

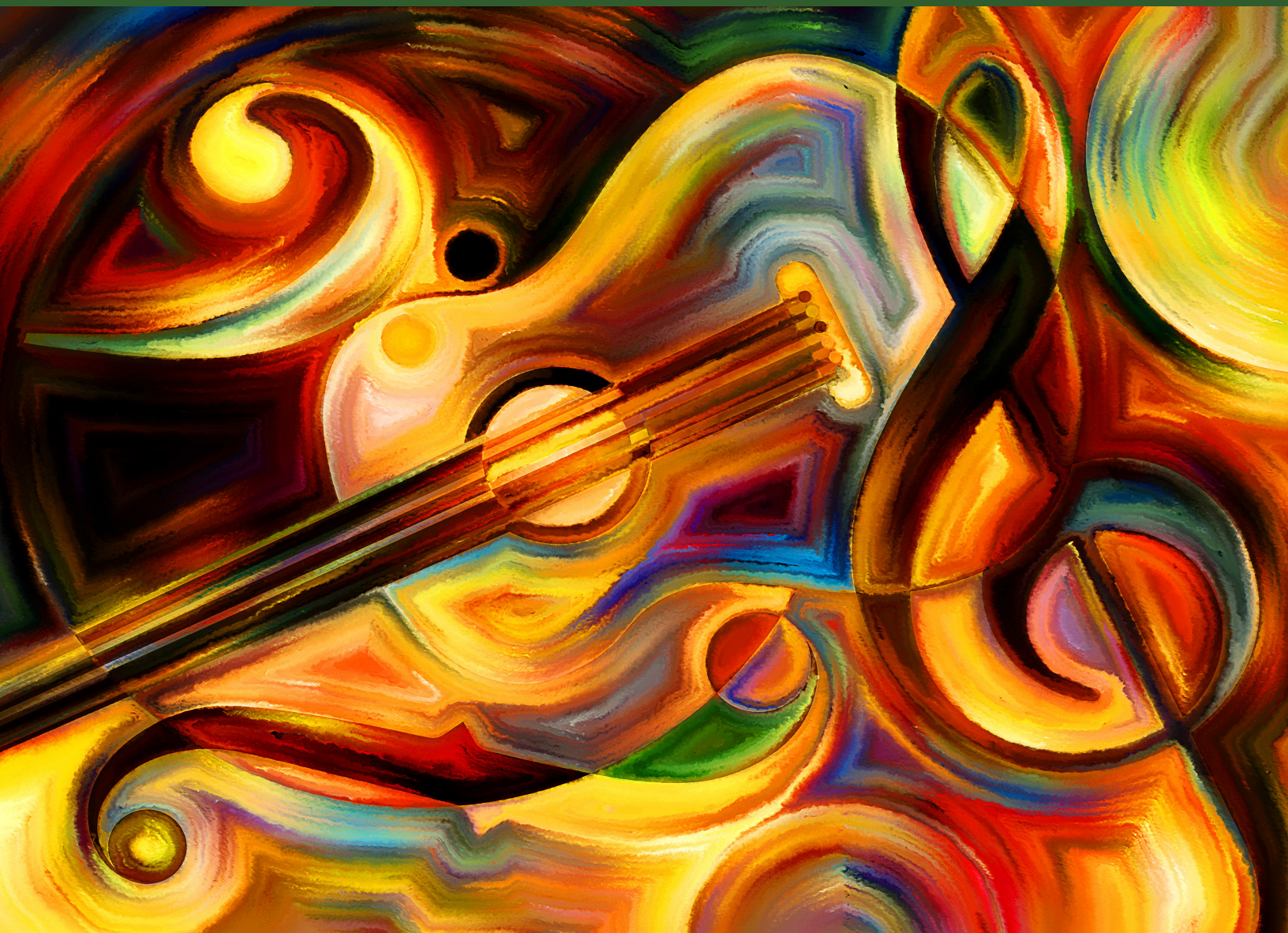


South Carolina MUSICIAN

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No. 1



THIS ISSUE FEATURES:

**The Classroom Environment:
Striving for Excellence or
Having fun?
Is it possible to have both?**

Angela Rex

**Reflections on Optimizing
Student Practice**

Margaret Brown

**State Superintendent
Ellen Weaver
gives statement.**

Ellen Weaver



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Call for Articles

The SC Musician is looking for original articles regarding music education from teachers, researchers, or administrators for the 2023-2024 school year. Please submit your articles to Jake Henjes at jake.henjes@scmea.net

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President's Message



Colleen Marcou
SCMEA President

Welcome to the 2023-2024 School Year and another amazing year for South Carolina's incredible music educators. It is so hard to believe that we are back at school already. I am looking forward to many exciting SCMEA and National Association for Music Education (NAfME) events this year. Whether you are just starting your music education career; you are 10-15 years in; or you are getting close to the finish line and becoming a retired SCMEA member, we value your membership, your input, and your service to ALL of our students in the state of South Carolina.

I want to begin by expressing my best wishes and successes to each and every one of you within your divisions. Your dedication to music education and unwavering commitment to our students' growth and success are truly commendable. May this year be filled with joy, inspiration, and mo-

ments of musical brilliance as you embark on exciting new ventures in your classrooms and rehearsal spaces. As we move forward, I am particularly excited to witness the fresh opportunities and innovative ideas that you, the educators, have planned within your respective divisions. The power of music to inspire, transform, and unify is unparalleled, and I am confident that your creative endeavors will spark a love for music in the hearts of our students and nurture the next generation of talented musicians. AND, hopefully, music educators.

