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Table of Contents

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Table of Contents

Communications Technology and the Piano Teaching Profession

by Scott Price, University of South Carolina

Recent advances in communications technology have radically changed the process of information exchange in this century. Telegraph and telephone facilitated almost instantaneous communication across countries and between continents. Radio brought information and communication to remote areas, war zones, and occupied territories where communications technology had been destroyed or confiscated. Television coupled word with image, and the development of satellite and digital technologies has forever changed the process of information distribution. Electronic mail and internet technology have brought information access and communication to the general public at little or no cost. Piano Pedagogy Forum exploits the internet medium to bring new information and changing perspectives to the continuing growth of the teaching profession.

The internet continues to grow at a wonderfully alarming rate of speed. As it expands, the possibilities for information dissemination are only limited by the number of web sites that exist at any current moment. The insatiable human hunger for new modes of communication has given rise to such advances as interactive web sites, interactive CD Roms, QuickTime movie technology, video-phone and digital communications conferencing. Access to these technologies has few limits. The addition of human curiosity, as usual, has added pressure to mass in the fusion of a new energy in thought, visualization and realization of the potential of this technology.

Internet technology, and VHS recording technology, has created a new venue for music instruction that can no longer be ignored. Many publisher catalogs offer educational video cassettes on different types of piano instruction. These video courses have found their niche in a market-place where hobby players seek instruction on improvisation, new age styles, jazz and popular music. The television info-mercial has been partnered with the video cassette in a dual marketing strategy aiding these products to reach a growing audience. The internet is also attracting a new audience of information seekers. An internet search on the subject of "piano" will reveal that piano lessons may be obtained over the world-wide-web through any household personal computer. Teachers and students with the proper technology are also able to offer and enjoy instruction through videophone conferences. Although the days of Star Trek "Holodeck" instruction by famous pianists and pedagogues of present and past centuries is still confined to the realms of science-fiction and fantasy, current experimentation with such distance-learning and instructional courses suggests a demand from the general public. These experiments also suggest that a segment of the general population is beginning to ignore the process of traditional music pedagogy.

New advances in music technology give rise to new fears about the future of piano teaching. What is this technology? Is it affordable? Is this technology a fad? Does it really communicate ideas and produce a result? Will the traditional piano studio have a future? What are the motives behind this technology? Who is initiating this technology and under what guise? Is art falling prey to finance? How can artistry and the oral/aural

tradition of music survive? Are we going to de-value interpersonal human communication? Who is going to monitor this activity? These are all valid fears that become overwhelming when one is besieged from all sides.

Perhaps the most important question is "Who monitors this activity?" Traditionally, musicians have monitored their own activities through the constant networking that keeps the profession alive. National organizations have also developed committees to discuss, study, and develop protocols for the use and absorption of current trends and technologies into the profession of piano teaching. However, discussions on the use and misuse of communications technology in music instruction are still to be defined.

If the pedagogy profession is to exist in compatibility with new communications technologies, the profession must absorb them into its core of study and discussion thereby creating procedures and protocols for communications development and application. The teaching profession will then serve as watchdog, facilitator and arbiter between the industry, the profession, and the general public who look to the professional pianist for quality instruction. The possibilities of partnerships between music instruction and communications technologies are virtually unlimited and overwhelming at this time. Without national discussion on this looming issue, the profession won't know the wolf has been in the fold until after he has departed with a substantial part of our livelihood. Quality may become subordinate to quantity. Art may be defined not by artists, but by industry.

By inviting the wolf into the parlor, the teaching profession may be able to domesticate him while creating a lifelong companion that will protect our interests while sniffing out his own curiosities. In the end, the teaching profession and its ideals remains intact; but with stronger senses, heightened capabilities, and new ways to reach a hungry audience. Communications technology should not be personified as the creator of a new order in piano teaching - it should only provide a new tool in musical intuition and understanding. Further acceptance of new modes of communication can also allow performers and teachers to bring music to a population that, in the past, may have had to do without the joys of a musical experience and the satisfaction that is gained through self expression in one of the ultimate arts of communication. Through communications technology, music can truly become the universal language.

Scott Price is Assistant Professor of Piano, Piano Pedagogy, and Coordinator of Group Piano at the University of South Carolina. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and Bowling Green State University, he has studied with Jane Magrath, Thomas Hecht and Virginia Marks. He has performed at the national conventions of the Music Teachers National Conference, Music Teachers National Association, the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, and has given performances and seminars at the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas TX, the University of Oklahoma Seminar for Piano Teachers, the North Dakota State Music Teachers Convention, the South Carolina State Music Teachers Convention, and the Bowling Green State University Summer Music Institute. He has served as repetiteur with Lyric Opera Cleveland, and as music director for Lyric Opera Cleveland's Educational Outreach program. He has been a faculty member of the Cleveland Music School Settlement and the Bowling Green State University Creative Arts program. Dr. Price is Co-Editor of Piano Pedagogy Forum.

Keynote Address

by Jane Magrath, University of Oklahoma

Warm greetings as we bring you this, the initial posting from a new and exciting web journal! In my capacity of writing this inaugural keynote column I feel compelled somehow to recall and share something of the reasons why we are excited to be professional or amateur musicians - we are, in six words, totally and hopelessly committed music lovers. Where did this irresistible attraction first take root in our lives? Something has captivated us as well as scores and scores and scores of other people through the ages.

I'd like to quote from the opening of James Conlon's address to the competitors in attendance at the recent Van Cliburn Competition closing night's awards ceremony. "Being a musician is not merely a profession, it is a way of life. It is a passion, a vocation, an obsession. It is a privilege and a scourge which brings great satisfactions and great torments. Classical music is a spiritual force. It inspires, uplifts, and invigorates; consoles and edifies; challenges us to confront our inner selves and our destinies." What could be more true and more basic to the belief hierarchy of a classical musician?

For just a moment, I'd like to explore the relationship of this to today's music education circles. In teaching circles we talk often about what we can do to motivate the student. What makes an effective lesson? What is the best way to present a repertoire piece? What are some modes of learning and how can we match our teaching to the student's learning style? The list continues. We work ceaselessly to find the right answers and push the magic buttons in teaching to create just the right atmosphere and just the right combination of factors to allow our students to do their best. All this is quite well and good, especially since it signifies and represents the importance of teaching and of communicating with a student that many of today's most effective and most successful teachers believe.

I wonder if, through our excellent methods, we may skirt the central issue. Undoubtedly our experiences with some piece or pieces of music - classical, jazz, rock, or otherwise - brought us to a decision to make music ours for life. The music itself made us commit to being professionals; the music lured the amateur to discover the luster of practicing, of listening, of analyzing, and of further practicing.

We are musicians because of the very musical idiom itself - because the lure of music of quality is absolutely irresistible. The art music itself is what captivates, and what turns our students on. Are we teachers first, or pianists first, or music-lovers first?
Perhaps we miss the mark when we look too hard for too many teaching supplements and motivators, looking past the art itself: the very quality of the music that the students and we ourselves play. The zeal comes through the music. While the teacher, the music class, the choir director, the jazz director, and so on may be the facilitator, the very best of them places the art - the score - above all in affixing the music to the human soul.

Teachers bring light to the score and facilitate their students' ability to transform a score to life. Professional performers make music real. Amateur performers bring the music to life, and through that lend their enthusiasm for the music to anyone within shouting distance.

That should be the goal of any teacher - to have the student bring the score to life. All too often I'm afraid that teachers, in their most conscientious ways, strive to do everything with a student but that. It is the life in the music that keeps us thriving.

If you have a minute, look up James Conlon's address for the closing night's awards ceremony for the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition delivered in Fort Worth during this past June 1997. You can find a large portion of it in the piano journal Piano Today, Fall 1997 issue on page 4. I continue with his thoughts on the satisfactions rendered through being a musician. Conlon, in talking with the contestants at the Cliburn competition, encouraged them to remember that "the only permanent satisfactions come from the love for the music itself, and joy in passing it on to others without asking for anything in return." He continues: "We must also remind ourselves and our audiences that we are not only passengers on a joy ride through the classical repertory, but caretakers and guardians of a time capsule."

Without the human performer - student, teacher, professional performer - to transmit the music, there is no music. It is the music and the act of making music that feeds our musical souls. It also feeds the souls of our first year piano students, the third year piano students, the junior high student, the college student who practices into oblivion, and the compulsive closet practicer, drawn irresistibly to their instrument and the music.

Jane Magrath is Professor of Music in Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Oklahoma. She has presented over 200 recitals, workshops and masterclasses in over forty states as well as in locations in Europe, Southeast Asia, and Australia. She is a regular writer of *New Music Reviews* for **Clavier**, and her articles have appeared in the major piano journals. She has written, compiled, and/or edited over 25 volumes including the multi-volume series *Masterwork Classics, Practice and Performance, Technical Skills, Masterpieces With Flair, Melodius Masterpieces,* and *Encore* for Alfred Publishing Company. Her major reference book *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature* was published in 1995 by Alfred Publishing. She has served as Coordinator of Piano for the National Conventions of the Music Teachers National Association and in major capacities for other organizations including the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy. She has also served as the Rildia Bee Cliburn Lecturer at the Cliburn Piano Institute at TCU in Fort Worth, TX on two different occasions. A recipient of the University of Oklahoma Regent's Award for Superior Teaching and a two-time recipient of the Associate's Distinguished Lectureship, Dr. Magrath is a McCasland Foundation Presidential Professor at the University of Oklahoma where she serves as Chair of the Piano Department and teaches applied piano and courses in piano pedagogy.

Keyboard Classes in a Music Outreach Program

by Anna Belle Bognar, Director Music Plus Program, Bowling Green State University

Music Plus Program - Overview & Description

Music Plus, an outreach and enhancement program for students in grades 7-12, is housed in the College of Musical Arts at Bowling Green State University, OH. Music Plus was started by Dr. Victor Ellsworth (now Music Chair, University of Little Rock). He served as program director during the pilot period and first six years; the 1997-98 school year is the seventh consecutive year of operation for this outreach program.

Students selected from one Toledo, OH, inner city junior high geographic region are brought to campus on Wednesday evenings and include African-American, Hispanic, and Caucasian boys and girls. Private music lessons, keyboard classes, and other creative activities are provided each week in three 40-minute modules. Music Plus students choose an instrument, or voice, for private lesson study. Currently, the following are represented: violin, cello, voice, oboe, bassoon, sax, trumpet, piano, and percussion.

Instruments are provided for students, as needed, and those who continue in the program get to keep their instrument. Music and materials are also provided and there is a summer camp experience for students (residential camp or day camp, depending on current financial resources).

Program goals include giving students reasons to stay in school, to attend college, and to participate in arts experiences that they otherwise wouldn't have the chance to do. Students are transported to campus for lessons, classes and activities so they can visualize themselves as fitting into a college setting.

Currently, all 1997 Music Plus high school graduates are in college with three attending other universities and two enrolled at Bowling Green State University. This fall, the BGSU freshmen presented a session for other Music Plus students on the topic "What It's Like to be a College Freshman," followed by a lively question and answer period. It was a great evening! Both BGSU students have chosen to stay in contact (we're glad) and one is now assisting in the keyboard classes.

The regular teaching staff includes university faculty and college students - all are volunteers. College students may receive practicum teaching credit and music education students studying educational psychology can meet course field requirements by teaching Music Plus students. Music colleagues and other university faculty generously help with special presentations and performances.

To provide expanded opportunities for students, educational resources from the university community are utilized whenever possible. These have included collaborations with colleagues in the School of Art, Theater Department, Creative Writing Program, Computer Area, College of Education and Human Development, and the Bowling Green State University Minority Affairs and Admissions offices.

As is the case with many outreach programs, financial resources are always a concern. Music Plus has received help from the BGSU Foundation, a BGSU President's Grant, contributions from business, from industry, and from individual contributors. Program expenses are funded entirely by donations.

The College of Musical Arts provides encouragement and support through in-kind resources, assistance in seeking funds, musical performances to attend, and free admission to some ticketed musical events. Experiences in working with Music Plus continue to demonstrate that many people are very willing to donate some of their expertise and talents when asked to help.

Music Plus Keyboard Classes

Every student in the Music Plus enhancement program (for grades 7-12) participates in a keyboard class each week in addition to private lessons on their chosen instrument, or voice, and other program activities. The purposes of the Keyboard Classes are to reinforce basic musical skills (staff reading, ear training, rhythm, creativity, and musical expression) and to help students develop problem solving skills that work for them.

Two electronic piano labs, at Bowling Green State University, OH, are used for Music Plus Keyboard Classes. There are two mini-classes held in each lab room at the same time and having two 40-minute keyboard sessions allows a total of eight classes per evening. The use of groupings on the piano lab control panel, and headsets, makes the double classes possible; however, some instruction is still done out loud - just not too loud.

Every attempt is made to group students together at approximately the same level of advancement. At times, it is necessary to move students around and they get used to this flexibility. Students also work with the music sequencers available on each piano in one lab room. They play along with prerecorded accompaniments, record the pieces they are learning (or have learned), and use multi-track recording and changing voice capabilities.

Keyboard mini-classes contain from 2-5 students and each has its own teacher. Usually there is also one additional teacher in the room to help meet individual learning needs. Some of the keyboard class teachers are piano majors but most are not. Many teachers, however, are music education majors and all have some keyboard background.

In the early days of the program, when one person could do all the keyboard class teaching, lesson planning took time but was generally fairly easy. As the Music Plus

Program grew in size, additional keyboard class teachers were needed. Usually these were volunteer college students - wonderful people but with limited teaching experience - and curriculum planning became much more complex!! Added to this mix was another consideration. Sometimes Music Plus students were unable to attend every week due to home situations, or other problems. It soon became obvious that what we needed was a keyboard curriculum that would: (a) work in various situations, (b) still be beneficial for all the students, and (c) would work well for new teachers who were still getting their teaching chops.

Over time, a series of keyboard packets was developed. These were grouped into levels and contained a number of specific tasks to be accomplished. To date, the keyboard packets and levels are not polished examples for a model curriculum but they do work for us and, more importantly, they work for the students.

Each keyboard level contains from 7-10 packets of items to be accomplished and, as a student is successful with an item, the teacher initials it to indicate that it has been done well. There are usually 4-5 items per packet (enough to challenge but not so many that students get discouraged). Generally, each packet has a variety of things to do and includes something in the following areas: staff reading, rhythm, ear training, creativity, and pieces as avenues for musical expression.

Because review and reinforcement are parts of the learning process, topic items keep reappearing (in different disguises) in the packets. "What! I have to do this ear training stuff again?" is sometimes heard and gets answered with "Yes, but it will be easier this time around." Also, all keyboard class work must be accomplished in the piano labs because most Music Plus students do not have access to keyboards for home rehearsals. Since reinforcing basic music skills, and helping students discover successful problem solving techniques are keyboard class goals, using packets lets us work on both at once.

Every spring, during the final Music Plus recital when family members are invited guests, keyboard class certificates are presented to students. Large certificates are given for completing keyboard levels and small-sized ones for progress within a level. Even something as simple as a certificate can be an effective motivation. Some students plan ahead to make sure they pass at least one keyboard level during the year and other students start to work even harder in March and April to finish a keyboard level before the year ends.

There is always room for us to improve and current efforts are aimed at opening up additional keyboard experiences for advancing students - those who would like an alternative to keyboard packets. Right now, two students have opted to work with some "really hard pieces" - something they couldn't possibly finish in just a few weeks. Is it gratifying when students ask to be challenged? You bet it is!

The future for Music Plus keyboard classes will probably include things we haven't even thought about yet. The one thing I do know is that whatever those things are, we will work them out together - and that's what keeps us going and helps us find our successes.

In Their Own Words - Music Plus Students

In 1994, some of the Music Plus students, parents, and teaching staff participated in a session at the Music Educators National Conference. One part of that session was a spoken art presentation scripted from student journal entries. Diane Rao (then a doctoral student in theater arts at Bowling Green State University) and Dr. Joyce Gromko (then assistant professor of music education at Bowling Green State University) collaborated with students to compile and rehearse the presentation, "Because You Are You."

Here are a few selected passages from the longer work. They illustrate some of the reasons why working with outreach students is both rewarding and needed. As is appropriate, the students get the last word.

BECAUSE YOU ARE YOU
(Excerpts from a script compiled from the journal entries of Music Plus Students - Fall and Winter, 1993-1994)

Because you are you, you get misunderstood, you get mistreated. Because you are you, you are a victim of society, you are a victim of crime. Because you are you, you differ from people's emotions, you differ from people's characteristics...

...People think I'm a closed type of person and really tough. People who meet me think I have no feelings and don't cry and it kind of hurts.

...When someone thought I was a whore, everyone kept talking about me to other people and they believed it. And because of that, my best friend's mother would never let her go anywhere with me...

...I am a person whose eyes are brown, who thinks with lots of thought. A person who gets angered quickly. Someone who can't be bought...

...No more tears for a sister cause my eyes burn sad to see my homie die, but that's the way the world turns. Pay my respects and it's back to the fast lane all my homie's dying over rocked up cocaine. Sitting in the church listening to the eulogy: "God is my Maker." He made me born in the ghetto, raised in the ghetto, as long as I'm a sister, I'm goin' die in the ghetto. '79 is the year I was processed; 14 years later and there's still no progress. I'll sleep in peace when I'm lying in my grave. Trapped in the ghetto, just a modern-day slave...

...Because you are you, you want to be happy, you want to be loved. Because you are you, you get angry, you get upset. Because you are you, you make goals and you get things accomplished just because you are you.

Anna Belle Bognar is a Music Education faculty member in the College of Musical Arts at Bowling Green State University, OH, where she is Coordinator of the College Group Piano Program. Teaching areas include group piano and pedagogy, keyboard methods for middle school & secondary level general music

classes, and a graduate seminar in college music teaching. She is director of the Music Plus outreach and enhancement program for students in grades 7-12. Past advisor to Multicultural Music Students United, Sigma Alpha Iota chapter, and OCMEA chapter, she received a teaching award three times from the Bowling Green State University Undergraduate Student Government Association. Publications include articles for state and national newsletters, Piano Quarterly, Keyboard Companion, and contributions to the MENC Teaching Strategies Series (for Keyboard Classes and for Methods Classes). She has presented sessions for local, state, and national conventions including OMTA, OMEA, IMEA, MTNA, MENC, National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, and the National Group Piano Symposium.

Is the Willingness and Ability to Teach Adults a Moral Issue?

by Michelle Conda, University of Cincinnati

Dear readers, please indulge me. I am a first time mother at forty-two years old, and my world will never be the same. Everything I see around me is shaded by my new mother eyes. Just like every mother before me, I want the world to be a better place for my child. I was born in the "baby boom" era. I am used to being comfortable and having all my physical needs easily met. We have two cars, two televisions, central air conditioning. There is no doubt - I am a consumer.

The business world knows I am a consumer. I get at least five pieces of "junk" mail a day which end up in the landfill from companies who have "bought" my name from companies from whom I have consumed. This is really starting to bother me. I don't like that I am so "material minded."

Is this my fault? Yes and no. I am surrounded by advertisements for "instant win" lottery and "get rich quick" schemes. I have been taught instant gratification and consumerism from the time my parents wanted to make a better world for me. It's not a matter of placing blame - it just is the way it is. I take solace in the fact that I am a teacher of piano. I am teaching a nonconsumable. Knowledge isn't something one can throw out with the rest of the trash. It is not a single use item. Or is it?

