals “passing” for black, because contracts specified that if, say, only fourteen or fifteen of the contracted 16-piece band appeared at the gig, they might not be allowed to perform or get paid.

The Sweethearts toured American bases in Europe for the USO, during which they were financially exploited by their manager Rae Lee Jones. Even so, the members of the band formed such strong personal bonds that some of them turned down far more lucrative offers in order to stay with the ensemble.

Another nominally “black” female band that chose to include a white woman was the Darlings of Rhythm. Perhaps the white member, trumpeter Toby Butler, was a good enough musician that the rest of the band was willing to accept the risks that her inclusion entailed. As it happened, Butler was in fact arrested at one point, and her imprisonment was only avoided when the very light-skinned band leader convinced the officers that Butler was her cousin!

Despite a strong musical reputation, the Darlings did not match the commercial success of the International Sweethearts of Rhythm, and a comparison of the two bands’ photos suggests a possible reason. The members of the Darlings, while attractive and neatly attired, are not as well-dressed as the Sweethearts, nor do they appear to have been as well-coached in posing for the camera. For example, not all of them are smiling in what would have been perceived as a “sweet,” “feminine” manner.

The necessity of acting “feminine” was not the greatest challenge faced by some women musicians, black or white. Although the term “sexual harassment” was not in common usage, its practice was not unknown. Women who auditioned for Phil Spitalny’s Hour of Charm, a white ensemble, recounted tales of appearing at Spitalny’s hotel room door at the agreed-upon hour to find the band leader in his underwear. Some women were intimidated by this, while others found it amusing. Those who managed to play well enough to make the band in spite of such distractions, however, generally obtained a highly desirable job. The Hour of Charm embodied the “feminine” ideal. Presumably the same resources that allowed the band to include such enhancements as violinists and a harpist afforded the opportunity for high-quality clothes and careful grooming.

While many of the all-girl bands were founded, managed or led by men, some were “fronted” by women. One who exemplified the “glamour factor” was the stunningly beautiful Ada Leonard. A veteran of burlesque “strip” shows (which were far more reserved than those with which the term is associated today), Leonard aspired to a career as featured singer with one of the famous all-male bands. However, she got involved with a newly-established female band— the dismay of some members, owing to
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Female Swing Bands

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her previous mode of employment—and became its leader through an extended period of success.

Although Leonard was a strong musician, even the women in the band realized that her appearance would be an asset in attracting audiences. She often had to tolerate suggestive comments from audience members who were aware of her professional past. Because its members were white, Ada Leonard’s All-Girl Orchestra (later “Revue”) did not face the racial oppression that was such a part of the International Sweethearts’ experience. However, they were, like many female groups, exploited mercilessly by male agents and by the USO, which had them playing two shows a day, six days a week, travelling enormous distances, and sometimes being expected to give free shows on their one weekly day off. This band was noted for its musicianship, which was not an unqualified benefit. “As the band’s sound swung harder, the jazzier arrangements, more up-tempo numbers, and more improvised solos, its look became softer, as if to ensure the band’s overall reception as acceptably feminine.” (Tucker, 283)

Traditional notions of femininity were also challenged by the Prairie View Co-Eds, and as its members were women of color, they also had to deal with the typical privations imposed by the Jim Crow system. But these young women faced the challenge of yet another pernicious stereotype. The Co-Eds were members of the student body at Prairie View College, at the time the only four-year college in Texas available to African-Americans. Many people perceived education as unnecessary and perhaps even undesirable for either blacks or women. The spectacle of an ensemble of educated, black female instrumental musicians must have provoked great discomfort for a substantial portion of society.

The women of Prairie View maintained normal academic schedules, performing on weekends, and touring when classes were not in session. They were well-chaperoned during their playing engagements in nightclubs and on military bases. The band became so popular that they performed at New York City’s Apollo Theater, a mecca of jazz and swing music. Perhaps their biggest impact was on the African-American servicemen for whom they performed. The idea of bright young black women achieving success despite the resistance of a racist society must surely have been inspirational to those risking their lives to defend that same society.

The Demise of the All-Girl Bands

When World War II ended in 1945, the female swing bands did not experience an immediate effect. Many troops remained in Europe, Japan and other parts of the world, as well as on bases within the U.S. for some time. For at least the next year, USO shows continued to feature all-girl bands. However, as servicemen began to return home and be discharged from the armed forces, the female bands faced new obstacles. Throughout American society, women were expected to give up their places in the work force to the returning soldiers, sailors and airmen. It was generally considered selfish or unpatriotic to resist.

Of course, some women left the music business willingly, many to marry and begin families. Others, however, tried to sustain their hard-won careers. While it became increasingly difficult to maintain “big bands” from a financial perspective, condensed versions of some ensembles managed to stay in business for several years following the war. Some of the women even obtained work as solo acts, but even these had to face negative reaction for supposedly driving male musicians out of work.

The female bands of the Swing Era faced a variety of challenges, nearly always related to contemporary dogma as to what constituted appropriate social roles for women, as well as racial discrimination in the case of bands with African-American or “mixed race” membership. Despite these challenges, and despite the brevity of their time in the spotlight, the female bands demonstrated that women were musically competent and fully capable of sustaining careers as performers. For their artistic accomplishments and for their tenacity in the face of many obstacles, they serve as exemplars for all musicians, male as well as female, to this day.

Lindsey Hammack teaches band at Paducah Middle School in Kentucky. You can reach her by email: lindsey.hammack@paducah.kyschool.us.

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I often try to imagine what the future holds in terms of technology. I’ve been reflecting on past developments and predicting what teachers and students will use for learning and teaching over the next five years. Developments are so rapid that it’s a challenge to keep up and think forward.

Do you remember Moore’s law? In 1965, the founder of Intel suggested that technology would double in processing speed and memory capacity every 2 years. My recollection of my first computer purchased in 1984 was that it had 128KB of memory. Today, a brand new computer might include up to 6 GB of memory. Some computers already come with 1TB (terabyte) and since 2007 there have been external hard drive storage models with terabyte capacity. A terabyte is 1000 gigabytes.

So what technology will we be using in five years? The increase in memory capacity alone reminds us of the rapid changes. With terabytes today and petabytes looming on the horizon, just how soon will we require exabyte storage or more with zettabyte or even yottabyte disks? What will all this memory be filled with? What will our classrooms look like in 5 years? And, a bigger question: How can technology help shape new learning environments and pedagogical attitudes? I’d like to think technology can help move us forward toward the more student centered, constructivist learning environments research supports for improved student learning and whole child development. Our 21st century learning goals require us to think differently and respond. Students are ready for this new environment; are their teachers, administrators, school boards, parents and communities? That battle seems the most challenging for me. Change is a challenge. It always has been and no doubt, it always will be. We face change all the time in our personal experiences and in our educational lives. Some choices we make ourselves and others are made for us. Some decisions were good and others perhaps not. Nonetheless, we can grow from the experience and hopefully learned something to move forward. Education seems so resistant to real change. We talk about it a lot, but the changes seem superficial to me and often are retracted or toned down later. Perhaps it’s because change is often top down from administration rather than bottom up - from the teachers and students who often have the best insights.

I wish I had a crystal ball. Then I’d know how to advise teachers who ask. I’d know what technology I should learn to use and investigate their potential for education. But no one I know is psychic, so we must observe new developments and listen to others across the country. One way to be an observer and listener is to participate in professional development. There are many opportunities available: workshops sessions, full day and half day hands-on sessions, online courses, local in-service, more traditional college courses, and summer institutes. With so much rapid change, this is the time to investigate possibilities for your future. Can you think of one new technology tool you’d like to know more about and how it could be used for increased learning with your students? Use the VMEA website technology discussion <www.vmea.org> to find out upcoming offerings and what others are doing. Consider spending one professional development time with technology this year. Perhaps then you can use your own intuition and the thoughts of others to predict the future in music education.
Vermont Music Educator “Hall of Fame” Nomination Form 2010-2011

Please complete and return this form to the State Divisions Coordinator by December 31, 2009.