This summer NAfME and the state MEAs were able to join together in Washington D.C. for Hill Day 2023. For the first time since COVID hit, we were able to visit our Senators and Representatives in person to promote Music Education and express some of our goals and concerns for the future of Music programs in our schools. Teacher Recruitment and Retention has taken a big hit at both the state and national levels. As music education organizations, we need to work together to promote this wonderful career choice to the next generation. I believe we need to begin preparing for our own Hill Day here in South Carolina. This event will provide us with a unique opportunity to advocate for music education with policymakers and legislators here IN South Carolina, ensuring that our collective voice resonates far and wide, influencing positive change for our students and programs. Last March for Music in Our Schools Month, our Governor expressed his unwavering support for music education in South Carolina. His

statement helps affirm our shared vision for a future where every child has access to high-quality music education and experiences the profound benefits it brings.

At the national level, the NAfME has launched several new initiatives for the 2023-2024 school year, all geared towards advancing music education and enriching the lives of our students. One of the key focuses this year is to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in music programs. By embracing diverse musical traditions and experiences, we can foster an environment that celebrates our differences and unites us through our shared love for music. Together, let us make a commitment to not only provide exceptional music instruction but also to be advocates for the value of music education in our schools and communities. Music has the power to shape young minds, instill a sense of discipline and self-expression, and foster a life-long appreciation for the arts. By working collaboratively, we can amplify our impact and ensure that every student in South Carolina has access to a well-rounded, comprehensive music education. Last, but certainly not least, we recognize the challenges posed by scheduling conflicts in our schools for music courses. SCMEA is committed to working collaboratively with administrators, counselors, and other stakeholders to find solutions to prioritize music education while ensuring a well-rounded education for all students. As we embark on this exciting journey together, I encourage you all to engage in meaningful dialogue, share your successes and challenges, and

continue to uplift one another as a united music education community. Your passion and dedication inspire us all, and I am truly honored to serve as your president.

I would like to take a moment to say a huge “Thank You” to Joe Gullledge, our new immediate past president for all of his help and patience training me for this important position in our “Spectacular” South Carolina Music Educators Association (not to be confused with our “Sensational” Southern Division of NAfME). He is always there to answer the questions and lend support wherever and whenever I need it. His leadership over the last two years has added strength and guidance to this wonderful organization. Another big “Thank You” goes to the entire SCMEA Board for being such strong representatives of your divisions and committees and supporting music education in South Carolina.

The SCMEA Board is working diligently on this year’s Professional Development Conference on February 8-10, 2024. Please note that this year’s conference is actually the “second” weekend in February. We have some great speakers, clinicians, and sessions planned for this year’s event and YES - it will be in person as we take another step back to “normal.”

We encourage everyone to be active members in SCMEA and their divisions. The future of Music Education needs you. I am always open to suggestions and ideas for making SCMEA even more “Spectacular!” Here’s to a harmonious and transformative school year, filled with beautiful music, remarkable achievements, fantastic memories, and a shared sense of purpose.

If you need anything from me, please feel free to email me at colleen.marcou@scmea.net anytime.

Editor’s Note



Jake Henjes
SC Musician Editor

Dear readers,

I hope that you all are feeling rested and recharged to begin an exciting new school year. The SC Musician is striving to provide meaningful and insightful articles for the readers. If you have a topic you are passionate about or currently researching, please feel free to reach out and share your work as they could be articles that others would be interested in reading. If you are interested in submitting an article, please reach out to me at jake.henejs@scmea.net. Additionally, if you or a business in your area would like to advertise with the SC Musician, please reach out to me.

Thank you all for your continued support and engagement with our publication!

BAND

Dear Friends,

It is with much gratitude and excitement that I reach out to welcome you to the 2023-2024 year in SCBDA! I trust that what summer you MAY have gotten was a time of rest and relaxation and renewal for you and that you're able to meet the challenges that lie ahead with as fresh a perspective as is possible.



In a time of increasing external pressure, the field of education is a landscape that must be navigated with more finesse, awareness, and sheer determination than ever before. We must support each other, find the good in each other, and understand that, despite whatever differences we may have, we are still and always will be our own best advocates. Be strong, be diligent, and be PRESENT for each other. The smallest of gestures offered to a colleague who may be struggling can go a long way to ease what may feel like a mountain of pressure.

The lives of many students will be wonderfully affected by each of you in the coming days. Remember that we do what we do for that reason. Perspective, especially early in our careers is often a moving target, so always stay true to what you know is the foundation of your philosophy. As my high school director, Lane Moore always showed me, our ability to positively change a life rests more in the connections we make than in the trophies we bring home. Success has many faces.... make sure the most important ones are the ones looking back at us every day!

Your association is strong, and you have allies all around you. Your board is committed to leading with grace and dignity through good and bad, and we are here for you—all of you. I wish you all the very best in every aspect of the development of your programs this year. I wish you all health, peace, fulfillment, and growth personally. Humbly, I thank you for your trust, and I look forward to continuing to carry the torch forward with a wonderful group of board members AND all of you!

See you all at the fall meeting! We got this!

Leslie Gilreath, *President*

HIGHER EDUCATION

Welcome to another year where we make music the forefront of all that we do academically. Although not at the forefront, non-music academicians and others experience music in all facets of their lives. As musicians who are music educators, we understand that music embodies the art of manipulating components of rhythm, melody, harmony, form, timbre, dynamics, tempo, and articulation. Such manipulations constitute the art of music when we participate in the music-making or 'musicking' processes of performing, improvising, creating, reading, writing, and analyzing with understanding. As a result, we reap the benefits of music for the sake of 'music' alone. However, music is also powerful or influential in that there are other benefits that may emerge as a result of participating in music.



Among others, teachers may witness indications of benefits such as improved social awareness, increased communication, connections to other subjects, and habitual increases in critical thinking. Informed by such outcomes, we become more empowered to advocate for music in all PK-12. For that reason, the higher education division for the 2024 conference will sponsor sessions suggestive of additional benefits that may emerge when participating in music.