There are more and more piano courses that advertise "learn to play the piano without trying," or "learn to play the piano in 10 easy lessons." There are guarantees that if you are willing to pay the price, you will be able to play the piano without tremendous effort. These advertisements are geared to the adult world. The advertisers are aware adults are living longer and have more free time (especially between retirement and death). They also realize that it is the adults who have money. Therefore they are selling their bill of goods to a willing clientele that often demand instant success.

This subject has invoked passionate discussion in my graduate piano pedagogy class. Damon, a graduate student in the Conservatory and a member of the class, commented that eventually there could be a computer chip that is plugged into peoples' hands. Put in a "John Browning" chip, and you too can play the *Emperor Concerto* exactly like the artist! If you are willing to pay the price...

The price one pays to learn piano is not money as much as it is time and effort. Damon was also telling about the North American Indians' pipe rituals. When white men first studied the ritual, they thought the pipe was used to gain control over nature. In fact, the Indians would hold the smoke inside themselves, causing themselves pain during the course of their ceremony. When they released the smoke, it would carry their prayers and requests to the gods. If the gods did not answer their prayers, it was because they did the ceremony wrong - the blame was placed within the self. According to Damon, the moral of this story is that music is a craft to be studied and to which one must sacrifice a part of oneself. He admits this is not a "music is for everyone" statement.

I take a more moderate approach to this "instant success" crisis based on Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs." Once our basic needs are addressed, we reach for higher level needs, including the need for knowledge and self actualization. Because we live in a consumer world, it is easy to get caught up in fulfilling lower level comfort based needs. I believe adult piano teachers can contribute by being an antidote for this problem. I believe we have a moral obligation to teach adults music. We who teach and play the piano know the sacrifice one makes in time and effort is greatly rewarded by the experience of being able to play the piano. We know it's worth the effort. We have reached a higher level of gratification and frankly found it a gas! We have an obligation to pass that love and knowledge on to our adult students. We have an obligation to teach something beyond playing the piano - the importance of perseverence and the rewards that are the results of that perseverence.

How do we do this without sounding "preachy" or teaching the adult student like a child? Point out the little successes, not just once but constantly. Show patience in your teaching and teach your student to be patient in return. Find a way to explain the fact - yes, fact - that playing the piano is a wonderful, rewarding and fantastic experience. Try to gear the students' minds away from the instant gratification to the long term successes. Teach them to love that they can do it. Teach them to respect their successes and respect music. Because you do this, your adult learner may learn how to reach for stars without an airplane. And my new baby will live in a better world because the people around him took the high road.

Michelle Conda is the Coordinator of Secondary Piano and Assistant Professor of Piano Pedagogy at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma, where she studied piano with Dr. Jane Magrath and piano pedagogy with Dr. Jane Magrath and Dr. E. L. Lancaster. She has written about adult piano study for *The Soundpost*, *Keyboard Companion*, and the *American Music Teacher*. She has given presentations on the subject around the country, including the Music Teachers National Association Conference. She continues to teach adults through the Communiversity program at the University of Cincinnati.

The Keyboard Harmony Course: Its Need and Importance

by Dorothy Payne, University of South Carolina

I am delighted to have been asked to participate in the inaugural issue of this ground-breaking publication, in the company of some musician/pedagogues whose work I admire very much indeed. I suspect (and indeed, I fervently hope) that many of my own homespun observations and suggestions will overlap with those of others whose views are represented here. My remarks are made within the context of a long-standing and passionately held belief that the so-called "music theory" courses found in the basic music major curriculum (embraced by some, dreaded by others, but inevitably inflicted upon all) represent the most important training an aspiring musician will ever receive. This assumes, of course, that the teaching consistently relates the material presented to the music itself, which inspired the student to pursue his or her craft in the first place.

With very few notable exceptions, one finds that the traditional keyboard harmony component of the undergraduate musicianship core has significantly dwindled during the last few decades, and in some cases, disappeared altogether. Whether this is a result of curricular "streamlining," or reflective of the tendency of "card-carrying" theorists in the academy to want to teach *theory* rather than musicianship in undergraduate classes, I cannot say. It may well be an inevitable casualty of the broadening of subject matter which came along with the Comprehensive Musicianship Movement, in which the prescribed breadth of coverage made concomitant skill development virtually impossible. Having begun my teaching career more than thirty years ago, however, I am keenly aware of the depth of learning and musical literacy which has somehow been lost along the way.

In years past, there were varying mechanisms for incorporating keyboard harmony into the curriculum. In larger and/or more specialized institutions, there was an independent keyboard harmony course. In other cases, the teaching of keyboard harmony was left up to the class piano instructor and (more often than not) failed to support the work taking place in the theory classroom. Those institutions having an integrated core combining harmony, analysis, ear-training and sight-singing, might schedule a ten-minute keyboard "audition" with a graduate assistant once a week. The exercise to be performed would ideally reflect material being dealt with in the regular class meetings. I am reminded of a particularly challenging assignment devised by the coordinator of sophomore theory classes, while I was serving as a graduate assistant (this would have been sometime early in the sixties). The "acceptable" literature for study at that time, and at that particular institution, was limited to the chorales of J.S. Bach (not atypical of many music programs during the first half of the century), and the topic at hand was "the suspension." The assignment was memorable, not only because of the howls of protest which it elicited from the students, but also because of the quantum leap in written and aural skills which took place immediately after its completion. The students, including "non-pianists," were asked to (a) perform at the keyboard the two-phrase chorale *Danket dem Herren, denn er ist sehr freundlich*; which is a veritable treasure trove of suspension usage, and (b) be prepared to play the work not only in its original key of a minor, but also in the keys of g

minor and b minor. I mention this particular example without in any way suggesting that it would be appropriate (or even possible) for today's typical sophomore theory classes, but merely to cite one example of the advanced background and sophistication which characterized students of thirty years ago, but which one rarely encounters in today's entering music majors. It should of course be noted that many of today's entering students bring with them different kinds of skills and experience, and often have developed keen listening abilities, although not in the more traditional sense. It is important for us, as teachers, to recognize their accomplishments, while at the same time seeking to inculcate them with what we believe to be enduring musical truths. We in the academy are still wrestling with the challenge of accommodating our curriculum to a rapidly changing profession, yet another reason why this publication represents such an important forum for the sharing of innovative ideas.

The benefits of familiarity with the keyboard are incalculable for pianist, singer, and instrumentalist alike, and can contribute significantly to every stage of musical development. As opposed to the somewhat daunting example given above, we are not necessarily speaking here of improvisation, or realization of figured bass, or the often cited (and even more often dismally executed) melody harmonization. These are increasingly important skills for the developing musician, as well as for the teacher of basic musicianship classes (and therein lies a different article). Here, however, we are speaking of a basic "comfort level" with the topography of the keyboard; the ability to "function" musically (singing, playing, and *thinking*) in all major and minor keys; the ability to read and/or perform simple melodies or chords at the keyboard; the ability to transpose simple melodies or chord progressions; and perhaps most important, the unerring ability to visualize and aurally engage (or "audiate") the keyboard in performing analytical or ear-training exercises. My own experience in teaching theory at the undergraduate level encompasses basic techniques which have worked successfully in graduate review courses, as well as concepts which may be used in conjunction with applied lessons. I should add that many (if not most) of these are not necessarily original, and certainly not new, but I view them as pedagogical principles which deserve frequent revisiting. In pursuit of the above-stated goal of keyboard familiarity, I propose to share a few approaches which I have used successfully. If many of these seem painfully elementary, it is because I have found that the fundamental aspects of musicianship are often the most difficult to teach, and hence, the most neglected. The difficulties which result are likely to hinder every aspect of the student's academic experience.

At the early stages of freshman theory work, one such technique might be that of the old-fashioned "assembly line" in which students line up at the piano (obviously access to a multiple-keyboard lab could be useful here). As each student sits down, he/she is asked to play a specific chord (or scale, or interval, or even *note*!). Keeping in mind the principle that a simple exercise should, whenever possible, be presented in a challenging way, one might ask the student to perform a major triad with F# as its third. One step beyond would be specifying F# as the third and as the top pitch of the three-note sonority. Keeping the common note of F#, one might then be asked to perform, say, a dominant seventh chord with F# as fifth; then transpose it up a major third.

In preparing scales, one seeks not technical agility, but rather develops the student's ability to conceptualize the entire scale as an entity. To help bring this about, ask the student to place four fingers from each hand (omitting the thumb makes for the most natural hand position) over the eight notes of the scale. In the case of D major, the left hand would be responsible for D up to G, while the right hand would take over A up to D. This should be done silently, so that the student is mentally building the scale pattern, rather than flailing aimlessly at the keyboard, desperately hoping for the best. When the scale has successfully been performed up and down one octave (speed is not important, but steadiness and security are!), ask the student to look away from the keyboard, and (again silently) locate the notes of the E major scale and play them. This would, incidentally, also provide an opportunity to have the student perform the E harmonic minor scale (also without visual reference to his/her hands). This incidentally, brings me to another observation: students come to music theory far too often, believing that (a) minor scales are harder than major ones and (b) scales with more than two accidentals in the key signature are more difficult. In fact, the above statement is true for that student, but only because he or she lives in terror of the less familiar patterns and does not practice them. It is vitally important to make sure that your students (and you!) are "equal opportunity employers" in your teaching and illustrations. Make it a point to quietly but persistently shun C major. There is perhaps no other single problem which (when solved) can make such a difference in a student's comfort level at the keyboard.

The effective coordination of eye, ear, mind, and hand, helps preclude the unhappy results of non-visualization (encountered far too often by long-suffering theory teachers), such as the spelling of a D minor triad as D - Fb - A. If the student were to play this chord (or merely "see" it on the keyboard), he/she would immediately recognize its non-viability. One will frequently observe a violinist or other single-line instrument player taking dictation, and trying to "finger" the patterns heard on his or her instrument, or find (upon collecting a test or quiz) a hastily scrawled "keyboard" at the top of the page.

Intervals may be approached either singly (at the early stages) or through the technique of sequence. In dealing with the minor sixth, for example (one of the more vexing intervals!), the students might be asked to play an ascending minor sixth, followed by a descending minor second, ascending minor sixth, etc. More challenging: a descending minor sixth followed by an ascending whole step, descending minor sixth, etc. Keep in mind the importance of *mastery* of these initial exercises, so that they can be unerringly executed. Broken triads may be "sequenced" in like manner, such as, for example: C-G-Eb; D-A-F (minor triads with roots one whole step apart); E-B-G; F#-C#-A (maintaining the whole step root relationship), etc. Obviously the sequential pattern can be extended to encompass a longer series of pitches, and need not comprise a tonal pattern.

The "assembly line" technique may be used to advantage at highly advanced levels of sophistication; in teaching improvisation skills, for example, I give my students a brief excerpt (such as the final phrase of a Mozart sonata movement); they are expected to perform it in any major or minor key when their turn at the keyboard comes. A preparatory exercise might be that of "realizing" various cadence types in four part harmony (again, insisting on absolute mastery at each stage of the student's development),

in various major and minor keys. The latter can be accomplished within the context of an applied lesson, simply by asking the student to transpose a cadence/phrase/melody (from repertoire being studied) to a different key. If one has access to at least two pianos, it is immensely revealing for one student (or the teacher) to execute a melody (or chord progression) at one piano, and then ask to hear the same pattern played "by ear" at the second piano.

As is the case in all effective learning, the creative teacher seeks to challenge the student's present skill level, realizing (and frequently reminding the student) that when a student struggles with and masters a particular task (whether or not it appears directly relevant to the student's ultimate professional goals), he/she has thereby brought about an increase in overall ability which cannot help but enhance other activities. Like much other music learning, the development of functional keyboard skills is most effectively accomplished by frequent (and even short) but intensive practice sessions, covering a fairly limited amount of material. While a certain amount of rote, mechanical repetition is required for genuine mastery, shorter sessions help keep the mind alert and hasten the final skills synthesis: the ability to not only think about, but to *think in* the language of music, which is the ultimate goal.

Dorothy Payne currently serves as Dean of the School of Music at the University of South Carolina. Prior appointments include Professor of Music Theory and Director of the School of Music at the University of Arizona, six years as Head of the Department of Music at the University of Connecticut, Associate Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, Assistant Professor at the Eastman School of Music, and Instructor of Music at Pacific Lutheran University. She was awarded the PhD in music theory, Master of Music literature in piano, and her bachelor of music in piano performance, all from the Eastman School of Music, after which she pursued additional piano study in Vienna and Rome as a scholarship student. Known as an exemplary teacher, Payne is active nationally in establishing and maintaining standards in schools of music. Her teaching interests lie primarily in the development of musicianship skills, and she teaches one of these courses each semester at the University of South Carolina. She has been honored by two teaching excellence awards: one from the Eastman School of Music, and the other from the University of Texas. She has chaired the Music AP Test Development Committee, and has served as an exam reader for the past eight years. Payne is extremely active in the National Association of Schools of Music, both as a visiting evaluator and as a member of the National Commission on Accreditation. In 1993 she was elected to the Association's Board of Directors and is now serving a second three-year term as its Secretary. She is also active in the College Music Society, Music Educators National Conference, Society for Music Theory, and Music Teachers National Association. Payne has performed as pianist and organist, and co-authored the textbook *Tonal Harmony with an Introduction to 20th-Century Music*, published by McGraw-Hill and now in its third edition.

The Ear, the Instrument, and the Path to Reconciliation?

by Scott Price, University of South Carolina

One of the greatest tasks facing the pianist and teacher of precollege and college-aged pianists is how to build listening skills. In fact, the word "listen" is probably spoken on average of at least five times in every piano lesson. "Listen" is also one of the words that is written on virtually every competition or audition critique. How has such a word turned into a mantra for pianists and how has it turned into a litany for every piano teacher?

Hearing is the one sense that cannot be turned off. The hands can refuse to touch; the eyes can close; the mouth can refuse to eat; and the lungs can receive air through the mouth. We use the word "listen" to direct the over-used and abused sense of hearing to certain details that arise from the general din of background noise. If these details happen to be the peculiarities of a musical score, a student who is schooled to notice and listen to these details must certainly be able to express them through sound at the keyboard. The music profession goes to great lengths to educate students in the tools necessary to learn, interpret and perform compositions at the piano. Yet, we seldom discard the need to remind students to listen. Physiologically, our students must hear us as well as themselves. The ear can only turn off through dysfunction or injury. Why do students often seem not to hear or make a connection? The most commonly deduced answer is "students just don't listen."

I firmly believe that students do listen. They come to teachers with a love of the sound of the instrument. They have a passionate, and often violent, love of the literature written for the piano. Every piano-lover reveres that single inspiring pianist whose music-making epitomizes the ideal that must be met at all costs. Pianists hear the bad notes and the inconsistencies and practice long hours to burn away the shame of inadequacy. They heartbreakingly strive in lessons to execute their teachers' wishes - sometimes with enlightenment and sometimes with frustration and tears. Students do possess the ability to hear the notes, music and instruction. They often have not yet developed the realization that the ear's desire must pass through another medium before it is executed in the language of sound.

The daily task that confronts all performing pianists is how to take the ear's desire and create a relationship between the fingers and the piano keyboard that will execute and realize that desire. At times, this process can require a certain sense of detachment and brutal self-criticism. In its most basic sense, the pianist must develop a comfortable relationship of touch sensitivity or tactile partnership between the finger pad and the black and white keys. This allows the pianist to actually feel or touch the music desired by the ear. Although the mind, heart and spirit of the individual are of greatest importance in the communication of the musical experience, the ideas must pass, in some manner, through the fingers and into the piano key if the musical experience is to be realized for the auditor. The finger actually becomes the ear and listens in a tangible way to the results of musical expression through the keyboard. Most students are so enraptured (and justifiably so) by the sound, literature, and romance of playing the

instrument that they do not take time to translate what they hear and think into what they do at the business end of the piano.

So, by one definition, listening means creating the music with the finger through some manner of tactile relationship with the piano keyboard. Most students do not feel the keyboard as they play. Therefore, the most basic beginning is to create a scaffolding or framework allowing them to measure tactile units of time and contact with the instrument. If a students knows not only where the finger should be in relationship to the key, but also when it should be in relationship to the key, the basis for a strong partnership with the keyboard is established.

How does a pianist or student begin to develop a sense of contact with the keyboard? If a pianist or student is to begin to play and make music, he must press or "attack" the key. The attack determines sound quality. Variations in the application of the laws of physics can produce different dynamics and accents. When applied in combination, they can create complex dynamic constructs such as *crescendi* and *diminuendi*. The speed and force of attack can also influence tone quality. The pedals, when combined with tone quality, can be used to create what are referred to as sound "colors." Many students and pianists have achieved high levels of mastery over the concept of attack in the production and execution of the musical idea. Yet, the playing often seems to be hurried. The details are lost in the battle for execution of the next attack. The student appears to have neglected to listen to the playing or the instruction. He concentrates only on what he is going to do at the keyboard and not what he has already done. Perfection of attack is only half of the formula necessary for successfully maintaining a tactile relationship with the keyboard in the realization of a musical idea.

The other half of the formula needed to experience a sense of tactile compatibility with the piano keyboard is the concept of key release. Release determines sound duration. A student or pianist who is aware of the function of key release in the realization of a musical idea understands the execution of variations in staccato and legato. That student or pianist is also prepared to execute such complex duration constructs as rubato, tempo, and the subtle distinctions in sound cessation. Many pianists and students are quite well-aware of the length of given notes and their playing can often sound labored or color-less as little attention is given to the subtlety of the attack. They listen only to what they have just done at the keyboard and not to what they are going to do as the next note arrives.

The basic concepts of attack and release are needed to realize a comfortable sense of tactile relationship with the piano keyboard. The student is aware of the beginning and the end of a musical tone thereby opening a new dimension in the actualization of the ear's musical idea. By knowing the actual length of a note, a student can wait for the next note to arrive thereby allowing himself to feel the key and enjoy both the preparation and execution of the next musical idea. The time in-between the attack and release is where the magic of a gratifying relationship of finger to piano is initiated. The ear's desire has been transfigured into a physiological realization. The student is listening with his fingers as well as with his ear. The musical idea has become a real and tangible thing.

The understanding of attack and release concepts is, admittedly, an abstract and infinite goal. Even when a student has been initiated into the sound/touch world of successful musical expression at the keyboard, many barriers remain between self-satisfaction in the art of musical communication. Many students and pianists, out of habit, still throw themselves at the keyboard with their new comprehension of musical expression. They try to force the instrument to submit to their will not realizing that the piano is a fixed piece of machinery that will not bend to the will of a constantly changing biological entity. Even after establishing a strong relationship with the keyboard, it is seen as a force to be conquered.

In the arena of performance and teaching, a reverse perspective or analogy is sometimes the easiest way to communicate an abstract principle to a student and alleviate old habits. In the process of turning the ear's desire into real musical expression, we often forget the instrument. Instead of forcing the instrument to do our will, perhaps it is desirable to allow the instrument to instruct. If we personify the instrument and ask it what it wants to play and in what manner it wishes to perform, the keys may somehow show the fingers a way to respond to pure instruction in sound. The finger and the ear work in partnership with the keyboard. In reaction to the instrument, the fingers must adjust directly to the keyboard without the sometimes confusing task of understanding and translating verbal instructions. The fingers and ear must deal immediately with cause and effect in the communication of sound. The living instrument listens without pity and will be brutally honest in its reaction to the attack and duration of the finger strikes. The student can meet the instrument on a tangible battleground. The teacher or coach then becomes the observer and critic instead of the arbiter of disputes in the conquest of pianistic expression. In a tangible musical arena, the student must listen with the ear and fingers because the instrument is unbending in its quest for a perfect result.