Nominator’s Contact Information:
Name: ______________________________________________________________________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________________________________________
City: __________________________________________________________________________________________
State & Zip Code: _________________________________________________________________________________
Phones: ________________________________________________________________________________________
Emails: _________________________________________________________________________________________

[1] Music Educator of the Year 2009-2010, for outstanding professionalism and contributions to music education and children. The VMEA Executive Board has resolved to consider all nominees from throughout Vermont to determine one music educator in this category for the Vermont Music Educators Hall of Fame.
Nominee’s Name: ____________________________________________________________________________ District: ______________________
School (s): __________________________________________________________________________________
Grade Levels: __________ & Specialization(s): (Vocal, Instrumental, General, Other,?) ___________________________
Please provide some details showing how this recognition has been earned ____________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________

[2] Outstanding New Music Educator of the Year 2009-2010, for impacting music education and children within the first five years of service. The VMEA Executive Board has resolved to consider all nominees from throughout Vermont to determine one music educator in this category for the Vermont Music Educators Hall of Fame.
Nominee’s Name: ____________________________________________________________________________ District: ______________________
School (s): __________________________________________________________________________________
Grade Levels: __________ & Specialization(s): (Vocal, Instrumental, General, Other,?) ___________________________
Please provide some details showing how this recognition has been earned ____________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________

[3] Special Recognition for Contributions to Music Education Award 2009-2010, recognizing music educators, non music educators, or organizations, individuals living or deceased, employed or retired, who have made significant contributions to Music Education in Vermont in the present or the past. The VMEA Executive Board has resolved to consider all nominees from throughout Vermont to determine not more than two entities for recognition in this category for the Vermont Music Educators Hall of Fame.
Nominee’s Name: ____________________________________________________________________________ District: ______________________
School (s): __________________________________________________________________________________
Grade Levels: __________ & Specialization(s): (Vocal, Instrumental, General, Other,?) ___________________________
Please provide some details showing how this recognition has been earned ____________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________

[4] Veteran Music Educator Award, Class of 2009-2010, recognizing music educators for twenty five years or more of service to music education and children. The VMEA Executive Board has resolved to recognize all music educators who qualify for this award category of the Vermont Music Educators Hall of Fame, as verified by the district represented.
Nominee’s Name: ____________________________________________________________________________ District: ______________________
School (s): __________________________________________________________________________________
Grade Levels: __________ & Specialization(s): (Vocal, Instrumental, General, Other,?) ___________________________
Total Years of Service __________________________
Nominee’s Name: ____________________________________________________________________________ District: ______________________
School (s): __________________________________________________________________________________
Grade Levels: __________ & Specialization(s): (Vocal, Instrumental, General, Other,?) ___________________________
Total Years of Service __________________________
The time has come once again to begin the process of recognizing Music Educators of Vermont for extraordinary levels of success and accomplishment and contributions to music education in Vermont. Every individual is encouraged to take a moment to forward the names of Vermont music educators for consideration at the district and state level to be recognized for contributions to music education in Vermont.

The VMEA Executive Board will inform the chairpersons of each district regarding music educators from respective districts, so that those individuals may be integrated into the process utilized by any one district for recognition. The board will also select from among all those nominated by the general membership, those individuals to be recognized at the state level.

You are encouraged to give consideration to Music Educators at all levels and all areas of specialization.

Please send your nominations to Bear Irwin, District Divisions Coordinator by December 31, 2009. Please use and/or adapt the form provided on the facing page, as well as any of the “sending” means (email is preferred) provided. Nominations can also be submitted using the form at the VMEA website <vmea.org>. You should expect confirmation that your nominations have been received and are included in the process. If you don't receive confirmation, please try again.

A description of the award categories follows:

Music Educator of the Year - for outstanding professionalism and contributions to music education and children. The VMEA Executive Board has resolved to consider all nominees from throughout Vermont to determine one music educator in this category for the Vermont Music Educators Hall of Fame.

Veteran Music Educator Award - recognizing music educators for twenty five years or more of service to music education and children. The VMEA Executive Board has resolved to recognize all music educators who qualify for this award category of the Vermont Music Educators Hall of Fame, as verified by the district represented.

Special Recognition for Contributions to Music Education - recognizing music educators, non music educators, or organizations, individuals living or deceased, employed or retired, who have made significant contributions to Music Education in Vermont in the present or the past. The VMEA Executive Board has resolved to consider all nominees from throughout Vermont to determine not more than two entities for recognition in this category for the Vermont Music Educators Hall of Fame.

Thank you for your help and participation.
Performance Practice

Guidelines for Getting Your Money’s Worth When Hiring a Band

David Killam

Editor’s Note: You may wish to photocopy this article and share it with event organizers who may not realize the logistics involved in a music performance.

Often the fee you pay covers band management costs but individual members are not paid. Properly treating and appreciating these volunteers can serve you well. Following is a list of “do’s” and “don’ts” some of which are mere common courtesy while others might be easily missed by one unaware of the requirements for successful musical performance.

★ Have restrooms available immediately upon musicians’ arrival.
★ Provide ample parking adjacent to set-up area. Many must carry large instruments.
★ Outdoor concerts require indoor contingency provisions in case of bad weather.
★ Anything over an hour and a quarter becomes unwieldy for both amateur performers and audience and should be attempted only with appropriate accommodations including reasonable break times.
★ Provide adequate lighting. (Never expect band members or their director to face into the sun in an outdoor late afternoon or early evening performance.)
★ Make sure adequate space is provided. A stage MUST BE EMPTY!!!
★ Don’t ever expect one group to work around instruments, equipment and wiring set up to accommodate another group to be performing later.
★ When multiple groups are to perform, provide adequate set-up time between one group and the next.
★ Don’t expect a band to compete with sirens, carnival ride noises or any other excessive sound.
★ Provide live electrical outlets.
★ Requests for specific selections can be honored only when music has been provided sufficiently in advance to allow for necessary preparation time.
★ A band to perform on a moving flat bed trailer requires chairs.
★ Control unruly members of an audience. Children must be supervised by adults.
★ Cold drinks on hot days or hot drinks in cold weather are especially appreciated.
★ Ask well ahead of time what other accommodations the group will need.
★ Extend verbal “thank you’s” to musicians.

Best wishes for a successful event.

Retired from over 35 years of teaching, David Killam resides in Columbia, N.H., where he formerly also served as school board member. An avid birder, gardener, and writer, he has received numerous awards, including state Teacher of the Year, induction into the New Hampshire Music Educators Hall of Fame, and the NH Audubon Society Goodhue-Elkins award. Mr. Killam performs in numerous venues on piano and euphonium. His book “Fussin’s, Cussin’s and Chucklin’s” is published by Xlibris <www.Xlibris.com>.

“...[M]usicians paint pictures on silence. We provide the music, and you provide the silence!”
- Leopold Stokowski, speaking to an audience

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Keene State College is a comprehensive, public liberal arts college accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, the New Hampshire Council for Teacher Education, among other accrediting agencies. Its 5,767 full- and part-time students are enrolled in 114 programs of study. There are nine music programs of study available to the 110 music majors and minors at Keene State.

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Facilities

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Auditions

An audition is required for admission to the Music Department. Auditions during the 2009-10 academic year will be held on the following Fridays:

- November 20
- January 29
- February 19
- March 5
- March 26

For an audition application or more information, call, e-mail, or write:
Ms. Barbara Hamel
Music Department
Keene State College
229 Main Street
Keene, NH 03435-2402
603-358-2177
music@keene.edu
http://music.keene.edu

Performance Groups

There are 20 music ensembles to meet a wide array of interests. All KSC students, regardless of academic major, are eligible to participate in any performing group. An audition is required for some groups. For a detailed listing, visit music.keene.edu.

Scholarships

Three $12,000 Academic Talent Scholarships are awarded each year to incoming freshmen. Students must audition by March 5, 2010, and receive a nomination by the KSC faculty audition committee. Many other scholarships, grants, loans, and work opportunities are available through the College, with the majority of KSC students receiving some form of financial assistance.