Additionally, the higher education division will continue to offer the Future Music Educators Symposium (FMES) for interested juniors and seniors on Friday. Dr. David Cudd (North Greenville University) continues to coordinate this symposium. The division will also sponsor a research poster session and a graduate-student research presentation session. Graduate students will have the opportunity to present their research at a separate session with interested conference attendees while continuing to participate in active music education research in South Carolina. Designated reviewers select top-tier submissions using specific criteria. As the Higher Education Division Research Chair, Dr. Mandi Schlegel (University of SC) coordinates both the research poster and research presentation sessions.

Please join us for informative sessions as we prepare to become more empowered as advocates for the discipline of music.

Rosetta Dingle, *President*

PIANO

Greetings, SC musicians! I hope this letter finds you rejuvenated from your summer endeavors and ready to infuse music into the lives of more young people entering your classrooms this fall. Upon reflection, the Piano Division has had many successes in the last three years: We have increased the number of programs participating in our events, more than tripled the number of students participating in our Fall and Spring Festivals, and the continued legacy of getting some of the best adjudicators and clinicians from around the state for our events.

Spring Master Class Clinician, Dr. Irina Pezner, did an excellent job getting some technical and musical elements out of our featured students. The Spring Honors Recital directly followed and showcased many talented students from across the state at the University of South Carolina Recital Hall on Saturday, May 20, 2023.

We are improving our Piano Festivals by streamlining registration and adding a second adjudicator at each site in the 2023-24 school year to promote impartiality and benefit students and teachers. We are joining SCMTA to host the January Piano Workshop and student master class at Fox Music House in Charleston, SC. Several sessions will be with a nationally recognized Alfred composer and a master class featuring students performing their compositions. We are continuing to host more facilitators with sessions relating to piano education from around the country at our upcoming SCMEA Conference and possibly adding an event for class piano ensembles in the near future.

This year, our Fall Piano Festival will be held on December 1st for the Lower State at Yeaman's Park Presbyterian Church in Hanahan, SC, and on November 30th for the Upper State at St. David's Lutheran Church in West Columbia, SC. Our Fall Master Class clinician is Robert Kelley, a Lander University Piano and Music Theory professor. The Fall Honors Recital will be at the 2024 SCMEA Conference.

Our mission in 2023-24 is to continue connecting with as many Piano teachers and programs across the state as possible so they have all the support they need to thrive. Just like most of our officers and participating teachers, we have noticed that most teachers in the Piano Division are in more than one division. Some are in multiple areas by choice, and others to fill out their schedule. We have found that embracing being in numerous divisions can be a good problem: More music equals more avenues to reach more students that can impact their lives! If either describes you, please reach out so we can plug you and your students into worthwhile enrichment and learning opportunities!

If you're interested in learning more about the SCMEA Piano Division, feel free to contact me at andrea_quinn.c@charleston.k12.sc.us



Amanda Quinn, *President*

ELEMENTARY

Welcome Back to the 2023-2024 School Year. I am excited and honored to begin my term as your next Elementary Division President. To begin I would like to thank Denise Thomas who has served for the last two years as the president and has done a tremendous job in doing so. I know I have some very big shoes to fill and I will do my best in filling them. I would also like to congratulate Mrs. Ginny Capps who was elected to serve as our next President-Elect. I know she will do an amazing job as well. Finally I would like to bring you up to speed as to what has been going on in the division as well as some important events coming soon.

1. 2023 Fall Workshop: We will be having our Annual Fall Workshop on September 9th from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Camden Elementary School in Camden, SC. This will be the first face-to-face workshop we have had Post COVID. Our Guest Clinician will be Steve Campbell from Dancing Drums. In Addition we will be discussing some changes and updates for our Elementary Honor Choir as well after the session. The cost is \$10 and payment will be accepted by either cash or check at the door. Please make plans to be there.

2. Elementary Honor Choir: Speaking of Honor Choir As was mentioned back in February we are in the process of revamping our Elementary Honor Choir program. We will be using Festival Scores once again for the auditions process for Honor Choir. The window for Honor Choir Submissions will open on September 11th and will close on October 6th. More information about the process or submissions will be discussed at the Fall Workshop on September 9th.

3. Bylaws Revision: Our Elementary Division Bylaws will be going through a revision process this year and we are working on developing a committee to begin the process of reviewing those bylaws and making recommendations for corrections and changes to those as well. Once it has gone through this process we will present it to you as the Elementary Division to review and look over. The plan is to have this ready to be voted upon at the Business Meeting in February in Columbia.



Seth Phillips, *President*

I hope that you have an amazing school year.

GUITAR



Dear Colloques and Friends, my name is Chris Essig and it is my honor to step in to the role of president of the SMCEA Guitar Division. Our division is young and growing fast! Along the way, it has been a great privilege to work alongside such exceptional people and great music teachers who believe in the potential of our instrument in schools. As excited as I am to take this baton, I am also

humbled by the task at hand. We as guitar teachers have much to do and much learn from established divisions. We welcome your wisdom and insight as we work together to inspire the love of music in our students.

This summer was off to a great start! Perhaps our best yet! Thanks to the Department of Education and the persistence of our past president Ben Broughton (Dreher High School), we were given a fully funded grant to host a 5 day intensive guitar teacher training at Dreher High school. Guitar teachers from South Carolina flocked and came out of the woodwork. We had such a beautiful time together learning about methods, technique, and assessments. Many classroom guitar teachers are also teaching guitar as a secondary class to larger programs such as choral, orchestra, or band. Based on their testimonies and our observations, we have learned that there is an essential need for teacher resources, networking, and opportunities for guitar students to thrive on their instrument. These are three areas of focus for the Guitar Division moving forward.