We exist in a profession that strives to reach perfection in musical expression at the keyboard. Everyone comes to piano study with a different number or combination of the parts necessary to play the instrument. In the end, all ideas must pass through the fingers and into the keyboard. An awareness of attack, release, and the time in-between may aid some performers and students to reconcile their differences with the piano keyboard. Ultimately, the ear becomes the finger, which in turn, becomes the sound that passes through the instrument to the audience in that marvelous musical experience. The pianist is listening with the ear, the heart, and with the knowledge that the audience understands because the fingers are fascinated and gratified by their contact with the prince of instruments.

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State University Creative Arts program. Dr. Price is Co-Editor of Piano Pedagogy Forum.

The Digital Reproducing Piano in the University Setting

by Barbara Fast, University of Northern Iowa

As pianists nearing the year 2000, we live in a time of technological revolution: keyboards are continuing to undergo rapid development, computers are accepted as the norm by students of all ages, and electronic communication via the internet is burgeoning. In the midst of these exciting technological changes, we pianists are in love with acoustic instruments. Most of us are classically trained, having learned to play the piano when keyboards and computers were nonexistent or in their infancy. This seems to present a dilemma. As teachers we are torn between our desire to pass on everything we know and love about the piano and our responsibility to expose students to the latest technology.

Digitally reproducing pianos, such as the Yamaha Disklavier,[1] provide an ideal union of the acoustic and electronic. In addition to being a traditional piano, the instrument contains fiber optic technology that allows a performance to be recorded and then played back, complete with key and pedal movement. Tempos can be adjusted faster or slower without altering the pitch and the pedal can be turned off during playback.

For the first time in keyboard history we are capable of hearing our performance coming directly from the piano, exactly as it was originally played. Because we can also see the key and pedal action, we can make visual as well as aural assessments. For example, we can see and hear the evenness of touch in the passage work of a Mozart sonata and the effectiveness of pedaling in a Debussy prelude. We couldn't ask for more complete feedback of our playing.

Within a university setting the Disklavier is useful in a variety of ways. Three of the five years I have worked with the instrument have been as a faculty member of the University of Northern Iowa where two Disklaviers are available for use, one in a teaching studio and one in a practice room. My experience in this setting provides the basis for the following observations regarding its use in teaching, practicing, rehearsing, and research.

Teaching

The Disklavier offers exciting new possibilities for feedback in the teaching studio. Because the technology allows students to hear their playing coming directly from the piano with no loss of tone quality or dynamic range, they are in a unique position to critique themselves without relying solely on feedback from a teacher. Listening to a performance that contained hesitations, tempo fluctuations, and blurred passage work is an infallible motivator to ensure problem areas will be quickly remedied in the practice room. Students can also evaluate artistic elements in their playing such as voicing, dynamics, and pedaling. Recording everything a student performs and having them listen to their playing at each lesson hones their listening skills and assessment of effective interpretation.

Two tremendously useful features of the instrument, removal of pedal from a performance and tempo manipulation, provide many possibilities for teacher and student. Simply taking off the pedal action in the playback of a sloppy performance immediately reveals smudged notes or inaccurate finger legato that was originally ignored by the student. It also allows students to experiment with alternate pedaling within a piece and compare different versions back to back.

Likewise, speeding up or slowing down a performance on playback allows students to assess the effect of tempo upon interpretation. Speeding up a performance of a work that is still under tempo motivates students by letting them hear what they will sound like in the future. Slowing down the tempo is similar to putting a performance under a microscope; trouble spots can be minutely analyzed for articulation and technical accuracy.

Just as the Disklavier helps students precisely analyze problem areas, it also aids them in assessing positive details in their performance. The importance of helping students recognize their successes was identified by John Steinmetz, composer, bassoonist, and former member of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, in an article entitled *Resuscitating Art Music*.[2] He tells of his surprise at being pleased with his playing after hearing a tape of a performance that occurred ten years earlier. Upon further reflection, he realized that as a student he received very detailed and specific negative comments while receiving only very generalized positive remarks. He suggests that teachers need to help students receive feedback about their playing that includes positive details.

- How come I hadn't known that I was already meeting my goals?...
- Perhaps it would help to learn how to collect more balanced data.
- We might look for ways to gather detailed information about what we're doing right…
- To have more complete data might make for a more accurate picture of our playing. Musicians ought to be able to recognize what works as easily as they can recognize what doesn't.[3]

The positive data encouraged by Steinmetz is easily available on a regular basis with the Disklavier. Because a recorded performance is stored and readily accessed on a disk, students can note their progress immediately in a lesson or over a period of weeks and months. Keeping a separate disk for each student in the teaching studio becomes a recorded archive of their pianistic development. As students have the opportunity to listen for the details of tempo, balance, and articulation they've incorporated into their playing, they gain confidence in themselves as musicians.

Because of the record and playback features of the Disklavier, listening projects can easily be integrated into the teaching semester. After students have recorded a performance onto a disk, the recording and a copy of the score can be exchanged between students to be listened to on the Disklavier and critiqued with written comments. Students are not only motivated to produce a credible recording that will be evaluated by their peers, they also eagerly await written feedback of their playing. Having students

frequently assess their playing with the Disklavier means that more time in a lesson is spent listening, a goal we all strive for. Secondly, it encourages teachers to take a more facilitative role in lessons and promotes discovery learning within students.

Practicing

Pianists who have access to a digitally reproducing piano for practice have additional tools at their disposal. Separate hand work is enhanced by playing one hand with a prerecorded second hand, allowing students to hear the entire musical context. This is particularly helpful in practicing complex passages, such as three against-four rhythms. In such sections students may also have difficulty assessing the evenness of the individual rhythmic figure when playing hands together. The feature of a split point, separating the right and left hands of a recording into separate tracks, allows the student to evaluate one hand at a time in a passage that was originally performed hands together.

Instrumentalists also use the Disklavier in practicing. Wind and brass instructors have recorded accompaniments to technical exercises they want all their students to perform and have made the disks available for practice. Because a Disklavier can transpose passage work, accompaniments to exercises that must be performed in all keys only have to be recorded once. Similarly, jazz students also use the Disklavier as a practice partner. After a chord progression has been recorded on the piano, soloists practice improvising on top of the accompaniment, using the transpose feature to play in all keys.

Rehearsing

Having a digitally reproducing piano available to an entire student body in a practice room or classroom allows the instrument to become a surrogate rehearsal pianist. If the accompanist records the piano part with the soloist at an early date, the instrumentalist or vocalist is free to rehearse with the recorded accompaniment at their leisure. This has proven to be valuable for soloists needing much repetition and time to become familiar with complex piano parts. Additionally, because recordings can be sped up or slowed down on playback without pitch being affected, students can rehearse at a variety of tempos.

Studio teachers and pianists can amass a library of piano accompaniments to be used in the future. Recording the piano part with the soloist after a work has been polished and saving the performance on a separate disk quickly builds an accompaniment collection. As music departments face an increasing shortage of collaborative pianists, this saves tremendously with initial rehearsal time. Opera and dance departments are additional settings that can utilize a Disklavier and recorded accompaniments when a pianist is unavailable. Again, tempo manipulation allows for flexibility during rehearsal.

The following specific suggestions have been helpful to instrumentalists and vocalists using the Disklavier:

- Attach a foot switch, an optional feature, to the Disklavier so the soloist can easily stop and start playback while standing away from the piano.
- Make blank disks for recording available for student purchase. Recent Disklavier models utilize high density disks used in computers; older models require double sided, double density disks available from office supply stores.
- Even though the Disklavier is very easy to operate, have instruction manuals available for check-out so students can access the various functions of the instrument. Though this seems obvious, it ensures students can format disks on their own and complete an intended practice session. The instruction manuals also pique interest and generate new ideas for using the instrument.

Research

Marija Sommer at Alderson Broaddus College is engaged in a research project that focuses on the effects of the Disklavier in student practice. Her preliminary observation is that students become much more aware of their playing because they hear and assess their performance in a practice session. Details such as bringing out melody lines and securely performing complex rhythmic passages greatly improve.[4]

The ability to connect a Disklavier to MIDI software has opened up new areas of research that analyze performance data. In one study, Dr. Linda Beckman examined several performances of the same piece to ascertain patterns of dynamics and articulation. After playing and recording on a Disklavier, MIDI data was obtained using Performer sequencing software with a Macintosh computer. The analysis of the data in this particular piece showed that when pianists produced crescendos, the lower voices in the left hand adjusted and created the global dynamic changes while the soprano (or right hand) remained consistently loud.[5] The implications are astounding. Because technology permits us to obtain objective data for a subjective art, for the first time we can analyze the components of musical style and expression.

In Conclusion

The capabilities of the digital reproducing piano are only beginning to be explored. The ability we have as pianists to hear our playing coming directly from the instrument and to analyze performance data is a technological revolution. With digital reproducing pianos, pianists have found an ideal marriage of an acoustic instrument with the latest technology that presents almost limitless options for teaching, practicing, rehearsing, and research.

Notes

1. There are several digital reproducing pianos currently on the market. References to the digital reproducing piano in this article will be to the Yamaha Disklavier, since the author's experience has been primarily with this instrument.
2. John Steinmetz, "Resuscitating Art Music," *Proceedings and Reference, 1994-95* (Los Angeles: The National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, 1995), 38-50.
3. Ibid., pp. 45-46.

4. Ms. Sommer can be contacted regarding further details of her research at: SOMMER_M@ab.edu.
5. Linda Beckman, "A Descriptive Analysis Of Dynamic And Durational Nuance In Piano Performance Using MIDI Technology," (D.M.A. diss., University of Oklahoma), 91.

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Italian Language Rhythm as Facilitator in the Piano/Vocal Ensemble Collaboration

by Scott Price and Walter Cuttino, University of South Carolina

The problems in ensemble facilitation that occur between pianists and singers in the collaborative setting have engendered a number of humorous, and more often vitriolic, exchanges between the two instrumental disciplines. Is there a single pianist or singer who has not, at one time, heard (or hurled) such comments as "That singer can't count!" "That pianist can't follow anything!" "Is that singer ever coming down off of the high note?" or "Will that pianist stop playing solo and listen to what I am singing?" Although historic, histrionic and humorous, these comments arise from justified (on both sides) contentions between the pianist and singer.

The coach or teacher, who often serves as arbiter between the two parties, has the responsibility of informing the pianist and singer that they are a collaboration of equals in the communication of the musical experience. They must work in tandem to create the illusion of a single musical entity conceived of two disparate instruments. In defense of the singer; the pianist must know the text, images and background of the piece being performed, and must also be aware of the physical limitations of the voice. The pianist must also be sensitive and supporting of the environmental and physical changes that influence the singer's instrument. He must know how to breathe with the singer and how to adjust dynamics to allow for the subtle vocal colors in different voice types. In defense of the pianist; the singer must be aware of the metrical pulse of a work as the piano is a percussion instrument and the pianist relies on the governing rhythmic structure in the proper execution of the instrumental part. The singer must also realize that pianists need time to adjust hand positions, and to adjust for acoustical reasons. The singer must also be aware of the limitations of the piano when discussing certain points of collaboration.

In many piano/vocal collaborations, the initial key to unity of ensemble is the text. After all, the story is in the text and most successful art songs, lieder, melodies, and operas tell a good story. Every story has to be told in a language and each language has its own sound and rhythm. One has only to listen to a cable-television news program to hear German, Italian, Russian, Chinese, English and other languages spoken one after another in a single broadcast. In this setting it is quite easy to hear that each language has a certain palette of sounds and rhythms as well as a distinct spoken melody. In *Singspiel* and *Recitative*, the melody of the spoken word must be beautiful in its own presentation.

When a composer combines music with language, the story, communicated through the structure and intricacies of language, dictates certain choices in the musical construct. For example, one cannot write *Presto* sixteenth-notes if the text is expressing ennui. Fast running notes sound contrary to the physical state associated with boredom. The music must enhance and flavor the textual image. Often, the intrinsic speech rhythm of a given language dictates some of the possibilities that will be used in the musical construct. If the pianist and singer are aware of these sounds and rhythms, an agreement can be reached between the two parties allowing for a successful collaboration. In a brief

explanation of this concept, this discussion will be limited to the idiosyncrasies of the Italian language as they are the most readily discernible to the ear and eye.

The Italian language consists of a general pool of multi-syllabic words that, when spoken, are stressed with an accent on the penultimate syllable. There are, of course, numerous monosyllabic and other exceptions to this rule, however, most words follow the rule of being spoken with an accent on the penultimate syllable. Some examples occur in the technical language musicians use in everyday practice (the accented syllable appears in bold type):

An-**dan**-te	Al-**le**-gro	A-**da**-gio
Ri-tar-**dan**-do	Puc-**ci**-ni	**Ver**-di
Cre-**scen**-do	Sop-**ran**-o	Di-min-u-**en**-do
Co-lor-a-**tu**-ra	Pa-va-**rot**-ti	Ri-go-**let**-to

When spoken with the proper accents, these words role off the tongue in the characteristic Italian rhythm intrinsic to the language (just think of a good comedy with stereo-typical Italian characters and you will get the idea). When used in combination, as in a line of text, they can create a chain of rhythmic events as in the aria "Non piu andrai" from Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro":

Non piu andrai, farfallone amoroso, notte e giorno d'intorno girando, delle belle, turbando il riposo, Narcisetto, Adoncino d'amor.

The following is the same text in a syllabic presentation showing syllables and accents:

Non piu an-**drai**, far-fal-**lo**-ne a-mo-**ro**-so, **not**-te e **gior**-no d'in-**tor**-no gi-**ran**-do, **del**-le **bel**-le, tur-**ban**-do il ri-**po**-so, Nar-ci-**set**-to, A-don-**ci**-no d'a-**mor**.

When one visualizes the accented syllables as long notes and the un-accented syllables as short notes, a series of rhythmic events begins to unfold resembling the dotted-eighth-sixteenth and triplet rhythms associated with Italian or Italian-styled music.

If a composer is to communicate the meaning of the text through the music, the natural rhythm of the language must be adhered to in the proper conveyance of grammar and pronunciation. The rhythm of the language governs the use of rhythmic patterns in the music as well as the placement of certain non-harmonic devices and harmonic formulae. If both parts of the collaboration "hook" into this rhythm, they can perform as a single entity without fear of a serious mishap.

If both pianist and singer are aware of the relationship between text and rhythm, both parties can navigate the score because they know the location of important events - both

textually and musically. The pianist and singer "agree" to agree with the composer in a unified presentation of the composer's work. The argument against this concept reminds one of the adage "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?" Regardless of viewpoint, the text/rhythm relationships exist and can serve as a unifying factor in the piano vocal collaboration.

It is no great secret that pianists and singers often have trouble staying together in the performance of a work. Awareness of the language rhythm can provide specific and concise points of ensemble unification within a musical composition. A pianist and singer who are aware of the rhythm underlying the text can experiment with each other's style of presentation arriving at a clearly defined and unified performance, thus creating an arena for mutually satisfying and continued collaboration. Adjustments can also be made for troublesome musical changes that occur in the process of translation. The singer will be able to guide the pianist through the unexpected and inspired nuances of a vocal performance, and the pianist will be able to think ahead and plan for the meeting points in the wonderfully flexible fabric of the vocal music experience.

Each spoken language has its own distinct rhythmic constructs. If the performers are aware of the governing peculiarities of that language, many of the ensemble problems can easily be solved. Awareness of language rhythm is only a beginning in building an artistic and communicative vocal/piano ensemble performance. It can, however, be the initial agreement that allows both parties to reach mutually satisfying arrangements as the collaborative process unfolds into a true musical partnership.

Walter Cuttino is Assistant Professor of Vocal Studies at the University of South Carolina. A graduate of the University of South Carolina and the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, where he earned the Master of Music degree and Artist Diploma in Opera, he has performed throughout Europe with over 950 operatic performances to his credit. Ferrando (Cosi fan Tutte), Almaviva (Barber of Seville), Tamino (The Magic Flute), Lenski (Eugene Onegin), and Rodolfo (La Boheme) are a sampling of the more than forty roles in his repertoire. Walter Cuttino has performed over 250 concerts, including a concert tour with the late Leonard Bernstein to London and Moscow.

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Table of Contents

Hats Off to the Scientific Disciplines!

by Scott Price

In dealing with the subjects of science and music, it is logical to speak first about the art form that I love most - music. What is music? It is many things to many people - self-expression, life, catharsis, art, faith, religion, love, etc. Music is an experience that is redefined by every person at every point of contact. Music has the ability to draw disparate peoples and cultures together into a community that transcends verbal expression. In the musical arena, there can be no lies or deception. We see each other in our true spiritual forms and celebrate our diversity in a way that is impossible in the tangible world.

Music is an art form that allows us to transcend common existence and glimpse the possibilities of fulfilled potential - if only for a brief moment in sound. These marvelous experiences can arrive without warning and leave without explanation. The human musical intuition seeks validation in a world that speaks in concrete and technical language. Therefore, musicians often feel threatened by extra-musical disciplines that value painstaking methodology in the definition and evaluation of the intangible realm. Science explains and proves those things which we don't fully understand. It slowly brings the intangible world into tangible existence. It seeks to qualify the magic of the musical experience. Science takes a many-faceted musical experience of multi-dimensional proportions and creates from that experience a textbook diagram of forensic details. Many musicians valiantly fight against a discipline that attempts to bring our values and beliefs into a realm where they can be dissected and analyzed. If we know there is a scientific explanation to the "Eroica Symphony," is there any need for an actual experience of this work when it can be explained in a series of mathematical equations? If the mystical forces of music are explained through scientific method and technology, is there any need to practice and create new music when the world has explained the answer? Science is the enemy of art - or is it?

Rather, science is the quiet and attentive lover of art. The sciences of anatomy, architecture, geometry and chemistry all were present as Michelangelo painted the Sistine Chapel ceiling. The sciences of physics, chemistry and acoustics all are present in the creation of musical instruments. Audio and recording technology, electronics, and communications technology have given music a new voice in untold ways and venues. The sciences of medicine, psychology and sociology support the continuance of musical practice and education. In fact, all of the sciences support music in one way or another and allow musicians to give voice to the spirit in that transcendent magic known as the musical experience. In fighting science and new technology, we may find ourselves fighting against the forces that aid us in the continued practice of our art.

A curious thing has recently developed in the relationship between the sciences and music. Practitioners of the scientific disciplines are finding that musical experience has positive influence on the development of the mind and thinking processes. Scientists are finding that musical experience has positive influence on the health and healing of our

fellow men. In many areas, the musical experience is increasingly considered to be a crucial component of human development, health, life, and well-being. In a very exciting and unexpected way, science is becoming the champion of the musical disciplines.