Scholarships

Music Faculty

Full-Time Faculty
Donald Baldini, B.M. Indiana
James Chesebrough, D.M.A. University of Connecticut
Joseph Darby, Ph.D. City University of New York
Heather Gilligan, D.M.A. Boston University
Maura Glennon, D.M. Florida State
Sandi Howard, Ph.D. University of Missouri-Kansas City
Carroll Lehman, D.M.A. Iowa
José Lezcano, Ph.D. Florida State
George Loring, M.M. New England Conservatory
Craig Sylvern, D.M.A. Ohio State

Lecturers and Adjunct Faculty
Robert Blake, B.M. Northwestern University
James Boccia, M.A.L.S. SUNY-Stony Brook
Flynn Cohen, M.A. Mills College
Diane Cushing, M.M. Boston Conservatory
Donna Dearth, M.Ed. Keene State
Joy Fleming, M.A. University of Akron
Julian Gerstl, Ph.D. University of California
Elaine Broad Ginsberg, D.M.A. University of Cincinnati
Sussan Henkel, M.M. Northwestern University
Rebecca Krause-Hardie, B.M. Juilliard
Marcia Lehnder, M.M. University of Connecticut
Ted Mann, M.A. University of New Hampshire
Robin Mathias, M.A. City College of New York
Andrea Matthews, M.M. Holy Names University
Scott Mullett, Berklee College of Music
Lillian Pearson, D.M. Florida State University
Timothy Rogers, M.M. Bob Jones University
Pamela Stevens, B.A. Central Missouri State
Christopher Swist, M.M. University of Hartford
Heather Teed, M.M. UMass Amherst
Kim Wallach, M.Ed. Antioch University
R. Scott White, M.M. Boston University
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So, You’re Going to Have a Student Teacher

Bill Patterson

The following article originally appeared in the Winter 2008 issue of Maryland Music Educator. Reprinted with permission.

You are now going to be responsible for the final instruction of a new music educator. How can you make this a valuable experience for them and still maintain the integrity of your program?

You need to plan and plan more than you ever have for your own teaching.

First, prepare a packet of materials for the student teacher that includes:

- The schedule of your classes and when they are taught.
- A campus map and a list of faculty, a copy of the teacher code of conduct for your campus, the expectation of the professional dress code for staff members.
- Any concert schedule and performances and/or festivals your students will participate.
- The student discipline procedure manual, and referral forms used by your campus.
- Lists of dates for meetings they will need to attend that are before or after the work day.

Plan to meet prior to the first day your student teacher will come to school to go over the packet of materials you have prepared. Send the packet to the student teacher so they may come prepared to discuss and ask questions in regards to the campus and your expectations of them. Plan a time to walk the student teacher around the campus to become familiar with the office, restrooms, faculty lounge, and the teacher work room. Show the student teacher how to use the Xerox machine and any other equipment in the teacher workroom that they will need. Talk ahead of time to the school administration about getting keys for appropriate buildings and gates the student teacher will need to access. If they will be using your school computer, talk to tech services to get the student teacher set up with a password and a school e-mail account so they receive all the important campus communications. Don’t let them use your account, as you will be liable for any location they would happen to visit on the web.

Treat your student teacher as a professional in front of students, addressing them by Mr. Miss, Ms., or Mrs. Do not use their first name in front of the students.

What should you be teaching them? First, you need to model lessons for them and have them evaluate what you are doing and explain why you are doing things the way you are. Your lesson plans need to be shared with the student teacher and there needs to be time to discuss them before instruction, as well as a time to debrief after instruction to talk about what worked and what didn't. This type of observation should last for a week or two.

Their first teaching experience needs to be something they feel comfortable with and you need to be the evaluator, taking notes rather than interrupting them when they do something wrong. ALL your corrections and dialogue needs to be away from students and in private, not in the teachers lounge with your colleagues available to hear or add their two cents’ worth.

If you happen to have a class that repeats itself at a different period, model instruction for the student teacher and then allow them to try and mirror your lesson the following period. Ask the student teacher to self-evaluate, and then provide your observation of the lesson. Whatever you do, try to find positive comments to make them feel good about the experience. Ask questions like “What did you feel good about?” “What would you do differently?” “How did you feel when ____ happened?” “Is there anything you would like me to model for you again?” Use messages that make them reflect, not I messages such as “I would have...” “I don't understand why you did...” I didn't like seeing when you...” “I wouldn't have done...” All of these statements are negative and could lower the self-esteem of the student teacher.

Next, you need to start letting them get their feet wet by doing a lesson of their own. You certainly can tell them what it is you want them to teach, but they must work up a lesson plan and go over it with you before they teach. If they do not have one prepared, do not let them in front of the class. They will almost always have too much prepared and think they can get more done in the allocated time then they have available.

Try to allow the student teacher to have a performance built into their student teaching experience. You will want to choose the musical selections since you know the ability of the group and where you want them to be when the student teacher is done, especially if they are with you in the fall semester. The student teacher should fill out all facility forms, even if you have done so in the spring for the following school year. They also should be responsible for making the concert program and arranging for time to setup the performance area.

During the course of student teaching, you should expose them to fieldtrip requests and have them fill out some and get them approved by the administration regardless if the trip is real or not. They also should work up a budget of items to submit, including new capital items, a music budget and a repair budget. Have this submitted to the school administration and also plan to have them meet to justify the budget and do any revisions the administration would suggest. You might want to go over how they need to fill in specifications to get the correct brand and quality of instruments being ordered.

Make an appointment for the student teacher to go through a mock interview with the campus administration and have the administration go over what they could have done better or how to improve for when they have their first interview for a real job.

Continued on Page 16
Vocal Music

Vermont ACDA, Alive and Well

Frank Whitcomb
VT-ACDA President

The Vermont Chapter of the American Choral Director’s Association (ACDA) is growing and is expected to make a big splash at this year’s Eastern Division Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. First acknowledgements should go to our outstanding singers who prepared audition recordings at the end of the previous school year, competing with hundreds of other students for positions in these very select and prestigious performing organizations. The following students will be representing our state at the convention in February:

Women’s Honor Choir

Hannah Chambers, North Country Union High School; Anne Hamilton, Director
Kaleigh Clowery, North Country Union High School; Anne Hamilton, Director
Leah Cornelius, North Country Union High School; Anne Hamilton, Director
Julia Doiron, Mill River Union High School; Mary Ellen Harlow, Director
Emy Geer, Essex High School; Glory Koch, Director
Lydia Koch, Essex High School; Glory Koch, Director
Alyssa Karol, St. Johnsbury Academy; Alan Rowe, Director
Tess Lebowitz, Lyndon Institute; Esther Holland, Director
Olivia Root, B.F.A. Fairfax; Melissa Towle, Director

Men’s Honor Choir

Robert Little, Burlington High School; Frank Whitcomb, Director
Zach Smejkal, Mt. Mansfield Union High School; Caleb Pillsbury, Director
Benjamin Stevens, North Country Union High School; Anne Hamilton, Director
Mark Tkach, Essex High School; Glory Koch, Director

Children’s Choir

Elizabeth Sachsse, Kathy Sherlock-Green, Teacher

Congratulations are also in order to Larry Gordon and Patty Cuyler and their performing ensemble Northern Harmony, which was selected to perform along with some 40 + performing ensembles as representatives of their respective states. Again, it is a distinct honor for any ensemble that is selected to perform for this convention, and we are proud to have Northern Harmony representing our state in February.

Vermont ACDA is a dynamic organization consisting of choral directors around our state who are deeply committed to bringing the art and joy of choral music to children, high school students, and adults of all ages. We promote excellence in choral music and participate in all aspects of the choral art, from performance, composition, and publishing to research and teaching the fine art of choral music. We work in the smallest towns in the state to the largest cities, and strive to elevate the role of choral music and the way it touches our society. If you are interested in what we do and would like to become a member of our organization, please visit our new and expanding website at <vtacda.org>. As you can see from the above participants in our Eastern Division Convention, our organization is alive and well, and we congratulate each and every one of them as they prepare for their trip to Philadelphia February 9-13, 2010.