Speaking of teacher resources, I am so excited to be working closely with the new head of the Guitar Department at the University of South Carolina, two time Grammy Nominated Mak Grgic. He believes in High School Guitar programs and is working hard to support us in so many ways. Mak and his grad assistant Michael Bunny won a grant from the Arts Commission to bring to South Carolina the highest level guitar teacher training we could ask for. From Austin Texas we were happy to host Austin Classical Guitar and Guitarcurriculum.com. Texas and the southwest, lead the way in the most effective guitar pedagogy out there. We were so fortunate to have their team in South Carolina this summer offering a free training for our teachers!

On that note, and on behalf of the Guitar Division, thank you for your support! If you would like to take a look and listen to some of our best students perform, check out the South Carolina Allstate Guitar Ensemble perform with the Virtual Guitar Orchestra! Search: SCMEA All-State Guitar Ensemble - Bella - Virtual Guitar Orchestra. I am looking forward to a great year!

Chris Essig, *President*

ORCHESTRA

Welcome to the SCMEA Orchestra Division. I hope this message finds you happy, healthy, and ready for a wonderful school year with your students! After serving the organization for the past ten years in various positions, it is my distinct honor and privilege to serve and work alongside you as our Division President. I would like to thank our Past-President, Erik Hines, for his leadership as we continued to navigate our way through pandemic protocols during the 2021-2022 school year, supervising our committees and moving our organization forward, and also overseeing the successful implementation of the Outstanding Performance Award for our division. With an accumulation of points earned through participation in all SCMEA sponsored events, we look forward to presenting 28 trophies to directors at our September business meeting. Many thanks to Audrey Bass, Awards Chair, and the awards committee for motivating our directors to strive for this achievement.

String educators, mark your calendar for the fall business meeting September 9 at Irmo High School. To kick off the new year we are thrilled to welcome Dr. Peter Boonshaft, one of the most inspiring voices in music education today, to speak to our division. His session "If you don't know, I can't tell you" is something you won't want to miss. The day will begin with a 9:00am reading session followed by our new teacher orientation at 10:30am. We encourage all new teachers to attend this meeting so we can ensure you have a successful year. The business meeting will begin at 1:30pm. Thank you to Colleen Marcou and Irmo High School for hosting this event.

Region auditions are quickly approaching. This year Regions 4 and 5 will hold auditions on September 30 while the rest of the state will host their event on October 7. Region 4 will also audition virtually. Thank you to Ann Buttmer, Auditions Chairperson, and to the region event hosts for your hard work to ensure the auditions process runs smoothly.

Jeanette Kuhn, our Conference Chairperson, has been working hard to put together exciting and inspiring sessions for the Orchestra Division portion of the SCMEA Professional Development Conference. Our annual conference will be held February 8-10 at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center. Orchestra Division clinicians will present content on fundamentals, music advocacy, reading sessions, and more. We also look forward to special performances led by some of our state's dedicated string educators. Our



Allison Key, *President*

business meeting will be held Saturday afternoon at 3:30pm.

Thank you to Ginger Greer, our All-State Chairperson, for planning our All-State event. Creston Herron will be conducting the 6-8 Orchestra, John Concklin will be conducting the 9-10 Orchestra, and Perry Holbrook will conduct the 11-12 orchestra. River Bluff High School will host our All-State Orchestra event February 23-25. The Septenary Award is a new award that will be presented to any student participating in All-State each year through 6-12 grade. Two students were recognized at All-State this past year and we look forward to presenting this award to more students in the future.

Check out our orchestra division website for information regarding our events throughout the year. As a reminder, please make sure your NAFME membership is current as this is a requirement to register and participate in SCMEA events. Thank you for the incredible opportunity to serve as your Orchestra Division President. I wish you all a wonderful year with your students and look forward to seeing you soon.

CHORAL

Greetings!

It gives me great pleasure to have the opportunity to serve our SCMEA Choral Division in the role of president. I am so blessed to be surrounded by dedicated members that serve with humility and tenacity so that we can provide the SC students in choral music the best experiences and music education possible.



Firstly, I would like to take a moment to thank David Richardson, past president, for his fantastic service in the role of president as well as Nikki Belch who was serving in the role of past president during my period as president elect. Our outstanding choral leadership team has been working hard to make sure that our events are not only ready to go logistically, but visible and active on our website. Choral Arts plans to be a wonderful event. With the USC School of Music booked, Dr. Alyssa Cossey offers us 3 fantastic sessions that will get us rejuvenated and inspired to dig into a great year of music making. We also have collegiate registration available! So, if you want to nurture the future, encourage a choral music education student at one of our colleges or universities to join us!

I am here to serve you and to facilitate how we can benefit from each of our unique perspectives and gifts as well as those same attributes of the diverse communities that we serve. Please, do not hesitate to reach out to me if I can be of service! We look forward to growing, adapting, and learning together how best to serve and support choral music education in our state!

With sincere gratitude,

Maurice Burgess, *President*

String Review

With Contributions From

Charis Burger
Mauldin High
Greenville, SC

Elizabeth Conrad
Woodmont High
Greenville, SC

Angela Rex
Riverside Middle
Greenville, SC



The String Review includes orchestra pieces that were reviewed by members of the SCMEA Orchestra Division.

Thank you Susan Wines for organizing the review!

Dynamic Forces by Katie O'Hara LaBRIE Grade 2

Score is written well and easy to read, student parts are very legible except the last line of the piece on the 2nd page - is blurry and faded out at the bottom.

This is a great musical selection for teaching dynamics, Slurs over 2 beats with moving eighth notes, staccato eighth notes and counting eighth rest. Measures 34 and 35 in the cello part seem out of place - would be nice to have a lead up into those two measures. The ending is a let down. This piece has the dynamics but is missing the Forces especially at the ending. Would have been nice to have had a very powerful ending. Good piece overall.

Rhapsody In Blue by Michael Hopkins Grade 4 +

Love this piece! All parts and score are written very legibly. It is great to have suggested fingerings and positions in all parts and score. This is a great resource for High School Orchestras to experience George Gershwin at an attainable level. Great job replicating this piece using only string instruments.