Arts funding and education continues to be undermined and undervalued in this country. The continuing debate over budget cuts in the National Endowment for the Arts is only one example. In a musical discipline where one must devote a major portion of life to the mastery of skill or knowledge, it is difficult to devote as much time to fund raising and arts support. The valiant championship of music by patrons, arts organizations, and private industry, have won great battles in the furtherance and support of the arts. Unfortunately, we live in times where the general public, donors, and taxpayers, are forced to think of their lives in terms of basic subsistence. The efforts of sponsors, and efforts of the scientific and musical communities, are not enough in the fight for musical existence in the present sociopolitical climate. When considering the exciting findings of the scientific community, and the continued excellence in musical achievement in this country, the general public still has to think of budgets and taxes. They must consider their own survival and often have one very fair and valid question for the musician: "Why is it important for me that you do what you do and why is it important that I support your work?"

It is to the credit, in large part, of the scientific community that we can now give to the general public, the answers that they demand in a timely and current language. The scientific disciplines are now able to help musicians voice the answers to concrete questions with carbon steel answers. What the musical community has always known through intuition, philosophy and education, the scientific community is now supporting with concrete data. When the general public asks us the question "Why?", we now have many answers, both steely and holistic, beginning with "Studies have shown..."

In a sense, a new and vitally intriguing energy is being pumped into our profession from an unexpected source. Our own discipline is being outfitted with a new exterior while suffering no damage to its integral core. We are already witnessing a quiet explosion of interest in the effect of music on the human condition. From one perspective, the new findings of the scientific community can be coupled with the knowledge and skill of the musical community creating new possibilities for education, performance and research.

So, the next time a new study arrives at conclusions that support music and music study, it may be worthwhile to extend a kind word of thanks and respect to a non-musician who explored the values and possibilities available in our world of magical experience. Perhaps it is also worthwhile to take a bit of time and return the favor by actively participating in their research. In a new millennium, music can be brought, as a necessary gift, to everyone without the need for a justification of governmental proportions. Perhaps we are moving quickly toward a time when music is conceived and practiced by everyone as part of a new quadrivium.

Scott Price is Assistant Professor of Piano, Piano Pedagogy, and Coordinator of Group Piano at the University of South Carolina. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and Bowling Green State University, he has studied with Jane Magrath, Thomas Hecht and Virginia Marks.

He has performed at the national conventions of the Music Teachers National Conference, Music Teachers National Association, the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, and has given performances and seminars at the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas TX, the University of Oklahoma Seminar for Piano Teachers, the North Dakota State Music Teachers Convention, the South Carolina State Music Teachers Convention, and the Bowling Green State University Summer Music Institute. He has served as repetiteur with Lyric Opera Cleveland, and as music director for Lyric Opera Cleveland's Educational Outreach program. He has been a faculty member of the Cleveland Music School Settlement and the Bowling Green State University Creative Arts program. Dr. Price is Co-Editor of Piano Pedagogy Forum.

Keynote Address

by Jane Magrath

Recently I had occasion to once again examine and consider the content in a piano pedagogy course at the graduate and at the undergraduate levels. Most of us can readily compile a list of topics we believe should be covered in a pedagogy course, perhaps differing only in the extent of the emphasis to be placed on various topics and skills to be developed. Invariably in the planning we also structure and map out the student teaching experiences that are a necessary part of that course. Experts in the field of piano pedagogy are well aware of Ann L. Milliman's fine dissertation titled *"A Survey of Graduate Piano Pedagogy Core Course Offerings"* (Ph. D. diss, University of Oklahoma, Norman, 1992), and this work cites in detail many topics dealt with in graduate piano pedagogy courses throughout the United States.

One issue I will consider here surrounds the amount of time in a college or university course that is devoted to the actual study of music literature. How do we provide a situation so that prospective teachers learn with some assurance that the music they select for teaching is appropriate for a student's specific musical and technical stage of development? While it is asserted commonly that we must know both "what to teach" and "how to teach," on occasion much time is spent in course settings studying the "how," and with less time is devoted to the "what." Nevertheless, if the literature is not chosen appropriately by the teacher, and if it does not lie at the right level for the student, no extent of "good teaching" can right the wrong. Since we assume that the music is the reason that the student is with a teacher, then the musical and technical goals must be obtainable for satisfactory performance to take place. In the piano pedagogy course offerings, ample experiences in learning the music, the teaching literature as a body, must be infused.

In terms of working with the standard music teaching literature in various pedagogy courses, it is critical to note that incorrect interpretations do exist, that tempi that are substantially too slow (or too fast) are incorrect, and that other various performance-related issues can be either right or wrong. In other words, we must avoid lapsing into a world that allows student teachers to be so creative in working out their own students' interpretations that the rubato is disproportionate, that a pulse is lacking, that the true character of the music is obliterated, and so on. Perhaps too many actual errors in performance everywhere are blamed on what is termed a "creative interpretation?!" Pianist Frederic Chiu recently performed a solo recital in Oklahoma City in which he opened with the Prokofiev *Music for Children, Op. 65* followed by the Schumann *Kinderscenen, Op. 15*. What an elegant statement in favor of the artistic performance of the standard teaching literature!

Secondly, abetted by timely and skilled assistance from a highly knowledgeable associate in the field of injury prevention for pianists, we have incorporated a much too short but important segment on that topic in our graduate pedagogy course. Especially interesting have been the discussions surrounding why the topic is not part of so many pedagogy

courses. Simply speaking, if one has not been injured as a performing pianist, he tends to shy away from the topic, leaving it perhaps for the less fortunate who have been injured to educate us once their own rehabilitation has taken place. Nevertheless, teachers face the risk of allowing, abetting, perhaps even encouraging performance-related injuries in their students when they are improperly taught or when they are allowed to continue with bad habits in their playing. Should that not be sufficient cause to include the information in our courses on a regular basis? In fact the Committee on the Prevention of Medical Problems from the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, chaired by Gail Berenson, provided a fine resource tool for teachers and students in an effort to address performance anxiety and medical problems that musicians often develop during their careers, formalizing the work into an extensive bibliography that was published in the *Proceedings of the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy*, 1994-95, pps. 293-296. An extension of that bibliography by Linda Cockey recently appeared in the December/January 1997/98 issue of *The American Music Teacher*, pp. 28-43. In fact certain technical practices and playing habits, allowed to continue unchecked, can and will result in performance-related injuries. Again, while some room for interpretation of motions and movements at the keyboard exists, and while various schools of piano playing exist today as they have for decades, a wrong way of playing the piano can result in injury and even cessation of activity as an amateur or professional pianist.

Finally, and certainly at the core of teacher training in any pedagogy class, is for the pedagogy student to develop his philosophy of teaching. This is the set of beliefs upon which the individuals from our classes go forth and enhance the cause for music learning and study; or, perhaps they go forth and teach as they were taught, sometimes for the better, but sometimes for the worse. I sometimes intentionally will shake up a young teacher with the reminder that every student with whom they come in contact ideally leaves the teacher loving music just a bit more than when they began the study. To allow, or promote, less than that is a crime. In fact, every individual leaves a class, our classes and lessons, with a changed outlook on the subject, as well as with increased skill and knowledge surrounding the course topics. The music - be it classical, jazz, functional harmony, music from a beginning tutor or method, and or otherwise - and its character and its communication must remain at the center of all courses in piano pedagogy and music teaching.

Jane Magrath is Professor of Music in Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Oklahoma. She has presented over 200 recitals, workshops and masterclasses in over forty states as well as in locations in Europe, Southeast Asia, and Australia. She is a regular writer of *New Music Reviews* for **Clavier**, and her articles have appeared in the major piano journals. She has written, compiled, and/or edited over 25 volumes including the multi-volume series *Masterwork Classics, Practice and Performance, Technical Skills, Masterpieces With Flair, Melodius Masterpieces,* and *Encore* for Alfred Publishing Company. Her major reference book *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature* was published in 1995 by Alfred Publishing. She has served as Coordinator of Piano for the National Conventions of the Music Teachers National Association and in major capacities for other organizations including the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy. She has also served as the Rildia Bee Cliburn Lecturer at the Cliburn Piano Institute at TCU in Fort Worth, TX on two different occasions. A recipient of the University of Oklahoma Regent's Award for Superior Teaching and a two-time recipient of the Associate's Distinguished Lectureship, Dr. Magrath is a McCasland Foundation Presidential Professor at the University of Oklahoma where she serves as Chair of the Piano Department and teaches applied piano and courses in piano pedagogy.

Group Piano Study: Teacher's agenda vs. Students' Agenda

by Scott Price

What a virtuosic web we weave...and I do mean virtuosic. The successful group piano instructor often has to produce a course production of Broadway proportions. Our classroom agenda is intimidating. We are compelled to teach several related skill areas to a group of students who, usually, are in their seats to fulfill a requirement. Not only do we have to impart to them keyboard skills, we have to do so by getting everyone to think in the same way, at the same time, and in the same place on the keyboard! If that isn't enough, we now utilize an electronic keyboard communication system that is able to create individual learning environments within the group setting. Complicated as the teaching situation may be, students usually come out of their respective classes with some level of understanding of the instrument its use in the application of ideas encountered in their other music course work.

What is the agenda of the College Group Piano Instructor? The group piano curriculum may be sorted into four general and related skill areas: Technique, Reading, Harmony, and Creative Activities/Applications. In the group piano setting, course texts are carefully chosen or created to fit the curriculum and lesson plans are carefully devised to teach, apply, and reinforce concepts learned in class. Technique is necessary to allow the students to actualize given tasks and cope with performance on the instrument. Vertical and horizontal reading skills allow students to visualize harmonic and melodic patterns within the music thus improving their reading and memory skills on their chosen instruments. Harmony exercises support the students' music theory course work by giving them practical applications of concepts experienced in their music theory classes. Creative activities/applications test levels of comprehension, provide creative outlets, and create venues for improvisation. All of these skills are integral to a student's musical education and professional survival; but how do students reconcile these skills with their personal and educational agendas?

The student's personal musical agenda is most often quite different from that of the applied teacher or classroom instructor. Every group piano instructor knows the look of detachment that covers the faces of students who are present to meet the requirements of their degree program and to meet the requirements of a class attendance policy. Most Freshmen and Sophomores are still "learning the ropes" of the music school and are mainly concerned with making progress in their respective areas of applied study. Juniors and Seniors are concerned with degree recitals, graduate study auditions, or preparing for the student teaching experience and finding a job, or successfully completing the piano proficiency requirement. Group piano study is generally not too high on the list of priorities. This is surprising to us as instructors who know how crucial the acquisition of keyboard skill is to the successful education and job prospects of the non-keyboard music student.

The average undergraduate student in music does not yet possess the body of knowledge or the experience to visualize the "master plan" at work in their chosen course of study. It

is, therefore, the responsibility of the classroom instructor to explain and convince the student of the role that the given subject will play in their education. I will admit that I have been guilty of assuming that every student in my group piano class instinctively knew why he was there and why it was important for him to do well in the class. After several years of profound consternation over my students' lack of enthusiasm over their study of the piano, I have had to face the realization that the students' lack of enthusiasm was probably due to my lack of enthusiasm in their personal interests-namely, their chosen area of music study and the knowledge necessary to grow and succeed in that chosen area.

Two years ago, upon assuming duties which included coordinating and teaching some sections of group piano at the University of South Carolina, I decided to change the whole focus of my approach to keyboard skills education. Knowing that the majority of students in my class were music education majors contemplating careers in the public schools, I decided to teach the courses according to their agenda. We now begin each semester with a discussion about what the students desire in a career and how the group piano class can assist them in the attaining their personal goals. I point out the fact that everything we do throughout the semester will not only help them with their work in music theory classes, it will also provide them with basic skills to help foster success in music activities among their public school students. This simple initial discussion has changed the attitudes of the students in my classes. Many of them now realize that they are in the class sequence to fulfill a personal aspiration and not just to meet a degree requirement. Once an initial agreement has been reached regarding the purpose of the class, the instructor's agenda can then become the students' agenda. As I have rethought the methods by which I teach keyboard skills, I have developed a general list of group piano "attitudes" that I keep on my desk when creating lesson plans. As these "attitudes" have reshaped my procedures in the classroom, I have had students tell me that they really felt positively challenged by the class; that they really understood their primary and secondary chords, secondary dominants and augmented sixth chords; that they found many of the activities enjoyable and useful; and that they actually learned to play the piano at a level of skill that was useful to them. It is also nice to have students raising hands to answer questions because because they want to make progress with a skill that is important to them in their search for a career.

The following list of "attitudes" are ideas that I use to direct my thinking when doing lesson planning for my classes. In a college/university setting where our time and interests are divided among multiple activities, I find that I need continued reminders to take the extra step in meeting my students' needs in the classroom.

Group Piano "Attitudes"

This class is for the students. We have to meet them half-way and sometimes more.

These students are adults who are proficient on other instruments and develop feelings of inadequacy and a large degree of shame when they struggle to bring another instrument up to a level of skill that is self-satisfying. Relate all concepts and skills to the things they

already know and understand. Let them know that it is ok if it just takes a little more time.

The point: all activities must go beyond the keyboard/classroom into the world of the student. Let them know that you will not sacrifice quality. Everything they accomplish should have a direct and real application in their career discipline.

Technical Skills

Technique drills always work more successfully if there is a direct application to the harmonization or repertoire piece that follows in the lesson sequence. These students are adults who don't want to waste time on something that won't be used.

The students already read music. Rote learning of a small number of horizontal note patterns in a repertoire piece creates a sense of success and validation in the students' work allowing them to move into the realm of vertical harmonic reading with more ease.

Scale and arpeggio study is more successful if the students realize that they can actually "see" the key signature in the black and white key combinations on the keyboard. (i.e. C-Major is all white, B-Major is all black except for the white key directly to the right of each group of black keys.)

Reading Skills

Organization skills are important here. The students (most of them) possess some level of reading skills. They are beginners at piano playing skills-not at musical skills. Validate the person and allow time for second tries as they struggle to voice their ideas in sound at the keyboard.

Start with horizontal pattern reading. They already know this. Show them that they can actually "see" the pattern on the keyboard in black and white key combinations. All they then have to do is put some fingers down on top of those combinations.

As pattern or horizontal reading grows, really discuss how to move back and forth between horizontal pattern reading and vertical harmonic reading. Perhaps work with an exercise a bit longer so they have time to experience the changes in conceptual thinking. This is one area where they may not be quite adept. Discuss the long range plan where the students try for a little more success each time. Small failures are just that-over, done with, gone.

Creative Activities

This is where the students can shine and practice skills they will truly use in their careers. Draw upon their entire education in classroom activities.

Harmonizations - go a step further and have the students work in pairs as one turns the

harmonic progression into a two-hand accompaniment and the other performs the melody. If the students know that they will perform for the class, they are capable of creating wonderfully varied accompaniment styles and musically interesting, well-rehearsed ensemble collaborations. The point made to the students is that they will have to do this type of thing in their jobs and the activity is a study in how to reduce difficult piano accompaniments and how to create ensembles for beginning instrumentalists or vocalists. This is real life.

Accompaniments-have the students bring in their own instruments to play melodies as other students serve as accompanists. This is real life.

Ensembles-go a step further and show the students how they can create an ensemble and score it for elementary instrumental or choral ensembles. Make it part of a class project where the other students have to execute the ensemble. Perhaps a student could serve as conductor. This is real life.

Improvisation-after students have learned a harmonization or ensemble, have them throw out the written parts and work together in groups to create an improvised ensemble by following the chord progression and procedures of the old piece. They have to make the decisions, practice and rehearse for class performance. This is real life. Wonderfully varied musical creations can result with the knowledge that the students really accomplished something and used their classroom knowledge successfully-(of course, this takes careful preparation and choosing of ensemble members.)

Improvisation-wonderful validation exercise as students don't have to worry about reading notes and can explore their tactile abilities. They can discover and make use of stylistic talents that may not have been apparent to them. They may also realize the importance of knowing more things outside of the small body of knowledge that they will use in their teaching career. This is real life.

Many of these so-called "attitudes" may seem like common sense, amateurism, or needless commentary. However, after many years of post-secondary study, it is easy for the instructor to forget the ordeal of the first few years of college and the struggle to learn and reconcile so many seemingly disparate subjects. A simple discussion putting the class objective into reasonable perspective can do wonders for the progress of the students. It has proved to me that the class is not about how successful **I** can be at dispensing knowledge. The class is really about the students and how successful **they** can be at keyboard skill because **they** feel it is important.

Scott Price is Assistant Professor of Piano, Piano Pedagogy, and Coordinator of Group Piano at the University of South Carolina. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and Bowling Green State University, he has studied with Jane Magrath, Thomas Hecht and Virginia Marks. He has performed at the national conventions of the Music Teachers National Conference, Music Teachers National Association, the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, and has given performances and seminars at the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas TX, the University of Oklahoma Seminar for Piano Teachers, the North Dakota State Music Teachers Convention, the South Carolina State Music Teachers Convention, and the Bowling Green State University Summer Music Institute. He has served as repetiteur

with Lyric Opera Cleveland, and as music director for Lyric Opera Cleveland's Educational Outreach program. He has been a faculty member of the Cleveland Music School Settlement and the Bowling Green State University Creative Arts program. Dr. Price is Co-Editor of Piano Pedagogy Forum.

Paying Attention: What Cognitive Psychology Tells Us About the Capacity of Attention

by Sue Haug

"Everyone knows what attention is" wrote William James in **Principles of Psychology**, 1890. From the piano teacher who is concerned about the young student squirming on the piano bench, to the university lecturer who tries to keep the interest of her 8:00 a.m. class, to the exhausted student who drinks a pot of coffee in hopes of studying all night - everyone knows first-hand when attention lapses. We say that people "pay attention" or "command attention" or "give their attention." These verbs (pay, command, give) indicate an active process where the attendee makes a choice to attend to something. In cognitive psychology (cognitive psychology is the study of the processes governing human thought; how people acquire and use knowledge) attention is usually discussed in terms of allocating cognitive resources. This may involve selectivity (determining what to attend to) and concentration (the amount of mental effort required for a task).

Although people try to attend to several things at once, our ability to do so is clearly limited. An important theory regarding such cognitive limits is called the capacity model of attention. Psychologists use models and flow charts to illustrate their theories of how our cognitive mechanism works. The models of attention attempt to explain the limitations of attention, how the selection process may work and what causes failures. Capacity models of attention are particularly instructive for music educators who deal regularly with limits of students' attention as they try to think of and do many things at once (i.e., reading music or improvising, handling the technical aspects of their instrument, listening, making musical-aesthetic decisions, following a conductor or ensemble partner).

Daniel Kahneman's 1973 capacity model of attention is often cited in psychology textbooks. It assumes that there is a limit to a person's ability to do mental work, but that we do have some control over how we allocate this mental capacity. We know that humans can and do carry on multiple tasks. Witness the driver of an automobile carrying on a conversation on a cell phone while simultaneously reading a map, and drinking coffee. We also know that our ability to do multiple tasks successfully depends on the complexity of each task. If traffic gets heavy or if it begins to rain hard or if we spill the coffee, the task of driving becomes more difficult and our comfort with multiple tasks lessens (or we have an accident). We also know that the amount of attention we have can vary from moment to moment. If we are tired, for example, it is much more difficult to concentrate on driving, much less attend to another activity. We also know that things outside ourselves can impact our attention. A near accident has a way of suddenly increasing our attention. An interesting conversation or a book-on-tape can keep us alert when the monotony of driving might otherwise cause drowsiness.