“The eternal task of song can never be finished in a single lifetime. That is the beauty and fascination of the art. Once you begin to phrase finely, you will feel more joy in the beautiful finish of a beautiful phrase than that caused by the loudest applause of an immense audience. The latter excites for a moment; the former endures forever.”

- Dame Nellie Melba

Student Teacher

Continued from Page 15

Keep in contact with the college supervising professor and keep them aware of the success or failure of the student teacher. There will be times when a student teacher really isn’t ready to be let loose into the teaching profession, and you need to let the college know as soon as possible.

Bill Patterson is president of the Arizona Music Educators Association. He can be reached by e-mail at <william.patterson@dvusd.org>.
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Bachelor of Arts in Music

Gordon College is New England’s only multidenominational Christian College of the liberal arts and sciences
The Vermont Symphony Orchestra is celebrating its 75th birthday this year! Seventy-five years of turning kids on to great music—and we’re doing our best to keep up the good work! For those of you possibly unfamiliar with the Symphony’s outreach efforts, here’s a quick review.

SymphonyKids exists to explore the delights of classical music with Vermont school children, and to inspire them with a lifelong enthusiasm for music through a variety of educational and FUN programs. Our core offering is called Musicians-in-the-Schools (small ensembles playing for assemblies). Each year, VSO musicians reach thousands of schoolchildren, traveling to the tiniest schools and every corner of the state to demystify the orchestra and bring the message that classical music can be cool! We also present the Musical Petting Zoo (a hands-on introduction to the orchestra for younger students), the Green Room Program (an in-depth concert-attendance experience for high school students), and orchestral youth concerts (presented annually in Burlington and every other year around the state).

The Green Room Program, which invites middle and high school students to a concert after a meal with musician “mentors,” will this season be presented in a number of new schools around the state in addition to schools in the Burlington and Rutland areas. A Stowe High School student wrote after her session at Johnson State College on Sept. 25: “Thank you so much for this amazing opportunity! I really enjoyed the music, the people, and the entire experience. I had so much fun!”

David Ludwig, who has been our Composer-in-Residence for the last three years, now has the permanent position of New Music Advisor, and is still closely connected with SymphonyKids. He is a tireless advocate for making new works and young composers an integral part of our outreach efforts. (For example, Joshua Morris’s marvelous piece “6x6x6,” written for last year’s orchestral youth concert at the Flynn Center, will be part of our Holiday Pops program this season.) Ludwig will continue to visit schools as in the past, stirring up excitement and creativity wherever he goes!

This season our featured orchestral youth concert program, which was presented on December 3 at the Flynn Center in Burlington, was entitled “Play Me a Story.” Narrated by Willem Lange, this lively program started off with the vivid music from Bizet’s Carmen. An Abenaki legend about the creation of Lake Champlain, written by Derrik Jordan of East Dummerston, was narrated by storyteller Carolyn Hunt while husband Rick accompanied the music with a spontaneous mural. “Odzihozo and the Lake” was timely, as we celebrate the lake’s Quadricentennial, and was a hit with the audience as it was during our 9-concert Made in Vermont Music Festival tour this fall. Then, a student composition brought a fractured fairy tale to life! Joshua Clinger and Hannah Chambers from North Country Union HS updated “The Three Little Pigs,” with “Wolf School Drop Out” as the result. We concluded with the classic and timeless story-set-to-music, “Peter and the Wolf.”

For more information about any of our SymphonyKids offerings, contact Eleanor Long, Education Coordinator, at Eleanor@vso.org. You can also check out our website <www.vso.org> to find out about discount coupons (75th Anniversary Specials). We look forward to another record-setting SymphonyKids year!

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Glenn Giles
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There are so many things to think about when planning the what, how, when, and why of music teaching. Included in the decision-making process might be the National Standards for Music Education, the Vermont Department of Education Music Standards, Edwin Gordon’s Music Learning Theory, Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Piaget’s Theory of Cognitive Development, Vygotsky’s Theory of Cognitive Development (including the Zone of Proximal Development), and the Orff, Kodaly, Dalcroze, and/or Feierabend approaches. Another aspect to consider might be student preferences. This edition of Research Resource summarizes recent research that explores student preferences.

Ilari and Sundara (2009) studied 60 Canadian five-, eight-, and eleven-month-old infants to determine their music listening preferences. Two versions of a traditional Chinese children’s song were compared. One version was unaccompanied, performed with voice only; and the other version was performed with voice and an instrumental accompaniment. Both versions were sung by a female 9-year-old child in an unfamiliar language, Maio. The accompanied version was heterophonic; composed specifically for the research; and comprised of a variety of instruments not particularly related to the Chinese culture, but based on the thematic material of the original song. Preference was determined by length of listening time to each version. Beatriz found that the infants preferred the unaccompanied version of the song, and speculated that this may have been due to an innate bias for human voices, the simplicity of the musical structure, and/or to general cognitive limitations caused by age.

Brittin, (2000) examined 343 second-through sixth-grade children in intact music classrooms in a Western United States urban school district to determine their perceptions of tempo and preferences for ten musical selections. The children listened to the recorded selections, and stated their preference and tempo perceptions by responding to a written survey. All of the selections were accompanied children’s songs, including “Yankee Doodle”, “Mary Had a Little Lamb”, “London Bridge”, and “This Old Man”. Nine of the ten selections were performed with electronic keyboard sequenced accompaniments, and included traditional folk and popular styles. The tenth selection was accompanied in an acoustic piano chordal style. The accompaniment style names were Bluegrass (banjos, duple), Funk2 (brass, R & B with heavy back beat and swing), Heavy Rock Shuffle (compound, heavy bass shuffle), Hip-Hop (disco, heavy sustained bass, duple), Hully Gully (big band, swing), March (wind instruments, duple), Piano Chords (half- and whole-note chords with piano timbre), Polka (accordion and tuba, duple), Rock Ballad (heavy country-rock guitars, duple) and Samba (Latín, duple). All of the selections were performed at the same tempo, 108 beats per minute; the chosen tempo because it approximates a speed at which teachers with limited piano skills would likely be able to perform. Britton found that the most preferred accompaniment styles were Hip-Hop, Heavy Rock Shuffle, Samba, and Funk2; and the least preferred were Polka, March, Bluegrass, and Piano Chords. For all but the second-grade children, and all accompaniment styles but the Samba, the selections that were perceived to have faster tempos were also indicated as the more preferred selections. The Piano Chord accompaniment style was perceived to be much slower than the other accompaniment styles. Britton concludes: “results suggest that a teacher with limited piano skills might well be encouraged to utilize the capabilities of an electronic keyboard or other MIDI source, rather than rely on limited technique alone” (p. 246).

Siebenaler (1999) conducted a study using selected songs from the Music Educators National Conference songbook Get America Singing…Again. A collection of patriotic songs, show tunes, and folksongs designed to promote singing. Participants were 160 children in intact music classes of third- through fifth-graders in an urban American school. The children listened to recorded performances of their male music teacher singing the ten selected songs, and indicated their preference and level of familiarity for each song on a Likert-type scale ranging from “like it very much” to “don’t like it at all”. The ten chosen songs were “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” “De Colores,” “Down by the Riverside,” “Give
Student Preferences

Continued from Page 20

My Regards to Broadway,” “Home on the Range,” “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad,” “My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean,” “Oh, Susannah,” “Puff the Magic Dragon,” and “This Land is Your Land.” After listening to the songs, and indicating preference and familiarity, each song, in subsequent class meetings, was rehearsed for ten minutes. Following all of the song rehearsals, preference and familiarity were assessed again. In both instances, before and after song rehearsals, results indicated that the most-preferred songs were also the most familiar songs. According to Siebenaler, “implications for music teachers might be to build on the familiar songs the students know, and not to give up on songs that students initially dislike until they gain some familiarity” (p. 220).