Charis Burger

Danse Estrangé by Kirt N. Mosier Grade 3

Danse Estrangé is a driving and chromatic filled work for an advanced third year or high school ensemble. The opening theme is presented in the violas with pulsing quarter notes in the cello and bass, giving bass players an opportunity to explore fourth position. The rhythm in the violins is almost exclusively doubled throughout the work and remains first position, making this a good selection for those who might have less confident sections. The cello part shifts frequently to a high E and employs both forward and backward extensions. The viola part is very challenging, making use of the full range of first position notes. After the initial driving dance, the middle section features a lyric melody in the violas and cellos accompanied by a rhythmic ostinato in the violins. The initial dance motive returns and it concludes with a fiery 'Presto' section in three-four.

Angela Rex

Cold Fusion - Peter Terry Grade 2 ½ ME

Cold Fusion immediately grips an audience's attention with a dynamic beginning. This piece is great for practicing syncopation because the underlying motif is sprinkled throughout all the sections. The juxtaposition between that percussive accompaniment and the lyrical theme creates a stimulating sound that young orchestras will fall in love with.

Elizabeth Conrad



Lander University

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The Classroom Environment: Striving for Excellence or Having Fun? Is it possible to have both?

Angela Rex



Coming back to full-time instruction after the challenges of the last several years has not been easy, but it has taught us the value of making each day that we are face-to-face with our students count. With that being said, the social and emotional needs of many of our students have become a priority in our classrooms. Does this mean that the high standards and expectations that we had established for them pre-Pandemic need to change? Do we have to program music that is less challenging? Should we avoid teaching technique because it can be challenging and not

as enjoyable as playing repertoire?

I strongly believe that the answer to all of these questions is a resounding no! We can still hold our students to high standards and expectations. We can program challenging music. We can and SHOULD teach technique to give them the tools they need to be successful with the repertoire that we put in front of them. Our challenge as teachers in our current classroom situation is to find ways to maintain these standards, while taking into account the social and emotional needs of today's students.

Making Technique Time Fun!

Teaching technique does not have to be dry or boring for you or your students. There are several key ideas that can help to make the process fun and engaging for all involved.

If you are bored, they will be too!

Students will buy in if you seem excited and interested. After twenty plus years in the classroom, teaching F-natural to a group of beginners may not be the highlight of my day, but I always keep in mind that it should be a fun experience for them. So instead of treating it as commonplace, I make a big deal of the change in tonality; teaching the a new finger pattern and putting a new twist on songs they have already learned. You can take

'Hot Cross Buns' and change it to 'Stale Old Buns'. Change 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' to 'Mary Lost Her Little Lamb'. It is our job as teachers to 'sell' what we want them to learn, therefore getting them to 'buy' in and engage.

Relate your own experiences and struggles with them.

If a specific skill gave you trouble as a student, don't be afraid to share that with them. This will make those students who are currently struggling to feel better. If the skill was not hard for you, perhaps share a story about how a former student struggled and then had success. If you don't have a story, make one up! Students are much more likely to keep working on a skill if they know they are not the only ones having trouble.

Keep the classroom mood light.

Students need to know that it is okay to make mistakes. If your classroom environment is one in which the students are scared or timid, they are going to be less likely to try new things. Laugh at yourself when you make a mistake. Show exaggerated examples of how not to do a new skill. Praise students for their efforts and small achievements.

Be okay not always being in charge.

This concept is a difficult one for many directors, myself included. However, once you've introduced a concept, allow students to work in groups or peer tutor each other. Give them a short list of specific things to look for when helping each other. You will find that this can be much more effective than repeating the same instructions over and over. Students will take suggestions and corrections from a classmate more readily than they will from you.

Play games and be creative!

Are you working on shifting with students and they are still squeezing or pressing too hard? Try a section competition. Have each section play the exercise and whichever one does the best wins a point or bragging rights for the day! Exaggerate the skill. Have students try to play the exercise with 'ghost fingers' (finger tips barely touching the string). They'll love the crazy sounds and you'll have gotten them to shift with less finger tip weight. Turn repetition into a game. Try 'Around The World'. Choose a measure of an exercise you're working on and have each row or section play the measure, with a metronome or beat playing, passing it off to the next group without stopping. If a row or section has a mistake, you have to start over. The kids love to try to make it all the way across the room and don't even realize they've been practicing the same measure 5 or 6 times!

The table below lists additional approaches to teaching technique that can help you make your classroom more engaging.

In our effort to teach technique and raise the skill level of our ensembles, we must be careful to avoid the following pitfalls.

Talking too much.

The philosophy of 'talk less, play more' is more important than ever with today's students. Attention spans are shorter, therefore requiring us to deliver our instruction in a more condensed and concise fashion. This does not mean that we must skip steps or leave out curriculum; it requires that we deliver the material in smaller 'bites', allowing the pace of the class to remain active.

Staying isolated.

As orchestra directors, we are often the only person in our building who understands exactly what it is we do. This can be isolating and lead us to believe we are alone. You are NOT alone! There are thousands of orchestra directors out there who want to share and help you be successful! Most of us are just an email away. Are you struggling to find material to supplement your method book? Having trouble selecting music for your next con-

Dry Approach	Engaging Approach
*Play the same scales, with the same rhythm patterns or bowing patterns every day.	*Play scales daily, but have a different focus for each day. Ex. Rhythm, bowing patterns, Tone, extreme intonation, and dexterity.
*Learn a concept from the method book and repeat the same exercises for an extended period of time.	*Once you have introduced the concept through the method book, find supplemental sources to use for reinforcement and review. Have the students write exercises for the various concepts.
*Play finger patterns or tetra chords in the same order or rhythmic pattern every day.	*Mix up the order of the patterns or the notes within the pattern; use a metronome or drumbeat app to encourage speed and dexterity; have competitions between sections; let the students choose the pattern order or the pattern of the week to reinforce.
*Using the same bow hold workouts every day.	*Have a variety of activities and rotate them throughout the week. Add background music. Have students lead the workouts. Let students move to a different part of the room during the workout.
*Playing the same chorale every day, for weeks/months.	Chorales can take time to tune and balance. Repeating them for an extended time is necessary. Add variety by changing dynamics, bow lanes, emphasizing the harmony or bass line over the melody or allowing a student to conduct.

cert? Reach out to a colleague, especially a veteran, and ask for their help. We love to share because, just like you, someone helped us when we needed it.