Music teachers are well aware of the limits of attention and the challenge of dividing this limited mental capacity among many complex tasks. Kahneman's capacity model of attention offers insights into the reasons for these limits. I will describe the model below

in relation to the challenges of piano performance.

Arousal/Available Capacity

Kahneman's model assumes that all mental activities compete for a limited pool of attentional resources; however, this pool can be made larger or smaller depending on one's arousal. Imagine a box (which Kahneman labels capacity) representing the amount of attention available at any given moment. The volume of this box is variable, as represented by a movable top (labeled arousal). A person's capacity of attention increases with arousal up to a point as we become more alert and focused, but too much arousal can interfere with performance and decrease attention. Imagine that the top of the box collapses somewhat, causing a decrease in the volume of the box. As any performer knows all too well, attention is available in varying amounts at different times, depending on motivation, level of anxiety, and alertness. The movable line dividing arousal and available capacity represents this changing resource pool.

Diminished arousal is an all-too-familiar phenomenon when students "go through the motions" of practicing without really giving their practice full attention. In this unmotivated state, arousal and capacity of attention are much less than the amount which accompanies an important performance. Performers may be aware of their increasing attentional capacity as they focus on their playing more intently and juggle the various performance tasks much more efficiently. Unfortunately, most musicians have also experienced negative arousal in performance when anxiety creates lapses in concentration or distracting physical manifestations.

According to Yerkes and Dodson's 1908 law, performance is best at intermediate levels of arousal and most performers would probably agree that too much arousal can interfere with performance. It is very hard to concentrate on subtle musical choices when physical symptoms such as shaking hands, a dry mouth, or an upset stomach interfere. Much has been written about performance anxiety and how to keep maximum attention available for performance tasks by reducing physical and mental disruptions. These various symptoms of anxiety or distractions are labeled "miscellaneous manifestations of arousal" in the model because they are outside influences which impact attention (i.e., capacity) by influencing arousal. Performers who take beta-blockers before a performance are attempting to moderate the negative impact of too much adrenaline or arousal.

Capacity can also be limited by fatigue. The day before a performance it is tempting to practice an extra hour or two. Students study all night, hoping their additional efforts will mean more points on the final exam. The trade-off, of course, is that physical and mental fatigue does diminish attention. Through experience we come to understand our bodies and respect this fact of nature.

Motivation is a key factor in maximizing attention. Note the intense concentration exhibited by a young person playing video games. This same person may seem unable to concentrate for more than a few minutes at school or at the piano lesson. One of the ways that music teachers try to capture student’s attention is by selecting music which is

appropriate for their age and interests of each pupil. By assigning interesting literature, we hope to increase the likelihood that students will be motivated to practice and to do so with concentration. When literature is uninteresting to students, it is likely that their capacity of attention during practice is diminished. Even when the music is satisfying to a student, however, it can be difficult to maintain interest throughout the weeks or months it may take to master a difficult piece. During a lesson, an observant teacher can tell when attention is waning. Teachers of very young children know how important it is to move from one task to another relatively quickly to keep attention. It takes maturity to focus attention on a project for long periods of time. But every teacher has seen examples of how an especially appealing assignment can suddenly increase the attention a student gives to the task at hand.

Allocation Policy

Another part of this model is called allocation policy. A funnel at the bottom of the "arousal/capacity" box allows information to flow into a smaller container (labeled allocation) which represents the way we allocate our attention. This central funnel is where a great deal of our teaching efforts are focused. Most performance activities require that we attend to various tasks at once and this means making decisions about how to allocate attention. One way we deal with the multiple tasks involved in music-making is through automatic processing, made possible by our previous experience and practice. For example, by practicing a passage using the same fingering over a period of several days or weeks and/or by preceding the study of a piece with technical exercises which use similar finger patterns, the fingering choices become so automatic that we do not need to pay attention to those decisions. As a matter of fact, automatic processing happens so easily with motor skills that we may find it almost impossible to change a bad fingering choice after only a few days of practice. A skillful teacher tries to guide a student through early practice stages so that more skills become automatic, leaving attention for more sophisticated levels of thinking and listening. We also try hard to minimize the need for "unlearning" so that our students will not have to devote attention to correcting mistakes.

Guided practice is very helpful when a new piece is assigned as teachers help students pay attention to various features of the music in a rational order. What we are doing is helping students make allocation decisions. We know that most students cannot concentrate on everything required to play a new piece perfectly at first sight, so we help them decide what to think about first. Teachers often begin by having students look for patterns which are familiar, so that those things which can most easily be automated are attended to first. For a keyboard student this might include identifying scales or chords, finding repeated rhythmic patterns, noticing common finger patterns and blocking important hand shapes. We help students break down a larger goal into realistic smaller goals or practice strategies. This is a way to try to help them allocate attention to the most important things first.

Successful lessons consider the limits of attention. A teacher would not usually give a child four or five directions at once, but would ask that attention be focused on one new

thing at a time. Sometimes one element might need to be sacrificed in order to attend to another. Pitch and rhythm can be separated, for example, if a student is not able to attend to both simultaneously. Practice can be slowed down, giving more time to listen and control movements. Pianists practice hands separately to focus on fingering choices. A great deal of wasted or inefficient practice is the result of trying to do more than one can actually pay attention to. Performances are littered with unnoticed errors, often because pianists do not break their work into manageable practice steps or because they try to go too fast too soon. Students often misjudge how much they can control (i.e., think about) at once. Discussing this allocation funnel is a way of reminding students of a very real human limitation and it can be enlightening to have them make conscious allocation decisions. Group lessons provide a perfect opportunity to discuss what one should think about during performance and to assess the results of a particular way of thinking.

Practice goals should also take allocation of attention into account. It might be helpful for students first to consider how many different things they must think about when playing a piece and then decide how many of those elements could be practiced separately (to give that element undivided attention). If done thoughtfully, practicing becomes a series of small challenges, building one element upon another. Students often need to be reminded to practice short sections rather than to play from beginning to end of a piece. Practicing one section several times in a row is much more likely to lead to automatic processing than the same number of repetitions of the whole piece. Maintaining attention for a series of short goals is usually more attainable than keeping maximum concentration for a long movement.

Momentary Intentions/Enduring Dispositions

Even with maximum capacity and allocation of attention, performances can be disrupted by outside forces. The Kahneman model calls these outside influences which compete for our attention "enduring dispositions." These include involuntary responses to sudden noises, light, or motion. No matter how hard one is concentrating on a task at hand, a loud noise is likely to be startling and demand attention. Loud coughing, a flash of a camera, or a sudden movement in the audience is hard not to notice when one is performing. An enduring disposition means just that - it is enduring - and people are programmed to react to these things because they may represent danger. These are instinctual reactions. But while we cannot help but notice such movements, noises and lights, we can learn to control our subsequent responses.

"Momentary intentions" also impact allocation of attention. If we have been thinking about a problem at work, it is unlikely that we will be able to turn those thoughts off suddenly to begin concentrated practice. Elementary school children often cannot focus on school work the day before a major holiday. Our personal lives and work pressures will affect how we are able to allocate attention for practice and performing. But within these limitations, we can control how we allocate our attention.

Monitoring Activities and Responses

As we are involved in a complicated task, it is essential to monitor our success/failure. We may decide that the task has exceeded our attention, so take some action to gain control or reduce the demands. For example, pianists can reduce demands on attention by slowing down or by practicing one part at a time. We try to reallocate attention by circling a fingering or a dynamic marking in the score, expecting that this visible sign will bring our attention to a problem spot. We notice when our concentration has lapsed and we take a short mental break or repeat an activity with a new goal in mind (thus, altering our allocation policy). This is an important part of the allocation model. Kahneman labels this control mechanism the "evaluation of demands on capacity" (represented by arrows at the bottom of the model).

As an outside observer, an experienced teacher can assist by helping to students to allocate attention to varying problems. Sometimes students hear mistakes, but cannot determine what is causing the problem. Practicing can be very frustrating under these circumstances. A skillful teacher can help students find the root of problems and can suggest when and how to reallocate attention to solve them. Slowing down or playing hands separately are solutions which even advanced pianists need to be reminded of occasionally. By asking leading questions, we can focus students' attention on problem areas or, if the student is performing successfully, on increasingly more complex issues.

The Kahneman model is a useful tool for diagnosing problems of attention and addressing the high demands which musical performance places on our cognitive system, although it is not the only model which cognitive psychologists have proposed. Another model of attention attributes interference to incompatible activities rather than insufficient capacity. If the same mechanism is needed to carry out two or more activities, a bottleneck may occur when those two things happen simultaneously. For example, we have difficulty listening to two conversations simultaneously and so we either block out one or shift our attention from one conversation to the other. The bottleneck (or filter) theories have been very influential in explaining sensory processing, but seem less relevant to complex musical processing. For while it is obvious that our attention is limited, it is also obvious that we can and do attend to many things simultaneously in musical performance.

The Kahneman model for attention illustrates the ways in which an individual can gain control or at least influence the attentional processes. It also helps to explain how the system can fail. Arousal can be reasonable, capacity high, and allocation of resources sensible; however, if the activities demanded of the system exceed the limits of attention for that individual, the performance will suffer. Learning to maximize attentional capacity and to allocate this attention efficiently is an important aspect of musical study. This model provides a common-sense way of thinking about how to structure practice to achieve the greatest result with the least frustration. Performance problems are usually problems in thinking. By putting the spotlight on how/what we are thinking when doing a particular task, we are more likely to identify potential problems and find solutions.

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Teaching Sight-Reading at the Piano: Methodology and Significance

by Dianne Hardy

I visited an elderly relative of mine at a local rest home a couple of months ago and there I witnessed Margaret Randall, eighty plus years old, whom I was told has trouble remembering her own name some days and frequently cannot recognize her daughter, but sits at the piano each day sight-reading hymns and any other music she can find. She is practicing her lifelong skill of sight-reading, one that has served her well for many years - even longer than certain fundamental life skills.

What is sight-reading exactly? Richard Chronister calls it a "prima vista" affair (1977) and Ristad (1982) characterizes it as requiring:

Fingers that can simulate a fast running passage and unwind the passage on the right beat with a flourish, an ear that refuses to shudder at notes missed, and a mind that is more intent on arriving on time than it is on enjoying the scenery of each measure. It needs a lot of 'ham', the ability to pretend all is well even when it is lousy going.

My masters thesis of 1992 assessed the current status of teaching sight-reading at the piano. Two hundred twenty one nationally certified teachers of Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) were polled about their teaching of sight-reading; if they taught it, how often they taught it and how they taught it. Finally they were asked to rate its importance on a five point scale. Of the 221 that responded, thirteen percent replied that it was the most important pianistic skill at the piano, 73 percent rated it highly important and the remainder rated it fairly important, while no one rated it as somewhat important or insignificant.

The benefits of skillful sight-reading are many. Fluency facilitates the learning of new pieces; it allows access to a wide variety of music and a more thorough knowledge of specific composers and style characteristics; it builds tactile, aural, and kinetic memory, which increases the player's confidence; and it provides training for many professions in music. Yet in spite of the high value placed on sight-reading by teachers, piano students are often deficient in the skill, displaying a large gap between the reading level and the difficulty of performance pieces. And the consequences of inadequate sight reading skill are devastating. Giles (1983) asserts:

“Probably more intermediate piano students give up their piano study because of reading problems. . . than for any other single reason. People don't give up activities that they enjoy. But if each piece presents a learning prospect to be dreaded, the result is predictable. We should not be surprised that the country is overrun by millions of people who 'used to play the piano,' but who now cannot pick out a single-note melody at the keyboard.”

Only seven percent of the certified piano teachers who responded to my study said that they addressed sight-reading in a systematic manner each week with the student and much of the literature I reviewed placed the blame for sight-reading deficiency on the current trends of piano training. Havill (1971) states:

“It is only in recent years that piano sight-reading has been emerging from its role as a step-sister of performance. Contrary to the old saying that 'sight-readers are born - not made,' the art of sight-reading can be taught.”

Regelski (1975) points out that most piano teaching tends to crystallize about repertoire building with the attendant stress on pure technique and polish of a few pieces a year. Sanders (1986) says that too often the desire for a good showing in recitals and auditions leads teachers to ignore functional skills, such as sight-reading. Gordon, Mach, Uszler (1991) concur citing how intermediate students will " sight-read" a new repertoire piece, but are rarely assigned material specifically for sight-reading.

The majority of teachers in my study said that sight-reading was not included in their program because they didn't know how to teach it. Many cited the reason being that instruction in teaching the skill is not included in the method book series that they use. Some did not even recognize it as a skill apart from the acquisition of repertoire and just said that students would get better with more years of lessons. A few teachers said they wouldn't attempt to teach it because they were rotten sight-readers themselves.

Research on Sight-reading

The present state of piano sight-reading is depressing, but not as bad as it sounds because we do know a considerable amount about the process. Many studies have examined the characteristics of excellent sight-readers and we can readily see implications for teaching the skill.

A majority of experimental research into the area of sight-reading has dealt with studies of a visual nature, an area that is observable in a way that the kinesthetic and aural are not. Young (1971) found that successful sight-readers have more progressive and regressive fixations on the music than unsuccessful sight-readers. Students need to read patterns and phrases rather than perceive notes individually and it is important to teach students to think notes in groups, as well as see them. One's ability to play with speed depends upon organizing thinking in such a way that it will flow rapidly and unhampered. The eye should move forward to notice details in advance of the playing. Bozone (1981) and Giles (1983) established that better readers grasped patterns of as many as six notes in a fixation. Haug (1991) noticed that the quick eye fixations of accomplished sight-readers allowed more complex scanning of music. Successful readers fixate all areas of chords simultaneously (Young, 1971) and group patterns or melodies into fewer chunks than poor readers; therefore, they are able to retain more in their short-term memory, which reduces the memory load. They also use higher musical structures when grouping than less successful readers (Halpern and Bower, 1982).

Further evidence that knowledge of musical structure affects sight-reading ability was presented by Sloboda (1982) and Wolf (1976) who found that good sight-readers tended to overlook musical errors if they did not meet the criteria that the pianist set up about how the music should sound. Wolf presented an actual case history, documented by Goldowsky, involving a misprint in Brahm's Capriccio, Opus 76, No. 2. After being overlooked by pattern readers who had corrected the note mentally, the mistake was discovered by a poor reader who read note-by-note.

Sloboda (1976) cited in Stebelton, in a similar study using music that had been altered, found that changes in the middle of phrases were the least detected, while alterations that began and ended phrases were detected best. He also investigated pattern recognition with musicians and non-musicians and found that musicians retained more information than non-musicians. Stebelton (1987) said that this finding supported the theory that overall contour or global information precedes detailed information in perceptual processing at brief exposure.

These findings indicate that the study of music theory should be carefully and systematically incorporated into piano study, particularly as it applies to the specific music being studied, either as repertoire or reading material. A good sight-reader continuously draws upon past experience in recognizing musical symbols and as long as the symbols are familiar, they may be read without hesitation because they are grounded in the student's memory. Readers must be acquainted with the meaning behind the symbols also. Each group of notes is read in positional relationship to the surrounding notes within the harmonic structure of the composition, so an awareness of repeated note patterns, phrases, chords, rhythmic groupings, themes - in short, the organic structure of the music - is essential to good reading.

Other visual studies have found the following: the reading span varies with the type of reading material used, as does the organization of the eye movements (Buegel, 1981) cited in Stebelton. The duration of the visual fixation increases as the musical selection gets more complex (Van Nuys and Weaver, 1943). Increased memory span depends upon improvement in understanding the pitch patterns or melodic segments of a piece, while increasing the rate of reading depends on improvement in one's ability to group rhythmic figures. Visual perception is affected by the spatial relationship of notes and the fewer times a student looks down at the keyboard while reading, the better the sight-reading will be (Fuszek, 1977).

Eaton (1978), cited in Hardy, examined the role of the tactile sense in sight-reading, identifying the sense as being the ability to locate notes on the instrument without looking at the hands. His sight-reading test measured note reading, psychomotor, and memorization skills and indicates that keyboard psychomotor skill is the most important factor in sight-reading achievement with note reading being second and years of experience third in importance. The tactile sense develops through the acquisition of keyboard technique. The famous teacher, Joseph Lhevinne (1972) advocated technical training for developing tactile feeling of the keyboard. He said that practicing scales greatly facilitates sight-reading because the hand leans instinctively to the most logical

fingering. Hilley (1977) suggests that locating notes in relation to the black keys and feeling for intervals develops the visualization of the topography of the keyboard, which in turn, improves tactile facility. Along the same line, Novak (1968), cited in Hardy, recommends teaching students to see notation, grasp it in the air and then play it on the keyboard. Additional means of developing the feel for the keyboard are transposing and playing with the eyes closed (Dumn, 1984).

Many studies have been conducted concerning the reading of rhythm. Elliott (1982) categorized many types of sight-reading errors and found 70 percent to be rhythm errors. Rhythm durations can be grouped into patterns and several models have been proposed to explain how rhythmical patterns are perceived. A proposal by Lonquet-Higgins (1978), cited in Hardy, using rhythmic structures by the barlines and the beams connecting eighth and sixteenth notes, show that the most important factors in determining the metrical hypotheses are the lengths of notes and where they occur in relation to the beat.

Sloboda (1976) found a tendency for readers to relax momentarily at the phrase boundaries, thereby interrupting the rhythmic pulse. Lowder (1983) documented that pitch errors are usually accompanied by rhythmic errors, especially at the bar line while Hughes and Watkins, (1986) in using a tape-recorded soloist for subjects were able to raise rhythm accuracy scores of sight-readers. Boyle (1968) improved rhythmic reading skills in students by utilizing bodily movement. Teachers need to help students achieve a sense of forward motion toward rhythmic points, such as the strong beats at the bar line and the crest of the phrase. While the eye is taking in details of what is coming, there is the necessity to remember what has just been observed; so sight-reading is, in this sense playing from memory. Strict rhythm must be observed and students need to be told to keep the basic beat at all costs because pausing or correcting note errors is not acceptable. Instead good reading involves a rapid and sure grasp of the meaning and sweep of the phrase, rather than a painful note-by-note accuracy. Ahrens and Atkinson (1966) quoted Sir Ernest MacMillan as saying: "Good sight-reading is nine-tenths rhythm and one-tenth notes". Teachers can have students sight-read with the aid of a metronome, as it will force the student acquire skill in keeping the basic pulse.

Several researchers investigated the importance of a well-developed ear as an aid to sight-reading. Auditory imagery is present in the music reading process and it increases efficiency in sight-reading. Aural imagery is a technique of translating notes into sound as one reads ahead in the music and students can be taught to do aural imaging as they pre-study a piece before attempting to sight-read it. Luce (1958), cited in Hardy,discovered a significant relationship between sight-reading and ear-playing with students while Bozone (1986) and Cutietta (1979) found sight-singing to help the sight-reading process. MacKnight (1975) showed tonal pattern instruction in teaching initial note reading, to be superior to note identification teaching techniques when developing both sight-reading skills and auditory-visual discriminatory skills. She suggests an intervallic or directional reading approach because of the stress on note relationships, one to another.