Burnsed (2001) explored preferences for subtle dynamic contrast among 288 elementary school children in grades one through five, 78 middle school students in grades six through nine, and 22 adult conductors. Participants compared recorded versions of five American folksongs performed using carefully controlled MIDI technology with no dynamic contrast to versions of the same songs with explicit, yet subtle, dynamic variation. Results indicated that the elementary school children “did not perceive a difference between the subtle expressive versions and the nonexpressive versions” (p. 52). At the middle school level, differences were perceived, but preference was only statistically significant for one of the folk songs, with preference indicated for the subtle dynamic nuanced version. The adult conductors indicated statistically significant preference for all five subtle dynamic nuanced versions over the versions with no dynamic contrast. Burnsed concluded that “expressive performance must be very explicit to affect musical preferences in the younger grades, and extensive music study may be necessary before the more subtle nuances of expressive performance are perceived and preferred” (p. 55).

In two related studies, Demorest and Schultz (2004) examined fifth-grade students’ preference for and familiarity with authentic and arranged versions of 19 recorded world music songs; as well as teacher ability to predict their responses. The students and teachers indicated their choices on Likert-type scales. In the first study, students listened to and rated either the authentic or arranged version of each song, whereas in the second study the versions were heard one after the other. The arranged versions were taken directly from recordings in the published basil series The Music Connection (Silver Burdett Ginn, 1995), Share the Music (Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1995), and Silver Burdett Making Music (Pearson Education Inc. 2002). Although these recordings included cultural characteristics such as instrumentation, most of the songs were performed using Western children’s voices. The authentic versions were performed by artists from within each culture, and were from a variety of sources. In both studies, Demorest and Schultz found that the songs the students indicated as most preferred, were the songs with which the students indicated they were most familiar. In the first study, there was no clear preference for either the authentic or arranged versions; whereas in the second study, the arranged version was very much preferred. Teachers were able to accurately predict their students’ responses to preference and familiarity, although their predictions tended to be higher than the ratings of their students. Demorest and Schultz concluded:

The findings of the present study suggest that teachers should introduce world music to their students using examples that sound like music students know. If we combine this suggestion with older students’ well-known preference for popular music, it suggests that “world pop” music, with its fusion of Western and non-Western elements, may be a logical starting point for introducing music of unfamiliar cultures. We are not suggesting, however, that students’ exposure to world music stop there, but that such an introduction may create a more positive context. (pp. 309-310)

Demorest and Schultz cite Fung, Lee, and Chung (2000); Greer, Dorow, and Randall (1974); Hargreaves (1987); and May (1985) as sources for information regarding older student preferences for popular music.

In conclusion, it appears that once age and experience limitations are eliminated, the commonality among this research is the finding that students prefer most that which is most familiar. This seems to be stating the obvious. The question for us as educators is how do we most effectively use this information in our planning for music teaching and learning? I believe that the suggestion of Britton (2000) to utilize technology to assist in our music delivery; and the extension of the well-known strategy to progress from the more familiar to the less familiar by Siebenaler...
Notes from Reston

News & Information from MENC Headquarters

ADVOCACY DATABASE MOVED TO MENC WEBSITE

The SupportMusic “Make Your Case” database has been redesigned and is now housed on the MENC website at <www.menc.org/supportmusic_cases>. This powerful advocacy tool will help music education advocates build a case for their music program when it’s threatened. Advocates can use the facts, statistics, research, and anecdotes on specific topics for presentations, speeches, and other communications with school board members, administrators, and legislators.

2010 WORLD’S LARGEST CONCERT

Visit the <www.menc.org/events/view/world-s-largest-concert> to download free sheet music, rehearsal tracks, and lesson plans for the 2010 World’s Largest Concert. The event will happen on March 11, 2010. Pre-orders are now being accepted for a DVD of the 2010 event.

MIOSM(r) LESSON PLAN WRITING CONTEST


THE GREEN ANTHEM LYRIC-WRITING CONTEST


SEARCH FOR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEGINS

In October, MENC Executive Director John J. Mahlmann announced his decision to resign from MENC after nearly 27 years at the helm of the association. During his tenure, which encompassed more than a quarter of MENC’s existence, he led the organization through a period of substantial membership growth and transformed the landscape of music education through innovative programs and vigorous advocacy. The MENC National Executive Board is now developing a plan to guide the search for a new director, and hopes to have a replacement chosen by April.

GET READY TO VOTE ONLINE FOR MENC PRESIDENT-ELECT

All active and retired members are invited to vote online for MENC President-Elect from January 1 to March 7, 2010. The President-Elect candidates are Nancy Ditmer and David Weatherred. Members in the North Central, Southern, and Western divisions can also vote for their division President-Elect online starting January 1. Read candidate bios and find additional voting information on the MENC Web site <www.menc.org/gp/2010-menc-national-and-division-elections>.

STUDENT COMPOSERS COMPETITION

MENC is seeking original music of student composers for featured performances during Music Education Week to be held June 24-29, 2010, in Washington, DC. Selected compositions will be the best representative works from MENC’s six divisions in each of the following levels: elementary/middle school, high school, and undergraduate/graduate school. The instrumental composition category is for woodwinds, solo, or any combination of instruments up to a woodwind quintet and piano. Visit the contest page <www.menc.org/gp/student-composers-competition> for rules and entry form. Deadline: February 15, 2010.

Professional Development

Music and Multimedia Summer Institute 2010

This summer marks the 10th annual Music and Multimedia Summer Institute at Castleton State College, scheduled for Tuesday through Friday, July 20-23, 2010.

Tentative plans include courses in Digital Audio, Music Composition, FLIP video, Independent Study, and a new course in two looping-based programs that work in similar fashion: Mixcraft for Windows and Garage Band for Macs.

The institute is a residential institute and fees cover three nights of lodging and all meals during the institute. Commuter rates available. You can review last summer’s institute online at <www.vtmidi.org/summerinstitute09> to get a general idea of what it’s like. Fees will go up slightly, as CSC is charging more for room and meals. The general organization will remain. Participants can sign up for workshop credit only or for graduate credit that requires an additional ten hours online following the institute.

Previous participants write about the Music and Multimedia Summer Institute:

“This was the single best professional development I’ve ever taken.”

“If all learning could be this exciting!”

“My instructor listened to what we needed. She gave us tool for our classrooms. She inspired us to want to explore and create more.”

“The instructors were extremely knowledgeable and well prepared for students who entered at all levels of understanding.”

“I’m happy to have the uninterrupted block of time to work on projects to benefit my program at school.”

“I especially enjoyed the collaboration with others at the institute and the special sessions that were optional.”

Plan ahead for the dates and then register for specific courses in early February when the final information for the institute is announced on the Vermont MIDI Project website <www.vtmidi.org>.
Teachers and students seeking to improve their skills may find what they need at a new independent music school in southern Vermont: the Open Music Collective.

Co-founded by bassist Jamie MacDonald and pianist Kate Parsons, the Brattleboro-based nonprofit offers lessons, master classes, workshops, and performances.

The organization’s website <http://openmusiccollective.org> states its mission as “promoting education and training in the art of music and musicianship for all levels of accomplishment in a comfortable, encouraging setting.”

The Collective is housed in The Cotton Mill, a huge renovated mill that is now home to many artists and small businesses.

The spring 2010 Open Music Collective semester includes:
* Jazz Ensemble - “Music of Wayne Shorter, Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane”
* Guitar Ensemble - jazz and modern classical repertoire for up to five guitars
* Bluegrass Ensemble - a little bit of listening and a whole lot of picking and singing
* Vocal Repertoire - singers and rhythm section working on great tunes and bebop lines
* Contemporary Chamber Ensemble - focusing on modern writers

Upcoming master classes and concerts will feature Peter Eldridge, Gene Rush, Harvey Diamond, and Satoshi Takeishi, among others.

The Open Music Collective also currently offers private music lessons for the following instruments (teacher name in parenthesis):
- Guitar (Draa Hobbs & Zach Pearson)
- Drums (Doug Raneri)
- Violin/Viola (Phil Bloch)
- Cello or Composition (Vernon David)
- Bass (Jamie MacDonald)
- Piano (Kate Parsons)
- Saxophone (Gil Chase-Pinkney)

Biographies of teachers are posted on the website. Scholarships are available for some individuals who need financial assistance.