Leaving out the ‘Why’.

When requiring our students to use the correct left hand position, it is not enough for teachers to say ‘because I said so’ or ‘that’s how you are supposed to do it’. Students like to know why. Taking a moment to show them that a bent wrist for a violin player will not allow them to access the entire fingerboard or will cause them to have a harder time playing 4th finger makes a difference. I find that students enjoy ‘fixing’ problems. Play ‘Find & Fix It’ - a game where the teacher stands in front of the class demonstrating a specific posture or position problem. Students have to tell you what the problem is, how to fix it and why it is important to correct that specific issue.

Using concert repertoire to teach technique.

As professional musicians, we often have one week of rehearsals prior to a performance. Why do we allow our students to work on repertoire for 3-4 months before they perform it? For those of us who see our students everyday, there should be no reason that they would need more than 4-5 weeks to learn and perform repertoire for a concert. If you are teaching the necessary skills before you pass out the repertoire, you will have shorter concert cycles and more time to rehearse making music with your students. Use the extra time to learn more techniques or work on an advanced piece of repertoire.

Choosing Concert Repertoire

As mentioned above, when choosing concert repertoire, the technique level of our students should drive the choices we make. However, choosing the right concert repertoire for our ensembles is one of the most challenging tasks for us as school orchestra directors. Will the students like the piece? Does it have good parts for every section? Do I own it or will I have to purchase it?

All too often we ‘over program’, choosing selections that contain notes and rhythms that are much too difficult, leaving little time for developing musicality. The students in our classrooms today are in need of experiencing safe ways to express themselves and experience emotions. What better way to do that, than by selecting repertoire where you will spend the bulk of your time rehearsing phrasing, dynamics, articulations and mood rather than notes and rhythms. The list below shares some suggested repertoire selections that can allow students, at various grade levels, to have a musically enriching experience.

Conclusion

The challenges we face teaching students in today’s classroom may lead us to feel that we should teach less technique and water down the curriculum. Our students are just as capable of being successful as they were a few years ago. We must help them be successful by changing our strategies to meet their needs. Keep the teaching of technique fun and light. Show enthusiasm for teaching that new skill. Praise them for their accomplishments and help them to be comfortable making mistakes. Be okay with not always being in charge. Use games and other supplemental activities to encourage repetition. Choose repertoire that will help them grow musically. Maintain your standards of excellence and have fun sharing the gift of music with your students each day!

Selection	Grade Level	Musical Skills
‘March and Canon’ - Thomas May	Grade 0.5	Add terraced dynamics, chorale section, introduction to a variety of dynamics, legato vs. detach
‘Burst’ - Brian Balmages	Grade 1	Variety of articulations and bow styles for young players, phrasing of eighth notes, balance accompaniment with melody
‘Classic Sinfonia’ - Elliot del Borgo	Grade 2	Phrasing in the ‘Classical Style’, legato vs. detache, phrasing of eighth note passages, balance parts across orchestra in order of importance to phrase
‘Appalachian Sunrise’ Doris Gazda	Grade 3	Cut time feel of pulse, phrasing long sustained lines, learning to sing through phrases at a variety of dynamics
‘Contrasts in e minor’ Francis Feese	Grade 4	Wide variety of articulations, frequent changes in bowing style, ¾ section requires musical maturity for phrasing and harmonic development



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Reflections on Optimizing Student Practice

The SC Musician is excited to announce our new “Research Corner!” This has come to fruition thanks to Mandi Schlegel, department of music education at the University of South Carolina.

Originally from Charlotte, North Carolina, she was a Kenan Music Scholar at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and earned her master’s degree in piano performance at the University of Texas at Austin, studying with Andrew Brownell. At UT, Brown is a member of the Analyzes of Gaze and Music Teaching and Learning labs, where she studies gaze behavior and attention.



Margaret Brown

Sharpen your pencils and pack your backpacks – we are going back to school! Like most teachers and students, I find figuring out the first few weeks of a new semester to be tremendously exciting - and exhausting. Amidst this happy chaos, I am thinking about how I can optimize my students’ learning in the classroom and at home, and specifically, how to teach my students to practice effectively.

As a teacher who also wears the “researcher” hat, I use research literature to inform and shape my approach towards teaching students to practice. During my doctoral degree, I have spent many hours studying and writing about research in music teaching and learning. My recent projects (Brown, 2023b; Brown & Duke, in press) analyze novice practice behavior and identify factors associated with successful practice and performance outcomes.

Studying how musicians learn continues to positively change how I approach teaching, and I am of the firm belief that all music teachers can benefit from learning about research-based approaches to student practice. While by no means a comprehensive review of research literature about practice (for two excellent reviews, see How et al., 2021, and Miksza, 2011), these three conclusions from practice research may offer a fresh perspective on how teachers can approach teaching their students to practice effectively.

Practice quality can affect performance quality.

Researchers consistently observe that successful musicians practice differently from less-successful musicians (Duke et al., 2009; Miksza, 2007). While this relationship between practice and performance may seem obvious, it is worth mentioning. Many students and teachers may assume that problems with performance are due to insufficient practice time. When a student fails to meet our expectations, we tell them to practice more, without investigating what they are doing when they practice. However, poor student performance can also be the result of ineffective practice.