Many authors point out the advantages of directional or intervallic reading over note identification reading citing the carry-over into the development of sight-reading skill (Chronister, 1990; Dumn, 1984). They argue that music reading is not music spelling and that intervallic reading develops aural imagery in the relationship of the sounds. Richards (1967) maintains that students taught by note naming usually have a more mechanical note-for-note sound in their performance, while pianists taught by intervals possess a greater sense of musical flow in playing meaningful groups of notes.

Commercial Sight-Reading Books

A considerable amount of commercial books for sight-reading are directed to the pre-college piano student. Some are books that are independent of a series and some, especially more current ones, are part of a method book series. For reviews of sight'reading texts, see Commercial Sight-Reading Book Reviews in this section. After examining pre-college commercial books for teaching sight-reading, I concluded that:

- sight-reading instruction books need to be graded into levels with a well-sequenced and systematic approach.
- they need to be one to two grade levels in difficulty less than the student's repertoire level.
- the music needs to be interesting.
- they need to be multi-key and employ a variety of rhythms.
- the material should represent all of the different style periods.
- reading instructions should be based on research findings.
- there should be a diagnostic test or some other form of assessment.

Chronister emphasized that sight-reading is "prima vista" or first sight music and any further reading of the material is not sight-reading. Also practicing is not sight-reading! Books that did not advocate practice did not, at the same time, address the subject of how often an example was to be played. I found only two exceptions, the *Four Star* series and Guhl's *Successful Sight-Reading*, which outline specific daily examples using new music each time. If a musical example is read only one time, a student can very quickly go through a book. Clearly, this is a problem with commercial sight-reading books. Are they financially feasible, given the sight-reading process?

Commercial Sight-Reading Books

A considerable amount of commercial books for sight-reading are directed to the pre-college piano student. Some are books that are independent of a series and some, especially more current ones, are part of a method book series. The Seven Magic Steps to Speed Sight-Reading, by Shinn (1971) outlines seven steps to aid in sight-reading. These include: (1) fundamentals, (2) interval recognition, (3) chord recognition, (4) inversion recognition, (5) arpeggios, (6) pre-reading of score, (7) increase of eye span. The author outlines all of the above steps and includes short exercises that emphasize them, but the instruction moves rapidly and the drills are sparse. This is not a series, but rather a single

ungraded book.

Grove (1985) wrote *Practical Sight-Reading for Beginners, books one and two*. In addition to the books, a cassette tape is included to play along . Since this series, in a manuscript format, presumes no prior knowledge of music, it begins by introducing basic music concepts. There is extensive written work, like a note speller but the few piano exercises are difficult. Throughout both books the student is instructed to play drills along with the tape while saying the names of the notes. No finger and no dynamic or articulation markings are indicated. Students are instructed to write in the names of the notes before sight-reading the exercises. Although the concepts quickly become advanced, the music for sight-reading is never written on the grand staff. Instead a single staff is used.

Keys to Sight-Reading and Musicianship by Andrews, Ringhofer, Sclater, and Toyich (1983) combines theory with sight-reading in the belief that students will sight-read with greater proficiency through analysis. All playing examples are short excerpts of music from major composers and each is prefaced with many theoretical questions about the example. There is only one book and it is not graded.

Richmond's *Sight-Reading Secrets* (1985) stresses the need to play with the correct pitch, rhythm, and fingering. This book requires extensive verbalization as the student plays the drills. However, most of the drills are described only , with the music not being written out. Consequently, there is very little actual reading included in the one ungraded instruction book.

Havill (1967) wrote *You Can Sight-Read , books one and two*. She admonishes students to count aloud and not look down. Every music example has an accompanying rhythm and keyboard drill and transposing and ensemble playing are included. The format of the books appears to be directed to the older or adult piano student.

Hickman (1986) wrote *Music Speed Reading for Beginners*. The single, ungraded book consists of twenty lessons which are divided into three parts each -rhythm, intervals, and ear training. Except for the rhythm exercises, which are not on a staff, there are no stems on notes so the student playing the note drills plays any rhythm and pitch he or she chooses. There are no clef signs; instead, the music is written on a single staff and the keyboardist is instructed to combine staves. The dynamic markings are few and no markings for fingering or articulation are given. Richman recommends reading as fast as possible.

Olson (1982) wrote *Right From the Start: A Rapid Piano Reader*. This is a collection of elementary reading materials that focus on reading, rhythm and specific concepts. The drills are short and each identifies a particular problem with a different picture for reading, rhythm or other elements. The ungraded collection contains a few duets.

Berlin (1986) revised an earlier course into *Four Star Sight-Reading and Ear Tests*. There are eight levels in this attractive series where he has outlined a different exercise or drill

foe each day of the week. The student is instructed to do the reading at home and the teacher gives the test at the lesson. Several sight-reading aids are stressed--keeping eyes on the music, learning to feel the keys, being accurate with notation and fingering, recognizing and following melodic progressions. Berlin instructs the student to use various playing techniques: (a) name the notes as they are played, (b) name notes and fingering and then play, (c) name the first note of each hand and then play, (d) place the hands and play. The weekly tests for sight-reading and ear-training are located in the student's book, and there is no criteria for assessment although the tests are representative of what the student has been reading in longer excerpts.

Butler (1983) wrote *Sight-Reading is Fun*, books one and two, an attractive series in which he stresses the need for sight-reading to begin when a student first reads music. The emphasis is on the concept of reading, not practicing the music. Suggestions are given to the student before reading: (a) observe the key signature, meter, etc., (b) keep the eyes on the page, (c) look ahead while reading, (d) keep going.

Sandercook (1979) wrote *Help Yourself to Sight-Reading*, an intermediate level book in which the author emphasizes pre-study followed by reading in three ways: without looking at the keys, from memory looking at the keys, and from memory with eyes closed. She stresses practicing the example until it is accurate.

Guhl (1989) who developed a series of books entitled *The Magic Reader*, levels one through four, stresses counting and keeping the beat. The books are outlined well with short and concise examples although not all keys are explored. She wrote additional books in 1991 called Sight-Read Successfully which coincide with level four of The Magic Reader. Each day's work is outlined and the stress is on reading, not practicing.

The remainder of the commercial sight-reading books are part of current piano series of books. Sheftel (1986) wrote a series of sight-reading books to correlate with *Alfred's Basic Piano Course*, levels 1b, 2 and 3. They are titled *Folk Songs Around the World*. In addition, the series contains ensemble work, keyboard skills, rhythm drills, theory and instructions to practice the sight-reading drills.

Bastien (1977) wrote a two volume course for the older beginner. Sight-reading is stressed in *Musicianship for the Older Beginner*, which also includes technique and theory. Sight-reading exercises are included in each unit. The material is easier than the repertoire the student is performing. Bastien emphasizes pre-study, tapping the rhythm, keeping the eyes on the music, looking ahead, and not breaking the rhythm. In 1976 Bastien also wrote the *Bastien Piano Library*, which has specific sight-reading books for levels one through four. In these books, he admonishes the student to keep eyes on the music, look ahead and keep going. All of the different major keys and many minor keys are dealt with throughout the four books.

Jane Bastien (1990) added sight-reading books to the *Bastien Basics* course. *A Line a Day* includes primer, book one and two. There are two parts to each drill for reading (a) the daily note search has students name and play notes in correct places on the keyboard,

(b) the student sight-reads three, four-measure phrases. The student keeps track of progress with a chart and is encouraged to play each piece until it is perfect.

Kowalchyk and Lancaster (1988) authored the sight-reading books for the *Glover Piano Method*. They are called *Sight-reading and Ear Training*, primer through level four. The authors correlate sight-reading and ear-training activities. Each piece for sight-reading is preceded with chords and patterns and easy keys are used with transposition. The authors emphasize keeping the eyes on the music, clapping and counting the rhythm before playing, preparing hands over the keyboard, counting aloud, and playing slowly;. Students are told to practice the assigned pages.

N. Jane Tan (1991) has written a series which is directed at developing the four memories employed in sight-reading: automatic, visual, tactile, and analytical. *The Well-Prepared Pianist* addresses them at each lesson. There are two guidebooks for teachers and student books for a primer and levels 1-A, 1-B, 11-A, and 11-B with the musical examples being a practical application of the author's philosophy. Although the teachers' guidebooks have many suggestions for teaching sight-reading, which appear to reflect the most current findings of research, there are few if any instructions for using the books so it is unclear how to teach the material.

Kowalchyk and Lancaster (1995) wrote *Sight-Reading Piano* to correspond with each of the levels of *Alfred's Basic Piano Library*. Included are rhythm sight-reading drills and improvisation exercises to develop tactile freedom on the keyboard. The exercises are short and the music is easier than the corresponding pages in the Lesson Book. Realizing that material can only be used for sight-reading one time, the authors suggest the following procedures: a) The student initially sight-reads the page for the teacher at the lesson. b) The student plays the page one time each day during the practice week. c) The student plays the page again for the teacher at the next lesson and discusses problems encountered in the performance.

A sight-reading aid for the teacher is the *Music Machine* (Burkes and Daley, 1982). Each book contains several songs bound together and segmented into four sections. So for each melody there are several options, depending on which sections the teacher uses. By using different combinations of melodies, a "first time" situation is continually created. The series includes a primer, level one, level two, intermediate, and a special collection entitled Joybug Jazz.

The Diagnostic Prescriptive Sight Reading Program

Studies have shown that most students do not sight-read well, and very few are offered specific sight-reading instruction. Little information on testing reading skills exists and even less focuses on developing a plan to address the teaching of the skill. The practice of correcting errors and rehearsing sections of a piece leads to perfection when performing but proves disastrous when sight-reading because the process of practicing repertoire and that of sight-reading are separate and success in one does not lead to success in the other. How then can we afford not to teach sight-reading as a separate skill? When a teacher

simply assigns a piece for the student at a lesson and the student plays the piece the following week the teacher does not know how the student practiced and how difficult the reading of it was initially. Often more difficult material is then assigned, still without the teacher having first assessed the student's ability to read it. Is this type of teaching not contradictory to the assertion that teachers highly value the sight-reading skill?

In order to change the haphazard teaching of sight-reading, teachers must first recognize that sight-reading is a skill apart from piano performance and one that can be effectively taught. Second they need to value their students' sight-reading ability as much as the ability to perform recital repertoire. In other words sight-reading must be given time and attention regularly in the weekly piano lesson. Third it is necessary for teachers to provide the student with a structured program complete with evaluation and lots of accessible reading material.

My **Diagnostic/Prescriptive Sight-Reading Program (DPSRP)** consists of a sight-reading test of thirty pieces that contain the music concepts taught from prep or beginning level books up through level five literature. A chart detailing the type and frequency of possible errors makes it relatively easy to diagnose students and place them in appropriate sight-reading levels. The DPSRP also presents a study plan for the remediation of errors with four basic levels of reading being established and procedures for each of the levels outlined. A student checkout sheet allows the teacher to keep track of what music has been assigned at each level of reading.

Diagnostic/prescriptive testing is testing in such a way that specific kinds of errors can be identified and subsequently remedied. The teacher tests and then follows up with a reading program based on materials that specifically address the test errors. To administer the test the teacher begins where (s)he feels the student can easily read and then works upward with the student playing piece after piece while the teachers observes the reading and charts the errors. (S)he ends the test when the student makes several errors on a piece or breaks the rhythmic flow.

The teacher then draws the Independent or lowest level wherever that piece is and the goal here is fluency. Music for this level is "prima vista" or one time through music. The second level is the Guided sight-reading level which is for music that needs to be practiced but only for a short time and the goal is perfection. By studying music at this level a student can learn a vast amount of literature. The third level is the instructional level where lesson pieces are found. These need to be practiced from a few to several weeks depending on the age and proficiency level of each student and the goal here is often performance. The fourth level, which is drawn directly above the instructional level is one I call the "frustration" level Challenge pieces which a student may occasionally earn, are placed here.

The Independent level, which is determined by the test, establishes the other levels. It is the lowest one, for example level one method book. The Guided level is placed one level above the Independent, level two method book, and the Instructional is placed one level above the guided, level three method book. The challenge piece, if given, would then be

method book level four or literature one. Testing brings the study of repertoire in line with the student's reading ability and reveals the common problem of assigning material that is too difficult for the student. If lesson pieces are frequently in a student's "frustration" level, he or she will become discouraged. Certain errors are more serious than others, errors that really determine whether the student can read the material or not. These are a)the inability to keep a steady pulse, b) rehitting or hesitating, c)the inability to leave the hand over the piano long enough to establish fingering, and d) looking down excessively. In testing a teacher will need to weigh these errors more heavily than a missed accidental or dynamic marking.

The goal of remediative study in the DPSRP is to teach the skill of sight-reading after the testing has been completed. It is important to go over the test results with the student, finding the errors that were made and establishing the different reading levels. Goals for each of the levels are reviewed and then music is assigned for each level -music that focuses heavily on the concepts that were missed. To attain fluency for the Independent level, I set up the following guidelines:

1. Play two pages a day.
2. Do pre-study of the piece before playing.
3. Use the metronome and count aloud.
4. Keep the eyes on the music.
5. Set a slow tempo and keep going without attempting to correct note errors.
6. Play the piece one time only.

I listen to Independent sight-reading every four weeks at the lesson, but I ask about it first at each lesson and make a new assignment.

The goal for the Guided level is perfection and I assign one page each week asking the student to work hard to get it perfect. The Guided level helps students take the responsibility of learning upon themselves and over time students see that perfection of a piece involves many aspects. In beginning the program the teacher will often see that a student's concept of perfection is just to get the correct notes and rhythms so the teacher gradually helps the student make many musical decisions. If the page is not perfect in one week, the student moves on to another, trying to apply what was learned from the first to the next piece. A teacher can carefully pick pieces at this level that drill the concepts a student missed on the test. It is much easier to remedy problems at the Guided level than at a student's Instructional level. I hear the Guided piece each week and then discuss its perfection with the student and make a new assignment. I like to assign music from the four historic periods so typically, I might assign the Contemporary for Independent level reading, a Baroque piece for the Guided level, the Romantic for the Instructional level, and the Classical for a challenge piece. Whenever a student changes an Instructional level piece, the order can be changed around if desired. At the Guided level, for example, all the Bach Minuets, easy Sonatinas can be learned so the student gets a real feel for a particular composers' writing, rather than learning one or two isolated pieces.

The Instructional level is where most pieces are that a student has been playing. If the test shows that the Instructional level has been too high, then a teacher can either lower it or double up on the Independent sight-reading assignment and not emphasize the Instructional for a while. **It is important to bring the levels in line with one another in order to create the optimum learning environment for the student.**

The frustration level is directly above the student's Instructional level and most students should not be working in it. However, if a student has been on the program a while, is advancing well and giving quality time to the different reading levels, he or she may welcome the challenge of learning a piece here. I believe in discussing with the student how difficult the piece may be. I point out that it may take a long time to learn it and perhaps will never be ready to perform; but then I leave it up to the student. Many times we teachers have seen a student master music above the Instructional level because the motivation was there.

The first and most important step in the program is for the teacher to place a high value on learning to sight-read - high enough that the progress gets checked first and faithfully every lesson. Making a new assignment and checking a student's progress must be done at every single lesson so the student will be able to learn pieces faster and better. Music study is made relevant when the student can see the fruits of his or her labor.

A teacher will see results in as little as four to six weeks as most students love the abundance of music they are playing. They like playing music that can be mastered in a short time and they want to be fluent readers. Students also enjoy making music decisions about tempos, learning strategies and such. I retest every three months. This is long enough for students to raise a level and correct many specific kinds of errors. I keep a file on each student with the test results so I have the data of the old test to compare each time. If a student fails to raise a level or remediate errors then it indicates that the student is not doing the program each day at home. All students will improve if they are faithfully doing the program.

Students can't possibly buy the music for the DPSRP because a student will frequently go through an Independent level book each week. I have a large music lending library for which I charge a yearly music lending fee so I Ioan the music for the Independent and Guided levels. One way to acquire music for the lending program is to seek out garage sales or sales of music at stores. Many times this yields older music, but it is good for sight-reading. Sometime music teachers organizations combine music to make a lending library. Remember, the more variety one has for sight-reading the better.

As the field of Piano Pedagogy becomes more established and refined, the teaching of sight-reading will receive more and more attention with increased information leading to widespread teaching of the skill, which in turn will produce better sight-readers.

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The Most Important Practice Technique

by Edward Gates

One man may practice daily on a musical instrument and fail to make any progress, while another shows daily improvement. Perhaps the nature of the talent that is the accepted explanation for this divergence of achievement derives from the fact that the second student observes what he is doing while he plays while the first one only repeats and memorizes and relies on the assumption that sufficient repetition of a bad performance will somehow bring about musical perfection.
- Moshe Feldenkrais[1]

To students who have no idea how to practice a new piece I suggest that there are basically four types of practice: 1) slow practice; 2) hands-separate practice; 3) practicing groupings (stopping between groups of notes); and 4) "structural" practice (building a passage from the most important notes). There are, of course, many useful practice techniques that don't fit into these categories, but this gives the student someplace to start in organizing his practice possibilities. By far the most useful of these techniques is slow practice. In this article I would like not just to extol the benefits of slow practice in general, but to consider some of its specific possibilities. If the student knows why he is practicing in a certain way - what he should be thinking about while he's practicing - he can benefit much more from his work.

One of the problems a student may have in learning a new piece is the misconception that what he is doing is "learning the notes." What he really wants to do is "learn the music." There is a big difference here. The student's mind is better focused on "how does this sound," and "how should this feel" - in other words "how shall I play this" - rather than "what notes should I play." His brain is thus engaged more in sensing than in doing. The real music is in the details and the details are in the sensing. If he focuses merely on playing right notes, intending to worry about interpretation (how to play) later, then by the time he gets around to really listening to the music, he will already have had the sound of senseless playing in his ears for long time.

To a student this may sound like an impossible assignment. How can he do everything perfectly - shaping, phrasing, balancing, timing, and everything else - the first time through? The answer is that perfection is not the requirement; what's needed is simply the right point of view. If from the beginning he is focused on sensing how the music needs to sound and how he needs to move in order to accomplish that - and with every repetition he tries to sense those things better and better - he will be on a very positive path.

I once heard a student ask the eminent pianist and teacher George Sebok how he practices. I don't remember Sebok's exact reply, but it was something like, "I practice to keep a smooth mind." He explained that he varies the tempo of his practice so that his mind doesn't hurry. Even if I don't remember Sebok's exact words, I remember the moment

well, because it changed forever the way I practice. I understood immediately that the hurrying mind, rushed in its thinking, is the bane of practicing - and of performing as well. When the mind is hurried it does not have time to notice what is really happening. It does not focus well and many of the details of the music go by unnoticed. One has only the feeling, "I got it," but the experience of the music is shallow.

In light of Sebok's comment let's rethinking what we mean by slow practice. He didn't actually say that he practices slowly but that he uses a flexible tempo that enables him to keep an unhurried mind. This is much different from setting a slow tempo and adhering to it. It is simply choosing a tempo that at every moment adapts itself to the needs of a sensing mind. It means taking whenever time is necessary to produce a musical phrase and move in a coordinated manner. One's mind feels in sync with the music. It includes even stopping, of course, if that is necessary to prepare for the music to come or to hear the music in the mind before playing it. It is really a wonderful philosophy of practice - that playing something before you're ready is not productive.