For more information, visit the organization’s website or contact the Open Music Collective by e-mail <info@openmusiccollective.org> or phone (802-275-5054).
There’s a lot of music to be made and you’re ready for it. Ready. Ready to drop your back pack, toss your coat on a chair and show them—show yourself—who you can be and what you can do.

**Faculty Who Know Me**

All you need is the right place where you can shift into high gear. A place that gets it. You’re looking for opportunities—professors who not only know you but inspire you to push the limits of your musicianship.

**USM School of Music**

USM School of Music at (207) 780-5265 or music@usm.maine.edu
Music talent scholarships and academic scholarships are available.

www.usm.maine.edu/music
A few years ago while attending a public school band and choir concert, I noticed a sentence wedged in between several others in the acknowledgments on the back page of the program. It said “...and many thanks to the singers and musicians in tonight’s concert.” While I understand that the well-meaning author had the best of intentions in mind, it hit a nerve in me. Why can’t we refer to these students as choral musicians and instrumental musicians, or just call them all musicians? Incidentally, I know a choral music educator who had hundreds of programs reprinted to rectify this kind of colleague-added misnomer on her concert program. Does it really matter what we call singers and instrumentalists? Isn’t this really just a semantical argument anyway?

While I agree that what you call student musicians doesn’t change what they are, I also believe that what they are should affect what you call them. The reality behind this discussion is that instrumentalists are usually taught to read and interpret a musical score, while singers are all too often taught primarily by rote; instrumentalists are expected to develop musical independence, while singers are often allowed to be completely dependent on a teacher, learning tape, or recording of a performance. At what point does a student become a musician, regardless of the instrument they express their art through? Perhaps what students should be called is tied most closely to how they are taught, and what they are expected to be able to do.

When I was teaching in the public schools of Maine, I started off by teaching my singers by rote. “Who has the time to teach sight reading?” I thought. With concerts and festivals looming, there seemed to be no time to train choral musicians. What I came to understand over time was that I didn’t have enough time not to teach my singers how to be choral musicians. What seemed like a lot of time for little payoff at first became the biggest time saver I could have asked for. Once I had choral musicians in my choirs, and not teacher-dependent singers, I had to start programming more difficult literature as the musicians began to devour the contents of their folders. Musical and note-learning headaches that were my problem before were now being solved by the musicians, often before I even knew there was a problem. When musical issues did arise in rehearsal, we now had a framework to identify the problem, put it into context, and solve it once and for all. We also had more time to examine the text, go into detail about musical and historical aspects of the piece, and play with choices of interpretation.

In the end, each choral music educator must decide what kinds of students they are creating: singers or choral musicians. Singers can develop fine ears, great voices, and be very good performers. Choral musicians can also be fine performers with excellent voices...

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The Listening Musician
Joel Smale


Have you ever played a gig or rehearsal with a musician who had great ears and listened to you like no one else? It is very inspiring and makes you want to play even better. When you play with another musician who listens with great depth, you are inspired to listen more... on that gig and every gig thereafter! Conversely, have you ever played with someone who just didn’t listen? What a drag! I can honestly say that I have played with some people who probably would have kept playing if I stopped playing altogether... and I’m the drummer! But I have also played with some wonderful musicians who listen so intently and with such big ears that the music they create is so much more than the notes on the page. Duke Ellington said, “Them that listen best, play best.” I would like to discuss some ideas about the listening musician and how we can better our own musicianship and that of those around us when we listen more.

Let’s begin with ourselves.

LISTENING TO YOURSELF

When you play or practice, you should always listen to yourself. I know it sounds crazy to say this, but so often, it’s one of the things we leave out! Young musicians are so consumed with pressing the right keys, looking at the music on the page, trying to use enough air, and grip the sticks correctly, let alone remember what “forte” means, that the last thing they do is pay attention to the sound they are creating.

This is natural, since learning a new instrument is like learning a whole new language. New notes, rhythms, pitch, dynamics, and any combination of those along with correct posture, hand position, embouchure, stick/mallet height, sticking, counting etc... it’s enough to make one go mad!

But the whole reason why we play music is because of what it sounds like. We like the sound. So encourage your young students to pay attention to their sound. Take more time to work on their reading and understanding of note values and develop their sound while doing so. They may not progress as fast at first, but if you take the time to develop their ears so they learn what to listen for, how to play in tune, and how to achieve a good sound, their ears will become automatic to these concepts, so they can pay more attention to dynamics and rhythm later while playing with a good sound.

As students get older, the primary reason why they play - the sound - will be inherent. As they listen to themselves, they can continue to develop their ability to play with good intonation, expression, tone, and dynamic contrast, all because they are listening to themselves. However, listening is only as good as what you do with it. If we listen but do not react and respond to what we are hearing, then our listening is in vain.

Responding to what we listen to is vital to improving our musicianship and our students’ musicianship. Correcting intonation, moving the mallets from the middle of the timpani to the edge, and covering open holes completely are all ways we can positively respond to what we are listening to.

In an ensemble situation, you want your students to listen to themselves in the context of the group. As they listen to themselves, they (and you helping them) can ask and determine:

- Am I too loud/soft; is my balance correct? If not, how can I change it?
- Am I in tune? If not, how can I change it?
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The Listening Musician

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• Do I have the melody or harmony? Or am I the foundation?
• Am I playing the correct pitches?
• Am I phrasing the way the music reads or the way the conductor is expressing?
• Am I playing these rhythms accurately?

Listening to yourself allows you to be a better musician. If we continue to work and develop our individual sound, tone, and style, we will become increasingly better musicians. And the better we are, the more we enjoy making music.

LISTENING TO THE SECTION

If you are playing in a group, such as a concert band, jazz ensemble, or orchestra, listening to your section is vital to making good music. If your students are listening to their section, they will carry the same ideas from listening to themselves to the next stage. They can ask themselves:

• Am I playing in tune with my section?
• Are we as a section playing the rhythms accurately?
• Are we phrasing together? Are we phrasing accurately?
• Are we all playing the correct notes?
• Are we beginning and ending our notes together?
• Are we supposed to be playing together or is the part divisi or in different rhythms?
• Are we too loud/soft as a section?
• Is our section balanced among ourselves?

Listening to your section will also require some communication beyond using your ears. Talking to members of your section or your section leader during breaks or after/before rehearsal can clear up some of the areas mentioned above. Ask how they are interpreting a certain rhythm or where they are breathing in a passage. Discuss points about tutti sections with other sections of the ensemble. (For example, “Since the trumpets are starting this figure softer, should we too?, etc.)

LISTENING TO THE ENSEMBLE

Finally, when playing in a large ensemble, we must listen to the entire ensemble to put all of this aspect of listening together. Listening to the entire ensemble is more of an offshoot of listening to your section. We need to pay attention to the ensemble’s sound and style, balance, and blend. Some of these elements come from listening and some come from watching the conductor; a combination of the two is ideal. When listening to the ensemble, we pay attention to:

• Intonation of the ensemble
• Who has the melody and what is the melody? Can I sing it back?
• Balance/blend - Am I too loud? Too soft?
• Style - Am I playing the rhythms the same way as the ensemble? Are my attacks/releases/entrances consistent with the ensemble?
• What is the bass line/harmony/countermelody? Who is playing these parts?
• Who is playing a similar part to mine at any given moment?

Your students can further discuss these same ideas with each other after listening. Encourage your section leaders to take the leadership role they are in and discuss things with their sections, such as:

• “Do we have the same rhythm in measure 102?”
• “Do you have an accidental in this measure?” or “What note do you have in measure 78?”
• “Let’s crescendo more into letter D.”
• “The conductor is slowing down here, so we need to watch more closely and go with her.”

Listening to the ensemble allows you to be a team player and play what the music calls for. It allows you to get beyond the written notes and make something very special happen with the performance.