In a recent research project studying novice

pianists, I observed that many underperforming students work diligently in the practice room, but how they practice does not produce optimal performance outcomes (Brown, 2023a; Brown & Duke, in press). Additionally, I found that some successful students also practiced ineffectively. This finding surprised me: I had wrongly assumed that since my students were playing well in class, they were practicing well at home. This could not have been further from the truth!

It is easy to evaluate the product of practice (tone, technique, repertoire) and the presence of practice (if students are practicing) without assessing the process of practice (what students did or did not do during practice). This lack of attention on the process of practice is understandable; music teachers have limited time to spend with each of their students, and teaching a student to practice takes time and consistent monitoring. Listening to a student perform a Beethoven sonata or a Sousa march is typically more enjoyable than watching a student practice, especially if that student is not very good at practicing.

However, if we neglect to regularly observe and assess our students’ practice, we neglect a crucial component of their musical development. Without attending to how they are practicing, students may fail to recognize the crucial relationship between practice quality and performance quality. Fortunately, music teachers can bypass much of the angst and frustration that can accompany student practice by teaching our students to attend to the quality of their independent practice. Practicing is a skill that we can and should teach our students and regularly assess as part of instructional activities. How might student attitudes towards practicing change if they regularly experienced positive outcomes in the practice room?

Effective practice isn’t about avoiding mistakes – it’s about fixing them.

The mechanisms of learning depend on making mistakes. In motor skill learning (which includes

practicing), procedural memories are updated when an individual makes a prediction error – when the predicted outcome of an action (for example, drinking a cup of coffee) does not match up with the outcome of that action (the coffee cup slips and spills everywhere). These discrepancies between predictions and outcomes send signals to the brain to change the immediate response to the action, and update the procedural memory associated with that outcome (next time, pick up the cup of coffee more carefully) (Kandel, 2013; Wolpert & Kawato, 1998).

Why is this important? Procedural memory formation is the foundation of effective practice. To practice effectively, musicians must predict what they want to do, identify discrepancies between their predictions and outcomes, and, when these prediction errors inevitably occur, adjust their behavior (Killion, 2023). Studies on both advanced and novice musicians' practice behavior demonstrate this connection between error correction and performance outcomes; musicians who successfully isolate and correct their mistakes tend to have improved performance outcomes (Brown & Duke, in press; Duke et al., 2009; Miksza, 2007).

Without knowing the crucial role mistakes play in the learning process, it is easy to assume that since good performance = no mistakes, and good performance = good practice, therefore good practice = no mistakes. Not only is this assumption about mistakes in practice unrealistic (as any seasoned musician can attest), but it is also simply not true. Making and responding to one's mistakes updates memories and ultimately affects physical behaviors.

Practicing an instrument involves learning and refining many physical skills, which inevitably leads to mistake-making. If students thoughtfully engage with mistakes during practice, instead of avoiding them at all costs, they work with, not against, their internal neurological and sensorimotor systems. Think of how different a practice session or rehearsal would be if, upon making a mistake, your students asked the question "how is what I played different from what I predicted I would play?" Mistakes, both valuable and inevitable, play a crucial role in the learning process. We should teach our students to embrace them.

Observation is a key component of teaching students to practice.

How can music teachers successfully teach their students to practice? The first step is observation. Without knowing exactly how our students are practicing, it becomes difficult to assess their ability and give constructive feedback. Teachers need to observe their

students' practice, and students should observe both effective practice and their own individual practice.

First: students should observe examples of effective practice. Our students are not inherently aware of how effective practice should look, feel, and sound when they are learning to play an instrument. Furthermore, practicing tends to be a solitary activity with little or no built-in interaction with other musicians. Without regularly viewing examples of effective practice, our students may have trouble determining whether their own practice behaviors are working. However, if students do regularly observe great practicing, students may more accurately be able to plan, execute, and evaluate their own practice. As music teachers, we are likely the most convenient and well-equipped practice model for our students. Why not show them how it's done?

Second: teachers should observe their students' practice. As previously mentioned, how students play in a class or lesson is not always indicative of their independent practice habits, both in terms of quality and quantity (Brown & Duke, in press). Without observing how students are practicing, teachers only have a partial picture of their students' musical capabilities, and teachers may miss opportunities to correct and/or reinforce behaviors in our students.

Third: students should observe their own practice. I did a short project with my beginning group piano students where I asked them to record their practice, and then report on their practice effectiveness before and after they watched the recording (Brown, 2023b). After watching their own practice recording, students noticed more details about the overall effectiveness of their own practice; most students wrote about aspects of their practice behavior that could be improved. The results of this project illustrated that students, even beginners, can notice a great deal about their own practice if given the opportunity.

This fall, as teachers encounter new groups of students, it is good to remember that learning can be uncomfortable. Our students, particularly at the beginning of the school year, may feel nervous, excited, frustrated, and vulnerable when learning a new instrument. Of course, some of these emotions are part of the process. Playing an instrument is a challenge, but we can make that challenge easier for our students by teaching them to practice well. This fall, as we begin the process of teaching the next generation of musicians, let's prepare our students to demonstrate confidence and skill both on stage and in the practice room.