The idea of practicing with a flexible tempo, even a rhythm that is constantly adjusting to the needs of the mind, may sound dangerous. Won't one simply end up with a distorted sense of rhythm and tempo? In fact, that has not been my experience, at least with high school and college level students. I have given this considerable thought, and I have come to the conclusion that rhythm is not perceived entirely in terms of durations. Strange is it may sound, rhythm may be very much a matter of inflection. Otherwise, the simplest rubato or rhythmic nuance would sound like nonsense. This can be demonstrated to the student by playing a passage with highly distorted durations but all the right rhythmic inflections - pickups that sound like pickups, for example, even though highly elongated. The student is able to identify the rhythms, despite the distortions. I certainly agree that this type of practice may be inappropriate for a beginning student who is just learning his rhythmic values. Yet it may be just what is needed by a more advanced student who is rhythmically erratic. His rhythmic sloppiness is probably due precisely to his not taking the time to understand the function and organization of the rhythm.

There is one problem that may arise from rhythmically flexible practice. If the student takes extra time at a certain spot over and over again, it may become a part of the way he hears it. One really doesn't want a certain way of practicing to become so ingrained that it becomes compulsive. (This would be true of any kind of practice.) If he finds that he constantly needs extra time there, he should make an effort to take the extra time earlier in the passage, so that he may be prepared for the "problem" spot before he gets to it. The object of his practice is, after all, to gain an understanding of the music that allows him to play the music the way he wants it to sound. Practicing with a flexible tempo is simply a means for him to gain that understanding.

Bringing a piece gradually up to performance tempo can be a challenge for the student. Many students use a metronome for this purpose, increasing the tempo little by little. Sometimes I recommend this technique, but it is not ideal. Gaining a faster tempo may become the sole objective, with the sacrifice of all musical considerations. The metronome, after all, has no idea how the music is put together. It produces simply a

string of beats. The problem with quickening the tempo can be the way one practices slowly (or flexibly). One needs always to feel the momentum of the music, the way one note spills over into the next, even at a slow tempo. To introduce the student to this feeling, the teacher can use a simple exercise. Walk with the student across the room. Then turn around and prepare to walk in a different manner. Rise up on your tiptoes with the student and lean forward gradually until you both take natural, easy steps in order not to fall over. The first time you do this you will probably have to take fast steps, because you lean too much. Do it again together, sensing how little you need to lean to take easy steps and even slow steps. Then the student will learn that the tempo of his walking depends not on how fast he moves his legs, but on how much he leans. Notice how easy it is to move fast this way and how it feels to lean so little that you move slowly. If the student can transfer this feeling to the piano, then his slow playing can naturally lead to faster playing. He will have gained a natural ability to play faster when he is ready.

Students often have the unfortunate misconception that slow practice is useful only for new pieces. The truth is that the benefits of listening and sensing only increase as one is gradually able to play a piece with less and less effort. And the faster and more complex the piece, the more important slow practice becomes. In order to play a fast piece efficiently and musically one needs such mastery of every detail and such perfection of every gesture that he doesn't need to think hurriedly in order to play it. If he has to hurry to play a passage, then he doesn't know the passage yet.

The gist of this article is the suggestion that slow practice is not just playing slowly. I once had the secret pleasure of listening to Sviatoslav Richter practice on the day of a concert. At first I was struck by the extreme slowness of his practice, but gradually it dawned on me that this was exquisite playing. Every note seemed to be perfectly placed and no phrase suffered from the slow tempo. Richter was taking the time to experience the music as deeply as possible. The longer I work at playing the piano the more I find I am drawn to this kind of practice. No matter how frantic my everyday life becomes, I'll always have this refuge in my practice - where there is time to search for the kind of music I really love.

Mountains should be climbed with as little effort as possible and without desire. The reality of your own nature should determine the speed. If you become restless, speed up. If you become winded, slow down. You climb the mountain in an equilibrium between restlessness and exhaustion. Then, when you are no longer thinking ahead, each footstep isn't just a means to an end but a unique event in itself. This leaf has jagged edges. This rock looks loose. From this place the snow is less visible, even though closer. These are things you should notice anyway. To live only for some future goal is shallow. It's the sides of the mountain which sustain live, not the top. Here's where things grow.
- Robert M. Pirsig[2]

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Go Thou "On-Line": A Guide for Creation of Your Own Web Site

by Steve Clark

Everyone's doin' it - millions of 'em! Maybe now's a good time for you jump in too? If you spend some time on the Internet, I think you'll most likely get caught up in the spirit of sharing and communication which exits there. The Internet has a way of promoting an open exchange of ideas much the same as one finds at a professional conference. Let me encourage you to become involved in the spirit of sharing which exists on the Internet. Every one of us has some experiences or expertise in some area(s), which would benefit others and there's no better way to share your gifts and facilitate communication on topics which interest you professionally than by creating a web page for your studio.
A few of the more commonly expressed reasons for creating a web page for one's your studio are:

1. to add visibility and a professional image to your studio
2. to facilitate communication within your studio - between you, your students and their parents
3. to provide an appropriate place for biographical information about yourself
4. to announce the special events of your studio - recitals, auditions, vacations, etc.
5. to give complete studio policies, tuition and fee information
6. to house information specific to your studio - topics about which you feel strongly such as practice, memorization, etc.

One more thought along those lines...

As classical musicians, we should be sensitive to issue of the relevance of classical music in the lives of our students. Just as past generations have been strongly influenced by television, the current generation is growing up under the exponentially growing influence Internet. Today's young people are forming a conception of their world which is in part determined by the information, opinions and ideas they find there. Classical musicians have long been criticized for sitting back and expecting the world to come to us. I think we all know by now that that this has not been a successful strategy for advancing the cause of classical music. I'm not saying the Internet has the answers to all our problems, but I do feel that it is a powerful tool of communication and we make a serious mistake if we do not take advantage the opportunities it affords us to establish a presence for quality music and serious music learning on the Internet.

After making the decision to create web page for your studio, your next step would be to give some thought to the specifics of what you might include on your web site and how to organize that information. Toward this end, you would do well to take time to visit a number of other sites and see how other web pages are done. The possibilities are of course absolutely limitless, but here are a few suggestions for things which might make a short list of items you would want to include on a studio web site.

- Calendar of events for your studio

- A map of how to get to your studio
- Email address so people can contact you via email
- Links to Local Arts Associations (Symphony, Concert Series, Ballet, Museum, NPR, Music Festivals)
- Links to other sites which you think appropriate (Music Teacher Associations, Local Music Dealers)
- Information on instrument purchase, upkeep and repairs (both keyboards and pianos)
- Technical information on playing the piano (scale and arpeggio fingerings and other special exercises you employ)

I'm sure other ideas would occur to you which would be specific to your particular situation. I recently began a project with some of my precollege students by asking them to think of some aspect of learning the piano which they feel is important and which they would like to share with others who are studying the piano. I promised them that we would create a special web page to showcase their ideas and we're having lots of fun with this project. With the younger students we usually focused on their attitude toward music and with the older ones I've tried to guide them into a statement of something which they feel is important for other students to know about learning to play the piano. Some of the essays which we're working on so far include; A seven year old girl, who is composing a beautiful essay on why she wanted to begin taking piano lessons and how excited she was when the piano was delivered to her home and she could begin, an eight year old girl is writing on how she got started learning music on her own, without the help of her older sister, an eleven year old boy (a transfer student) has drafted an essay on how helpful it is to follow the fingerings which are printed in the music (that was a tough one to negotiate!), a thirteen year old boy is writing on how to memorize music and a high school junior is working on an essay about Tobias Matthay's concept of forward progression in music with examples take from his current repertoire.

You will probably want to start with a relatively straight forward design for your web page in the beginning. You can always add things to it over time. Some things which you should consider adding as you go along would be to include some graphics, photos of you and/or your students, sound files and other items which would add some visual and aural interest to your page. After coming up with an initial list of items which you would like to include on your web site, the next step would be to get those ideas into the proper format for posting on the world wide web.

Four Roads Diverged... Ways to Approach Creation of Your Web Site

World wide web pages are constructed using Hypertext Mark-Up Language (HTML). HTML is a document-layout and hyperlink-specification language. It defines the syntax and placement of special, embedded directions that aren't displayed by the web browser, but tell how to display the contents of a web page, including text, images and other support media. The HTML language also tells you how to make a web page interactive through special hypertext links, which connect your web page with other documents or web pages - on either your computer or someone else's as well as with other Internet resources, like FTP and Gopher.

Writing HTML code takes a little bit of getting used to, but it's really no harder to master than one of the early DOS word processing programs where you had to type in the text formatting commands yourself. The main trouble with learning HTML is not it's difficulty, but simply that most of us have enough on our plates these days without taking on something else. The good news for those interested in developing their own web site is that, while you are probably better off in the long run knowing something of how HTML works, especially with regard to how clickable links operate, it's really no more necessary to know HTML to create a web page these days than it is to know the workings of an internal combustion engine in order to drive an automobile.

One way around the problem of learning to write HTML code yourself would be to pay a professional web page designer to build a page for your studio. That way you'll have a really professional looking web site which will be attractive to your students, their parents and everyone else. The down side of this approach is that professional web page design is very costly and although it may be tax deductible as a business expense, it's still a pretty expensive proposition. If you wish to have your page professionally done you should contact the design services department of your Internet Service Provider. An example of a professionally created web site for you to check out would be: Judith Siegel's web site, http://www.musicteachers.com.

Another possibility would be to enlist the services of a computer science student at your local college or university. These folks are often looking to build a portfolio of web page designs, they work for considerably less than professional web designers, they are really self-motivated and capable of some fine work. I went this route with my first web page. I came across a web page design which I thought was similar to what I wanted, gave the information to the student, and after a couple of drafts he came up with a layout which pleased me very much. A web page which was initially created through this method is The Piano in CyberSpace, http://www.colstate.edu/soa/music/resources/cyberpiano.

You might also try asking around in your studio. It's quite possible that a few of your budding pianists also know a thing or two about computers and the Internet as well. Why not give them the information you want on your studio web page and let them design it? It could be a wonderful project to involve your students in making a statement about what's important in music study and what kinds of things should be included on your studio's web page. Of course, you should be sure to retain final control of all decisions about the content and design of your web page, but I think you'd be very happily surprised with what your students would come up with for your studio's page. Just be sure they don't take the time they spend at the computer off of their piano practice time! To view a page which was created with the technical assistance of students from the teacher's studio check out Morrine Silverman's web site.

Finally, I think you should consider creating your studio web page yourself, using one of the newer HTML capable word processing programs or editing capable web browsers. The newest versions of the most popular word processing programs such as Corell's *WordPerfect* and Microsoft's *Word* allow you to save documents in HTML format. Likewise, the newest versions of the most popular web browsers, such as Netscape's

Communicator 4.0 and Micorsoft's *Internet Explorer 4.0*, allow you to create and edit files exactly as you would in a word processor and the save those files in HTML format. With these tools at your disposal, you don't have to know a thing about HTML code. You just lay the page out as you want it to appear press the "save as HTML" command and your program automatically provides the HTML code required to create your web page. I began creating web pages in the mid 1990's, the "old days", back when we had to write HTML code ourselves. By the way, I also had to walk 10 miles to school in the snow too.) To see a page which was created using *Microsoft Word* and *Netscape 4.0* try the web site for The American Matthay Association, http://www.colstate.edu/soa/music/resources/matthay.htm.

Blasting Off into CyberSpace! 10, 9, 8....

And now for the exciting moment when your page debuts on the web. Assuming that you've got your web page together, the next step is to find a way of getting it onto the world wide web so others can view it. In order for people to be able to access your web page you must transfer it to a computer which is connected to the Internet twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week. A computer so connected is called a "file server" or "server" for short. For most people owning a server is pretty impractical, so fortunately Internet Service Providers (IPS) rent space on their file servers. ISP's typically include a limited amount of space on their server(s) as a part of a patron's Internet access account. The amount of space included varies, but it typically runs around five megabytes and that's more than enough room for a large web site.

Once you've secured you own server, or more likely, space on one of your ISPs machines, it's a simple matter to transfer the web page you've created from your computer to their server. Transferring files from your computer to a file server on Internet is called "uploading" and its accomplished through a process called File Transfer Protocol (FTP). When transferring files, you establish a connection from your computer to your ISPs file server using the software which they provide. Then simply click on the transfer button and your web page will automatically "blast off" into CyberSpace!

Note: If you desire a special domain name for your web page (www.MyStudio.com), you may secure this address providing it is not already taken, by contacting the InterNic directly, by contacting a Domain Name Registration Service such as TABNET or by working through your Internet Service Provider (see below for contact information on the InterNic, TABNET and a complete list of ISPs nationwide).

Don't Play Hard to Get!

As stated earlier, a large part of having a web page is sharing ideas with others. Obviously, this can not be accomplished if no one knows you have a web site. The final task of creating a web site is to announce it to the wide, wide, world. Internet search engines are your major sources of help with this. Search engines are for profit companies who make money through selling advertising to businesses who wish to advertise on their web site. Search engines make no charge at all to you for listing your site. They are

simply eager to increase the size of their data base by including your web site and as many new web sites of every description into their indexes as possible. Each of these search engines employ different methods of data collection, each have different data bases, each indexes their data in different ways and each will yield different results to the exact same search criteria. Therefore, it is important that you register your web site with, at least, several of the major search engines if you are going to be effective in getting the word out about your web site. All the search engines have clickable links on their web sites which allow you to add the address, known as the "URL" (Uniform Resource Locator), of your web page, along with a brief description of your web site, into their data base.

Summing Up

Staking your claim to a piece of web real-estate is much easier than you might think. You certainly do not need to learn computer languages, spend large amounts of time developing computer skills, or be a computer whiz in order to do this. Just follow the four simple steps below to carve a niche for yourself on the world wide web.

1. Draft a list of items which you would like to initially include on your web site.
2. Determine the best road for you to follow to get your ideas into HTML format.
3. Transfer your web page to a server connected to the Internet.
4. Register your URL (address) with various Internet search engines.

Once your web page is up and running you'll be a full-fledged, contributing, member of the Internet community with all rights, privileges and responsibilities thereunto appertaining. CyberSpace is an exciting place. See you on-line!

Bibliography of Internet Based Web Page Creation Resources

Internet Web Page Tools and Software

The Complete Guide to HTML – URL no longer active

Advice on web page design from the pros at CNet – URL no longer active

Intern Software - http://dir.yahoo.com/computers_and_internet/software/internet

Sights and Sounds for Your Web Page

3D LOGO Generator – URL no longer active

Audio Files which you can add to your web site. – URL no longer active

Lycos Search Engine for Audio Files and Graphic Images which can be added to your web site. – URL no longer active

A huge collection of free animated graphics for use with your web page. – URL no longer active

Roadmap map-maker (Lycos) – URL no longer active

Excite City Net – URL no longer active

Create a Web Site Using a Template

Teachers.Net HomePage Maker - http://www.teachers.net/sampler/

Free web page creation and hosting. A business that gains revenue though advertising. – URL no longer active

Domain Name Registration and Web Page Hosting Services

Internic Official Domain Name Registration Site - URL no longer active

TABNet's Domain Name Look Up and Registration Services - URL no longer active

The List (Internet Service Providers) - http://corporate.mediabistro.com

Tips on Submitting Your Web Site to Search Engines

Submit It! - http://www.submit-it.com/?fof=Y

Five "Biggie" Search Engines - For best exposure, list your URL with all of them.

Excite – URL no longer active

AltaVista - http://search.yahoo.com/?fr=altavista

Yahoo - https://www.yahoo.com

HotBot - http://www.hotbot.com

WebCrawler - http://www.webcrawler.com

Steve Clark is the creator of numerous Internet resources for pianists and piano teachers including the web page: "The Piano in CyberSpace" and Internet mail lists: "Pno-Ped-L" and "Chopin-L". He recently made presentations at the World Piano Pedagogy Conference, the Music Teachers National Association, the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts, the American Matthay Association and the Georgia Music Teachers Association. He currently serves as Vice-President for MTNA Fall Competitions and chairman of the Technology Committee for the Georgia Music Teachers Association. He teaches piano at Columbus State University where he directs the Music Conservatory. He is a member of the American

Matthay Association, the American Liszt Society, the International Liszt Center for Nineteenth Century Music and he appears frequently as a solo recitalist. Students from his studio have received many honors and have been declared winners and finalists in state, national and international piano competitions.

Careers in Opera for Pianists

by Talmage Fauntleroy

Every time I pass through the halls of the University of South Carolina School of Music, I am amazedat the number of pianists I hear working on solo literature in the practice rooms. When asked to do some accompanying, most shrug and respond that they prefer performing as soloists. This vast number of pianists is not restricted to University of South Carolina, for I have encountered this attitude in many music schools and conservatories in the United States and in different countries around the world. Does every one of these pianists hope to be the next Kissin, Goode, Schiff, Ax, Ohlsson, or Watts? Are they all hoping for that very rare career as a solo concert artist? In too many cases, the answer is yes. Do most college-level pianists even know the odds against them for reaching this goal? Was the career objective to become a solo artist chosen after carefully investigating the career possibilities for a pianist, or was this decision the result of a narrow vision of what career possibilities exist for good keyboard artists? For example, how many undergraduate pianists are aware of what wonderful career opportunities there are in the world of opera?

Except for the students who chose to study in an urban environment where there are professional operatic productions, many piano students enter college knowing nothing about opera and without any idea as to what careers may be available in this field. Many have never seen an opera nor have any idea as to how opera could possibly relate to their chosen field of study.

The field of professional opera offers a variety of career opportunities for pianists. Assistant conductors, vocal coaches, rehearsal accompanists, stage assistants (people who give musical cues to cast and production personnel), and prompters (people who give word cues to soloists and chorus) are some of the positions which offer excellent career possibilities for people with a background in piano. Preparation for these positions includes the development of good piano technique along with excellent sight-reading skills, knowledge of foreign languages, knowledge of musical styles, and (for assistant conductors) the ability to play an orchestral score at the keyboard.

So once interested, where does one start? How does a piano student begin to prepare for a career in opera? Starting from the obvious, the student must first develop his or her technique and sight-reading skills and develop musicality through knowledge of a broad repertory. To this study, the college-conservatory level pianist should enroll in accompanying courses, and for practical experience, seek opportunities to accompany singers in operatic repertory. Most colleges, for example, have an opera workshop which provides excellent "hands-on" experience for pianists to work with standard operatic literature (arias, duets, ensembles), and university and conservatory opera programs usually include full productions for which pianists are needed as rehearsal accompanists and as assistant coaches and assistant conductors. Study of languages is encouraged (courses in both diction and in grammar) and training should also include listening to recordings. Hearing a variety of operatic recordings by a variety of conductors and

singers will give the pianist insight and ideas on style and also introduce him or her to a broad spectrum of interpretive options. Listening can be enhanced by studying a full orchestra score of the opera. The study of the full operatic score gives the pianist better insight when playing a piano reduction, since it helps to know what instruments are to be simulated on the keyboard. All of this intense academic preparation adds to the pianist's skill and eventually to his or her marketablilty.