Listen to the performance room or hall you are performing in. Each room sounds different and you have to react differently to each one. Are you on stage with a lot of stage curtains or is the auditorium carpeted? Are you playing in an arena with concrete floors and steel beams? Are you playing outside in a park, moving around on a football field, or marching down the street in a parade? Do you have amplification and are playing into a microphone? Each of these scenarios requires different things from the musicians.

OTHER WAYS TO LISTEN

Listening to the music we make is not the only way for musicians to listen. Encourage your students to listen to your voice. You want to teach them. They need to listen. If they aren’t listening to your instructions, they won’t be able to change or correct what you want musically. Listening to your instruction, your ideas, and your vision will permeate their being if they are listening to you. They can only listen if they are all quiet and paying attention.

Other ways we can listen, away from performing, are listening to a CD recording of music we are currently learning. This is a great way to approach our practice or rehearsal time. We can listen to what other performers have done with the music, and we can become familiar with the piece or reacquaint ourselves before hitting the practice session. We can listen to another interpretation of the piece. We can also break down listening to CDs by narrowing our ears to focus on the bass or the melody or the harmonic structure. Try to listen to just the drums or just the bass player, the soft guitar strumming, the saxophone harmonies, or the clarinet blend. Listen to the phrases, pay attention to the words if there are any, pick out the violins or the celli, and see where each element fits into the whole.

It took me quite a while to develop this sort of listening. It took some very direct listening practice and patience before I could “block out” certain instruments to pay closer attention to other instruments. I feel this is important in developing our ear. When we play in an ensemble, it is important to hear the whole, while at the same time listening to the parts, such as what we are playing. Practicing our listening in this way helps us achieve that
The Listening Musician

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The goal. Finally, listen to everything with a broad ear and vast range.

Another way to listen is to record yourself and listen back. I often record my high school band at some point between the first and third run-throughs of a piece. I will then play it back for them further down the road so they can hear how their sound, understanding, and performance have changed. We will then record again at a later date once we know the music better. After listening back, we can make adjustments as a group and individuals can make personal adjustments.

Do some of your students sometimes not fully understand what you want them to sound like, some of those subtle (and not so subtle!) changes and additions to the music? Often, after listening back to a recent recording, they can now hear what I have been communicating to them. They can hear that the ensemble's decrescendo into letter N is not effective. They can hear the balance or lack of balance that I address from the podium during rehearsal. Listening back to the recording is usually all it takes for them to complete their understanding of what I (their conductor) want. It drives home many of the teaching elements I communicate to them. It also brings about some things I didn’t hear before, too!

Record your personal practice time and listen back. How differently we sound! Tempos seem different, dynamics sometimes aren’t as exaggerated as they could be, phrasing sounds different, etc. Too often, we get so caught up in the moment of performing and reading music or playing what we know that we can easily forget the subtleties and nuances that can help bring our performance to the next level. Listening to a recording of yourself is a great way for self-evaluation and critique - both good and not so good. Listening to recordings can also be a great morale booster. If your group is sounding great, record them and let them enjoy themselves! Praise them for their hard work!

I like to play recorded music in rehearsals. We will listen to a recording of another group playing the same piece of music we are currently working on. It is very helpful to hear a finished product. Our students listen to a great deal of music; however, it is usually music that we will rarely perform in a school ensemble setting. I doubt that most of my students have wind ensemble, big band, percussion ensemble, or string quintet music on their MP3 players! I will also play music in our rehearsal room as students are entering for rehearsal. I have music playing in my office - classical, wind band, jazz, opera, Cuban music, or whatever. They are being exposed to all sorts of different music as background music. It is subtle, but it is present and it makes a difference in their lives.

Teach your students to listen in lessons and during rehearsals. Play a recording and have them pick out different elements of the recording. Prepare some specific questions for them to answer. What are the violins playing? What are the tubas playing? When does the oboe
The Listening Musician

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solo begin? What role do the bass drum and cymbals have in this march? Where is beat one? What is the time signature of this piece? When does the phrase end? When does a new instrument enter?

LISTENING AS A CONDUCTOR

As the conductor, one of my jobs is to listen to the entire ensemble all the time. Ideally, we like to train our young musicians to take initiative and leadership to listen and help their sections, but ultimately, it’s up to us. Overwhelming? I think so. A large task indeed! But it is do-able! As conductors, our ears should be more developed than that of our students. We have the experience already discussed previously as listeners of ourselves and our sections. Now it is up to us to manage all the sounds we hear, teaching our students to listen and react and formulate them all into one cohesive, unified ensemble sound.

It is very important for us as we study scores and listen to recordings to be aware of what the music sounds like. The better prepared we are for this, the better we will teach our ensembles, and the better the outcome will be. I find that transitions in music are often some of the most difficult parts of a piece to sound good. It’s usually a key change, style change, tempo change, or dynamic change where these transitions can make or break us. As the conductor, being prepared ahead of time for these transitions will help make our ensemble sound better. Also, the more prepared we are to conduct these trouble spots, the more effort and energy we can spend on listening in the rehearsal. Too often, the conductor is so caught up in getting through that flurry of 7/8, 5/4, cut-time, 6/8 with a cue to the timpani and a cue for the horns that we lose our focus of listening. Practice and prepare the mechanics of what you need for effective conducting so you can go into the rehearsal and performance with listening ears.

React to the sounds you hear. Are the violas out of tune? Stop and correct it. And, spend time teaching about intonation and what it is, how to listen for it and what to do to correct it. Teach this during ensemble and also during lessons.

Are the low winds ending their notes together? If not, stop and correct it and in so doing, teach them to listen for this in the future. Is the triangle player striking the triangle with a wood stick? Your ears should catch this in rehearsals so you can correct and help train your students’ ears as well.

Is the low brass playing the forte-piano the way you would like? If not, stop and rehearse it, explain how you want it to sound, and explain how to do it. Practice having your entire ensemble listen to themselves play the forte-piano. Do they hear what you’re hearing? Does what they hear move them? Sing it the way you see it on the page or the way you want it played. Once they hear the way you want it done, they will be better able to execute it - in this piece and any future time they have a forte-piano. Have your entire ensemble play the forte-piano and not just the tubas... we all need work on this and it keeps everyone involved and teaches everyone at the same time.

Perhaps your percussionists are coming in ahead of everyone else. Stop and correct it. Explain that they, too, must breathe with the rest of the ensemble for accurate entrances with the rest of the ensemble.

Did you hear something in your head while studying the score — or even during a rehearsal — that you want your ensemble to play? Is there a dynamic or tempo change you want that isn’t marked in the score? How is the balance? React to what you hear and make the necessary changes to get the results you want.

I don’t only stop my ensemble to correct them. I often stop them to praise them for a job well done! Did you hear something you liked? Did your ensemble react with listening ears to what was going on around them? Was it one of those paradise moments? Stop and let them know! They will learn two things: their listening is paying off and you’re listening, too!

Some of my student teachers have not had enough experience to develop their ears as conductors. Experienced teachers hear things differently than student teachers often will. This is natural. It only proves that it takes practice and experience to hone your listening skills. After a rehearsal, we will sit and discuss the rehearsal and how we felt it went, making a game plan for the next rehearsal based on what happened today. The conversation may go something like this:

Teacher: “At measure 84, try getting the basses to crescendo their moving line to help bring out the melody.”

Student Teacher: “Oh, I asked them to cresendo there!”

Teacher: (thinking to herself... “yes, but they didn’t do it!”) “Well, try for a bigger dynamic contrast there next time and see if you hear a difference.”

Student teachers are usually open to your ideas and input. Teaching them about listening as conductors will help them with your ensemble and with their future ensembles. It is important to react to what you hear, and important that whoever is conducting is listening.

When you react to what you hear from the podium, your students will gain a greater understanding of listening as you stop and explain things, often singing it for them. They will then be able to apply their newly learned skills to other songs as they continue their listening.