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NAfME Awards Shannon Kelly Kane Scholarships to Lydia Kirkland of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Sharon Tran of the University of North Georgia, and Ethan Watkins of Converse University



RESTON, VA (July 25, 2023) – The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) honored Lydia Kirkland of the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO), Sharon Tran of the University of North Georgia (UNG), and Ethan Watkins of Converse University as the recipients of the 2023 Shannon Kelly Kane Scholarship. Lydia, Sharon, and Ethan were presented the scholarships during the June 2023 NAfME National Leadership Assembly and Collegiate Leadership Advocacy Summit. The Shannon Kelly Kane Scholarship was created by Shannon's family and friends in coordination with NAfME to honor her exemplary life and her love of teaching music. The scholarship award is open to current NAfME Collegiate members, who have been nominated for NAfME Collegiate Professional Achievement Recognition. "NAfME is very proud to honor the legacy of Shannon Kelly Kane, and this year we are pleased to offer this recognition to three outstanding recipients," said NAfME President Scott R. Sheehan. "On behalf of the National Executive Board, it is my pleasure to offer our most sincere congratulations to Lydia, Sharon, and Ethan for their dedication, leadership, and outstanding service. Each of these recipients has had a huge impact on their respective collegiate chapters by promoting opportunities in music education and making contributions to their communities. We know the future is bright when we see how much these individuals have already made to the profession, and they're just getting started. We wish them all well and look forward to learning about their continued success in the future."



Lydia Kirkland "took on the role of vice president during her sophomore year in Fall 2020 and was continually reelected to the position until this past fall, when she began serving as chapter president," shared Katrina A. Cox, UNO assistant professor of choral music education; Morgan

Thompson, vice president of UNO Collegiate NAfME; and Dr. Karen Fannin, director of the UNO School of Music.

"Faculty, staff, and her peers have come to depend on her steadfast dedication to service, attention to detail, and commitment to bettering programs." Under Lydia's leadership with fellow officers, UNO Collegiate NAfME created community in the School of Music through social activities and professional learning sessions, resulting in increased membership numbers and participation, which included students outside the music education concentration. The UNO Collegiate NAfME chapter was presented twice with the "Distinguished Chapter Award" in Nebraska as well as

receiving the National Chapter of Excellence for Professional Development award. "The work she chooses to engage with is also rooted in service," those nominating Lydia added, "including working with local marching bands, the Omaha Area Youth Orchestras, the Nebraska Medical Orchestra, and the UNO Daycare. Her attitude, supportive nature, and hard work has been noted by many."



Sharon Tran has been an active member of the

University of North Georgia NAfME Collegiate chapter since her first year and has served in leadership for three consecutive years. She is currently the president of the UNG NAfME Collegiate chapter. Sharon "not only attends every UNG NAfME Collegiate- sponsored event, but she also takes lead on most events

coordinating workflows, presentations, and professional development opportunities at UNG," shared Dr. Marie Graham, UNG Assistant Professor of Music. "She has served as a student intern at the United Forsyth Orchestra Day for two years and also at the 'BookNotes' project. She has served as a student presenter at the Georgia Music Educators Association Conference in 2022 and 2023. Sharon was the lead presenter at the NAfME Collegiate Advocacy Summit in June 2022 for the UNG Chapter of Excellence presentation in the professional development category." Sharon "is a very organized and sought-after intern by our area school partners assisting with instrument demonstrations, band camps, etc.," continued Dr. Graham. "She is a true leader having earned the respect of her professors and peer musicians. I believe that Miss Tran will continue in NAfME leadership in whatever teaching position she lands, both at the county and state levels."



Ethan Watkins "is one of those rare students who sees a need and is motivated to address it. Never satisfied with doing the minimum to get by, he works hard at everything he does," shared Susana M. Lalama, Converse University NAfME Collegiate chapter advisor and director of the Petrie School of Music; Patricia

S. Foy, Converse University professor of music education; and Cassandra N. Shaddock, Converse University NAfME Collegiate chapter president. Among Ethan's contributions is coordinating travel arrangements for his chapter to the South Carolina Music Educators Association conference, as well as organizing educational meetings for the Converse

campus chapter. After taking the modern band course as a sophomore, he later served as a student teacher of the modern band class during the January 2023 term. In addition to successful community events, Ethan was heavily involved in organizing and presenting a themed School of the Arts “MET Gala” in October 2022, and helped spearhead a Winterfest instrument petting zoo for local children in December 2022. Ethan “is a true asset to our music education program as well as the university at large, and will, no doubt, be a future leader in music education,” added the individuals who nominated him.

Learn about past recipients of the Shannon Kelly Kane Scholarship, NAFME Collegiate Chapter of Excellence Recognition, and NAFME Collegiate Professional Achievement Awards. To learn more about the NAFME Collegiate program, visit nafme.org/membership/collegiate.

A Note From Ellen Weaver

State Superintendent of Education



Tom Finigan, Rosetta Dingle, Ellen Weaver, Colleen Marcou, Patrick Casey, Roger Simpson

From the time I learned to play piano as a small child to the moment I still step into the choir loft each Sunday morning, music has filled my spirit with joy and my life with unparalleled learning opportunities. Music is a deeply personal and formative educator: the skill it takes to accompany a soloist and let them shine that teaches both patience and humbleness. The collaboration it takes to harmonize and blend in skilled ensemble playing and singing teaches the value of community. The tenacity a musician must develop to push themselves to hone their craft with excellence teaches grit and patience. Music is the universal language that unites us across cultures, backgrounds, and giftings. Access to music education is a life-changing opportunity, and I am committed to advocate for every South Carolina student to be afforded this soul-enhancing gift.

-Ellen E. Weaver, State Superintendent of Education

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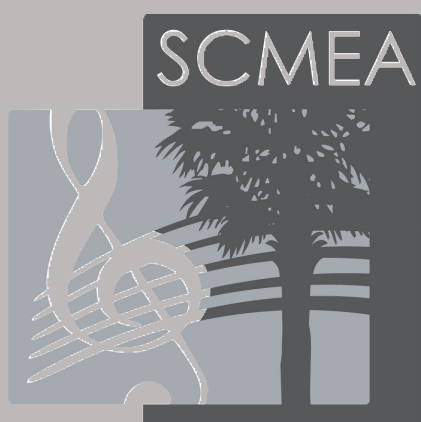
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