LISTENING TO OTHER PROFESSIONALS

As a professional musician, I play frequently under other conductors, some good, some not so good. I listen especially close to the good conductors I have the pleasure to work with. I pay attention to what they are hearing and want from me and from the rest of the ensemble. When they stop to discuss their ideas, my ears are attentive to them. I can learn and take back to my school ensemble what I have learned from my conductors.

Do your students perform in county, regional, or state honors ensembles? If so, take advantage of this great opportunity to sit in on the rehearsals and listen to what the conductor is saying (and hearing). They listen with different ears from you or I. When they stop to correct or praise, listen to them, listen to what they want, and then listen to see if it was corrected or is done the same when the ensemble plays again.

I have asked colleagues and retired band directors to come to listen to my rehearsals. I want to find out what they are hearing. I want their input, feedback, ideas, and perspective. It makes me vulnerable, sure. But it is one of the best
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VMEA Business

VMEA Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Carrie Kohl

Editor's Note: Carrie took notes in place of VMEA Secretary Cindy Hall, who was unable to attend this meeting.

Wednesday, August 12, 2009
Whitcomb High School
VMEA Board Meeting
11:05 A.M.

I. Welcome - New President Pat Roberts
a. Introductions - 15 present
b. Thank You
i. Host Carrie Kohl
ii. President-Elect Alan Rowe
iii. Treasurer & Secretary re-elected: Jim Derby & Cindy Hall
iv. New Presidency
v. Bear & Gary for serving extended terms

II. Review of agenda - Steffen motion, Jim second

III. Approval of minutes from 3-4-09 & 5-7-09 - Steffen motion, Chris second, motion passed

a. 3-4-09: Denis noted that it should reference IAJE
b. 3-4-09: Denis noted that in old business it should be Lauren McCoy (not Laura)

IV. Treasurer's Report - Steffen motion, Gary second, motion passed

a. Balance = $18,670.76
i. Steffen wondered what the Journal income is. How much of this money is journal money? Asked Jim to reinstate tracking the money as separate lines so we can

V. Chair Reports
a. Conference - move to old business
b. All State - Steffen
i. North Country did a good job of keeping costs down
ii. Vergennes did a good job selling tickets
iii. Return $2,500 to North Country
iv. Festival itself picked up $2500 each year and VMEA picked up $1250
v. Moving funds into the festival
vi. Ticket sales were very high in Essex, but so were the expenses
1. meals = $1,110 extra cost that was not budgeted for
ii. $1,800-$2,000 back to Essex and Vergennes hopefully soon
vii. Plans for 2010 in Rutland are going well
1. Castleton requested having their marching band participate in the parade and Steffen has told them no - handbook written support
ii. Ally pointed out that some e-mails on webpage are incorrect

VI. Editor's Report - Denis
a. General Finances: Denis is already keeping a detailed record of accounts
b. Fewer Advertisers - down about 8 from last year (Jupiter, UNH)
c. Trying to have more color pages to accommodate Ads (color or NO ad)
d. September Issue: How many should we print?
1. March sent to EVERYONE.
   i. Fix mailing labels
ii. District Chairs make sure data is up to date - by October 1st
1. send corrections directly to Cindy
iii. Gary pointed out that some e-mails on webpage are incorrect

VII. District Reports
a. D1 - not present
b. D2 - not present: Alan spoke: HS Festival is second weekend in April
   c. D3 - Ally: updated D3 roster. Sent to Cindy Hall with very few holes
   i. Gave up a few hats to allow for more district time
   2. Hands on opportunities
   i. energize singing through rhythm (more practical)
   ii. D6 - not present

VIII. Old Business
a. Web page discussion
i. Jim can't get into his VMEA webpage - Gary will help
ii. Ally wondered about previous topics
   1. Meeting minutes being published on site - Not yet
   2. Calendar - YES: district chairs should have access
   3. Selling Ads to bring in revenue - Not yet (they're waiting)
   4. Workshop on site for board to explore
   iii. Gary: we need to have something out there to attract people to the site
1. weekly (monthly) new home page
iv. Sandi: Chelsie was the point person...she's gone...who does it now? Steffen
v. District Chairs can designate a person to update data and calendar
vi. Pat: are we paying for core features on the site? Steffen & Denis clarify that we pay a hosting fee not a per feature fee...
vii. Sandi: online registration for conference? PayPal is too involved.
viii. Gary: is it possible to upload performance videos or audios? Copyright.
ix. Pat suggested using Facebook eventually.
1. create a VMEA Group - Sandi motion, Brian second, motion passed
b. Online Journal
i. Steffen - archive issues
ii. Sandi believes we should do one issue a year
1. Denis is willing to explore options
2. PDF - download a printable version (ads would print)
3. HTML - links come through (no photos, no ads)
   c. VPA partnership - Steffen
   i. VPA used to sponsor All State festival
   2004 - broke free from the VPA
1. since then Principals have been complaining about paying VPA fees and VMEA fees
2. VPA has been trying to get us back - met with Gary & Steffen
   a. Gary & Steffen made it clear that we are very happy where we are at
   b. Conference Planning
   i. Dr. Michael Huff is the keynote speaker: "Why so superior?"
   1. Choral Session: Young Male Voice (intonation)
   ii. Ally: exhibits are down this year
2. contacted via e-mail and mail all the Vermont Arts Council artists
2. has created some buzz for new people to have tables
3. as of right now we only have about 10 exhibits
   iii. Kate: Dawn Willis session descriptions (choose 1)
   1. energize singing through rhythm (more practical for Elem - HS)
2. discovering sources of inspiration for conductors
   iv. Sandi: tech focused second day of the conference for 2010
   1. build up reserves
   2. hands on opportunities
   3. one time event (maybe repeat in 3 years or so)
   v. We need to establish a conference budget so we know how much to offer for stipends for clinicians
e. Other
   i. VAAE (Gary) still interested in pursuing Arts Conference where we don't compete but work together

IX. New Business
a. All Eastern: It would be nice for there to be a Beginner’s Guide to All Eastern for new teachers who don't know that All Eastern Ensembles exist.
   i. Band: Peter Boomschaft
   ii. Orch: E. Dan Long
   iii. Chorus: Constance
   iv. Jazz: Terryl Stafford
b. MENC National Assembly: yearly event now

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The Listening Musician

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(and quickest) ways to grow as a musician and conductor. I don’t know it all... not even close. I need honest input from these mentors to help my ears and my listening be all that they can be so I can help my students’ ears and our ensembles to be all they can be.

Listen to yourself, your section, and the ensemble. Balancing listening to yourself, your section, and the entire ensemble takes some practice and is not so easy to do as it is to say (or write). With practice, these ideas can be implemented and then become a regular part of your playing and your ensemble’s performance. Now your ensemble is not merely playing what is on the page, but is taking what is on the page to the next level because they are listening to and reacting to what is going on around them, beginning with themselves.

Listen to recordings of professional groups and recordings of yourself. Listen to what other professionals are saying after they listen, and you and your students will benefit and grow for years to come.

The best and only way to sum up my ideas is to quote the inimitable Duke Ellington, who said all we need to hear in six words: “Them that listen best, play best!”

Joel Smales earned a Bachelor of Music in Performance from the Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam and a Master’s degree from Binghamton University. He is currently the band director at Binghamton High School’s Rod Serling School of Fine Arts, where he conducts the Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Ensemble, Stage Band, and several chamber groups including Percussion Ensemble, Marimba Band, and Steel Drum Band. In addition to being an educator, he is a professional percussionist and a composer. For more information, visit his website: <www.joesmales.com>.

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“Life is a score that we play at sight, not merely before we have divined the intentions of the composer, but even before we have mastered our instruments; even worse, a large part of the score has been only roughly indicated, and we must improvise the music for our particular instrument, over long passages.

On these terms, the whole operation seems one of endless difficulty and frustration; and indeed, were it not for the fact that some of the passages have been played so often by our predecessors that, when we come to them, we seem to recall some of the score and can anticipate the natural sequence of the notes, we might often give up in sheer despair.

The wonder is not that so much cacophony appears in our actual lives, but that there is any appearance of harmony and progression.”

- Lewis Mumford
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