After graduation, the pianist desiring a career in opera may continue to refine his skills by studying in specialized opera programs. Many U.S. opera companies offer Apprentice or Young Artist Programs, which provide "hands-on" training and experience for young vocal coaches, rehearsal accompanists, and stage assistants. OPERA America, the international opera service organization located in Washington, D.C., maintains an up-to-date list of companies in the United States and Canada that have apprentice opportunities for young artists aspiring to careers in opera. OPERA America also offers fellowship awards to young artists to work as apprentices artists in an OPERA America approved company. For more information on OPERA America and its program offerings, write to Jamie Driver, Education Director, OPERA America, 1156 15th Street, NW, Suite 810, Washington, DC 20005-1704; E-mail: Jamie@operaam.org.

Another way to sharpen skills in preparation for a career in opera is to work under the guidance of a "master" or mentor. This involves locating an accomplished professional in the field who will accept the pianist as an apprentice. Learning the craft from the bottom up, the apprentice artist should expect to spend most of his or her early years observing. An assistant will be expected to run errands, take notes for the conductor, stage manager, or stage director, make musical adjustments to the instrumental parts (cuts, dynamic markings, etc...) and as he or she advances, serve as a substitute for the mentor in music or staging rehearsals. A simple way to identify potential artists/mentors is to read the major opera magazines to keep track of who is working in the field. Magazines such as Opera News, Opera Canada, and Opera (published in London) keep monthly listings and calendars of schedules of professional opera companies and the professionals who work in these companies. The New York Opera Newsletter also publishes up-to-date lists of training opportunities and job openings.

Even while they practice to master solo literature, I hope that university-level pianists will also explore the career options available to them in the world of opera.

Talmage Fauntleroy (Director of OPERA at USC) joined the faculty of the University of South Carolina in 1992 following a ten year residence in Italy. In1982, he was appointed Artistic Director of Studio Lirico, an opera apprentice program located in Cortona, Italy, and since that time he has led it to become one of Europe's major summer opera training centers. In 1993 Studio Lirico became an official program of OPERA at USC. From 1987 to 1991, Mr. Fauntleroy was Director of Opera Studies at the music conservatory, Istituto Musicale "Pietro Mascagni" in Livorno, Italy. Also in 1987, Mr. Fauntleroy became a member of the guest artist faculty of the Kulturama Opera School in Stockholm, Sweden where he directed an annual three week "characterization" seminar as part of the winter mini-term (this position he maintained until 1996). Talmage Fauntleroy maintains an active career as a stage director and opera administrator both in the United States and Europe. He has been a member of the directing staff of the Metropolitan Opera and he has produced operas for such theaters in Europe and in America as the Virginia Opera Theater, Opera Carolina Theater, Central City Opera, Shreveport Opera, Whitewater Opera, Teatro

Comunale di Firenze, Piccolo Teatro di Scandicci, the Vlaamse Kammeropera (Belgium), the Kursall Teatro (Belgium), L'Opera de Nice and Festival Estate Fiesolana (Italy) among others. His directing repertory includes popular operatic standards such as Bizet's "Carmen", Donizetti's "Don Pasquale", Humperdink's "Hansel and Gretel", the three Mozart/da Ponte operas, Rossini's "Il barbiere di Siviglia", Verdi's "Rigoletto" and "Un ballo in maschera", as well as masterpieces by such composers as Cimarosa, Gazzaniga, Gluck, Handel, Orlandini, Pergolesi, Salieri and Sacchini.

Piano Pedagogy Forum

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Table of Contents

Hats Off to the Scientific Disciplines! Part II

by Scott Price

As the scientific community finds that the musical experience has positive influence on health and well-being, music is once again gaining stature as an integral component of human development, health, life, and well-being. In a very exciting and unexpected way, science is becoming the champion of the musical disciplines.

Outside of research and performance circles, it is not surprising that arts funding and education continues to be undermined and undervalued in and era where the general public, donors, and taxpayers, are forced to think of their lives in terms of basic subsistence. When the average person has to make "cut and dried" concrete decisions concerning their child's education, they often have one very fair and valid question for the musician: "Why is it important for me that you do what you do and why is it important that I support your work?"

It is to the credit, in large part, of the scientific community that we can now give to the general public, the answers that they demand in a timely and current language. The scientific disciplines are now able to help musicians voice the answers to concrete questions with carbon steel answers. What the musical community has always known through intuition, philosophy and education, the scientific community is now supporting with concrete data. When the general public asks us the question "Why?", we now have many answers, both steely and holistic, beginning with "Studies have shown..."

In one sense, a new and vitally intriguing energy is being pumped into our profession from an unexpected source. Our own discipline is being outfitted with a new exterior while suffering no damage to its integral core. We are already witnessing a quiet explosion of interest in the effect of music on the human condition. From one perspective, the new findings of the scientific community can be coupled with the knowledge and skill of the musical community creating new possibilities for education, performance and research.

In another sense, the question "Why?" was asked and the musical establishment remained silent. Musicians did not step to the front to defend their art with current answers in a language that the general public could understand and embrace. Although it is a boon to have other disciplines devoting time and research to the effects of music on the human condition, we must also admit that someone outside of the musical realm is answering the questions and providing information and justifications to the general public. When the answers and justifications are provided for us by an extra-musical discipline, the identity and future development of our art is being defined by those who may have goals other than those which we as musicians know to be at the heart of the musical experience. Regardless of the attractiveness of the research and rhetoric, our existence and future growth is being defined and determined for us.

I believe that most of those persons involved in pure research have the best intentions, and very often the same aspirations, as musicians. Although the apparatus and the trappings of the experiment may differ, we both seek after a truth that may improve the quality of life for our fellow men. We also step outside of the popular culture in an attempt to free ourselves from the biases and preconceptions of a rapidly changing cultural vista. When artistic and scientific disciplines begin to provide answers for one another, it is this rapidly changing popular culture (and the bureaucracies that sustain it) that must be carefully gauged and monitored.

Without careful monitoring and active participation in new areas of research involving music, we risk redefinition, fragmentation, and possible reallocation of our resources. In the worst of scenarios, the musical discipline could find itself at the mercy of a segment of popular culture that values financial gain as the ultimate goal. The sub-disciplines in our art form could be redirected to serve the ambitions of others.

Although the subversion of the musical art is a "worst-case scenario," the boundaries of the ivory tower are being crossed by those who genuinely seek new horizons in the search for a better quality of life for the world society. The emergence of interdisciplinary studies involving music are a reality and the form, function, and perception of music is rapidly taking on a new persona in current society. To remain viable and creditable in the academic world and in contemporary society, perhaps it is time to forge a new unity between performance and research that may lead to a new and equalized perception of the role of the musical experience in the new millennium.

Scott Price is Assistant Professor of Piano, Piano Pedagogy, and Coordinator of Group Piano at the University of South Carolina. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and Bowling Green State University, he has studied with Jane Magrath, Thomas Hecht and Virginia Marks. He has performed at the national conventions of the Music Teachers National Conference, Music Teachers National Association, the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, and has given performances and seminars at the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas TX, the University of Oklahoma Seminar for Piano Teachers, the North Dakota State Music Teachers Convention, the South Carolina State Music Teachers Convention, and the Bowling Green State University Summer Music Institute. He has served as repetiteur with Lyric Opera Cleveland, and as music director for Lyric Opera Cleveland's Educational Outreach program. He has been a faculty member of the Cleveland Music School Settlement and the Bowling Green State University Creative Arts program. Dr. Price is Co-Editor of Piano Pedagogy Forum.

Process vs. Product in Teaching Adult Amateur Pianists

by Jane Magrath

I recently sat on a doctoral dissertation defense for a paper on adult music programs in Community Music Schools in the United States. Ramona Graessle, then Ph.D. candidate, had investigated the status of programs and educational opportunities for adults in the community music schools. We as committee members reflected upon the large number of schools reporting increased demands for adults offerings in their programs, particularly as the baby boomers begin to come of age. No one was surprised. Almost without exception, the schools reported that the success of the various programs hinged almost in full on the effectiveness of the instructor. Yet, these schools in general seemed at a loss to know where to go to find teachers specifically trained directly in the speciality of teaching adults.

Increasingly, pedagogues acknowledge the growing appreciation of the importance of life-long learning for adults. The *Elderhostel* programs and their growing popularity certainly verify this trend. Even now almost any college or university could offer a well-taught adult piano course for an *Elderhostel* program at their institution and be assured of an enthusiastic response with filled classes. Music study for older adults is just that much in demand. We continued to muse as to why teachers who specialize in teaching adults were so hard find. Certainly most pedagogy programs train students to teach college level students in groups. Could older adults be so different to teach? Even if the issue of working for grades was factored in, why isn't the teaching of adults a highly lucrative area for a speciality?

Charles Leonhard in his 1952 book Recreation Through Music (New York, The Ronald Press) reminded us that the primary objective of any recreational experience is to experience pleasure and enjoyment. Certainly "pleasure and enjoyment" are goals of most music teachers for their students, but how many of us normally think of piano instruction as "recreational experience?" Should we?

A distinguished teacher of piano in Savannah, GA, Naegeli Metcalf, has made a speciality of teaching adults and seems to thrive on providing the balancing force of music study with its joys, rewards, frustrations, and inevitable inspiration of the music itself. She is willing and enthusiastic in working with the ups and downs of her students' busy professional careers, in finding just the music to motivate them that can satisfy her high musical standards and fulfill their goals, and in setting up home musicales where the students share their accomplishments with their friends. She is instrumental in helping these adults fulfill their dreams. Many of us, however, have acquaintances who feel that they don't have the patience to teach adults, or that they are not able to teach some of the music that adults want to play, or that they aren't able to work with adults who want to play much more difficult music than they are able to handle. (By the way, Ms. Metcalf had an earlier career teaching advanced performance majors in a college setting.)

In fact, could it be that some adult students study music largely for the reward through the *process* of the study? These adults perhaps have little need to reach a (teacher-desired) performance goal. Could it be also that some of today's teachers who work with adults are working under the same assumptions upon which we work in teaching the university student, or the class piano student, or the pre-college student - that is, while the process is quite important, the end product also is critical in the analysis of success in task?

How can this be compromised - and can it be? Perhaps the realization of the process-oriented adult may be the key toward bringing teachers of adults closer to the goals of their students. For me the sound, the product, is extremely important, as is the process. Yet, the adult who is focused on the process in large part can practice a highly challenging work that he/she chooses for himself that is far beyond the technical and musical skill level, and yet feel a sense of reward in working out that piece. Certainly Noah Adams helped us realize that in his wonderful book Piano Lessons. Take a look if you have not had a chance. Here is a portrayal of a person completely and passionately engaged in the love of music, fully enthralled with the process.

It occurs to me that we might look at the goals of the adult student in the educational process later in life, even with the urgency of the fixes taking place surrounding the Y2K computer projections. In no way am I suggesting that all adult students are only interested in the process. What I am suggesting is that some may be, and that is why they let themselves get by with differing musical goals from their teachers who are focused on artistic goals. I now realize why the adult student who I coached in a master class six or seven years ago, and who was playing the Rachmaninoff *Polichinelle* which was far beyond his technical and musical ability, was thriving on every small step of the working out process. It seemed to me as if the artistic image was so far removed. That student was playing for himself, and for no one else. While I focused on artistic image, he focused on the process.

Does not the art of teaching deal with proportionate focus on both the process and the product? Should the balance of process and product within some reason relate to the pianist's goals for himself and for his reason for study. Of course it is important to set goals, and to achieve and appreciate accomplishment, no matter who the student. In essence, an adaptive approach in all circumstances perhaps is ultimately the best.

Jane Magrath is Professor of Music in Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Oklahoma. She has presented over 200 recitals, workshops and masterclasses in over forty states as well as in locations in Europe, Southeast Asia, and Australia. She is a regular writer of *New Music Reviews* for **Clavier**, and her articles have appeared in the major piano journals. She has written, compiled, and/or edited over 25 volumes including the multi-volume series *Masterwork Classics, Practice and Performance, Technical Skills, Masterpieces With Flair, Melodius Masterpieces,* and *Encore* for Alfred Publishing Company. Her major reference book *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature* was published in 1995 by Alfred Publishing. She has served as Coordinator of Piano for the National Conventions of the Music Teachers National Association and in major capacities for other organizations including the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy. She has also served as the Rildia Bee Cliburn Lecturer at the Cliburn Piano Institute at TCU in Fort Worth, TX on two different occasions. A recipient of the University of Oklahoma Regent's Award for Superior Teaching and a two-time recipient of the Associate's Distinguished Lectureship, Dr. Magrath is a McCasland Foundation Presidential Professor at the University of Oklahoma

where she serves as Chair of the Piano Department and teaches applied piano and courses in piano pedagogy.

Accompanying Skills: When To Begin?

by Joyce Grill

What is so appealing about sports? Why do our piano students eagerly forego piano practice or lessons or quit piano study because of soccer or baseball or some other sport? Young students like the idea of "team", of camaraderie. But except for the occasional duet, piano students practice alone and go to their lesson alone. The vocalist or the instrumentalist gets to sing in a choir or play in a band or orchestra, but the piano student goes on alone, never getting to know the joy of making music with others.

Many students do start accompanying in junior high school. Their teachers often complain that it detracts from solo work and so the pianists learn by trial and error, often quitting lessons so they can just accompany. Yet accompanying is the one lifelong skill that a pianist is most called upon to use. How many calls do pianists get to accompany a soloist, a church choir, a community chorus, a musical, or to play chamber music, or be the pianist in a jazz band versus "we need a piano soloist?"

Accompanying skills need to be taught from the beginning, after all, it is the same instrument, the same notes and rhythms, dynamics, phrasing, musicianship. It simply requires an additional thought process to provide another positive, meaningful musical experience. It doesn't diminish the quality or expectations of the level of learning achievement. Some students will become proficient more easily, but every student should be taught the skills.

College students are often asked to accompany but refuse claiming they are too busy. Often it is because they don't know how. When do pianists get the experience to play chamber music or a concerto with orchestra often required for a degree? It is too late to start learning in college. (However, college piano pedagogy students should be taught how to teach accompanying skills.)

Band and choral directors should work closely with piano teachers. If a choral director can find a 5th grader who knows the 5 finger patterns in all keys with a grasp of tonic and dominant chords, you have the basis of vocal warm-up exercises. When piano students realize there is a way to use those skills, they are more apt to practice them. (Often, aren't technical skills the hardest ones to get students to practice?) Then too, choirs at that age mostly sing two-part harmony, an easy way to get started score reading. Later, the choir adds a third voice working up to 4 or more part harmony. Score reading takes practice like anything else and needs to start at an early, easy level.

Every band and string method book has a piano accompaniment book. When an instrumentalist starts lessons in 4th or 5th grade, the pianist has already been studying for several years. The accompaniments are very easy, and what a wonderful experience for a young instrumentalist to hear the harmony with their part. The young pianist gets to learn about tuning and can be a mentor. It would make both students practice more and I'm certain any band or orchestra director would be delighted to have their young students

working with a pianist. By the time they get to solo and ensemble contest, they have been playing together for several years and can work on playing musically instead of just getting the notes and rhythms together.

Listening to another part can open a pianist's ears. We tell young pianist's to listen, but why? Tuning is not an issue. But after hearing a singer's or an instrumentalist's part, texture and voicing become more apparent. This can transfer to solo literature, finding and bringing out inner voices which otherwise could be lost.

Teachers often have their students play duets. Why not skip a beat or a measure to see if the student can make the adjustment. (This requires the student knowing both parts of the duet.) Have the primo speed up or slow down----can the secondo adjust? If the students learn these skills at an early age, it prepares them for the performance when a soloist does something unusual.

Young pianists need to play so many thousand notes to develop the skills needed to play the piano, whether it is classical or popular music, accompaniments or solos. If studying accompaniments would keep students practicing and taking lessons, isn't that important? Above all, we are giving students a "team" opportunity with the rewards and joys of making music together.

Joyce Grill is on the faculty of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse teaching piano and accompanying. She accompanies area faculty recitals as well as recitals for touring professionals besides doing solo work. She is active as a clinician giving many clinics and workshops to piano teacher groups as well as high school and college students. She is active in MTNA and holds the Master Teacher Certificate. Publications include *Accompanying Basics* and *Character Pieces, Preludes*. She holds degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with advanced work at the School of Fine Arts, Fontainebleau, France.

Integrating Computer Software and Keyboards in the Group Piano Curriculum

by Karen Bauman Schlabaugh

Introduction

What would your music department do with rather substantial sums of money received from an unexpected estate gift? This was indeed the question that my music colleagues and I at Bethel College needed to answer about five years ago, and the article that follows details to some extent the opportunities and excitement related to music technology that has developed as a result in the intervening years.

Bethel College is a small liberal arts college of about 620 students located in North Newton, Kansas, a short distance from Wichita. The college is church affiliated and has a strong academic and music tradition. Offerings in the department include a music major and minor, courses in piano pedagogy taught cooperatively with another area college, certification in music education, and there is very active involvement in ensembles and lessons from majors and non-majors alike. As the music faculty contemplated both opportunities made possible by the monetary gift and needs in various curricular areas, our discussion turned almost inevitably to music technology and a new digital keyboard lab. The pianos in the lab were inadequate and outdated, and we favored an integrated technology system that would flexibly serve a number of courses, not one in which the functions of computer software and keyboards were separated.

The Nature of the Lab

The new keyboards were purchased and installed by the beginning of the 1994 fall semester, with computers and the remaining equipment arriving about a month later. The following information gives the specifications of the lab. There are nine Yamaha Clavinova keyboards, eight 76-key models for students and one 88-key model for the teacher. Five Macintosh computers with CD-Rom capability and five Roland sound modules create a unified MIDI system with five of the keyboards, with printing capacity from any of the computers. Software was chosen for both flexibility of use and ease of learning. These programs are currently installed in the lab: Encore (for notation), Master Tracks Pro (for sequencing), Band-in-a-Box (for laying out harmonic and rhythmic tracks for jazz and many other styles), Practica Musica (a comprehensive theory program including notation and aural drills as well as note-playing keyboard drills useful for group piano students), and aural skills programs correlated with the music theory textbook.

The lab serves a number of course offerings equally well because of the variety of software and the presence of both computers and keyboards. All levels of music theory regularly make use of aural skills and notational programs in the assignments given. Group piano students use not only the keyboards but the sequencing program and Practica Musica. Piano pedagogy students use the lab to learn about group teaching techniques and the advantages of technology in teaching. In addition, students often do

independent composition projects or even orchestration in the lab. In the fall of 1996, the department instituted a one-hour music technology course, taken in conjunction with the first semester of music theory, and designed to acquaint students with the software and capabilities of the lab.

Technology and the Group Piano Curriculum

The installation of the technology lab coincided with my full-time appointment to Bethel College. Part of my new assignment was group piano - two sections for music majors preparing for the piano proficiency exam. My previous position had not included teaching group piano, so I was excited about developing a curricular plan that would take full advantage of the new lab's potential. After observing numerous technology demonstrations and sessions at conferences and workshops, I was convinced that technology was meaningful in a group setting only when it became a tool for improving the individual student's level of playing. Too often the sessions I had observed included only a view of what the hardware and software could do, not how it could be used in an actual teaching situation. My primary goal, then, was to develop assignments (often individualized) in which I could see a direct relationship between a technology assignment and improvement in playing skills.

Prior to discussing the types of assignments I created, a brief description of Bethel's piano proficiency exam is necessary. The exam is a comprehensive one, involving basic keyboard skills such as scales and cadence patterns, sight-reading of several types of keyboard textures, repertoire performance, playing by ear, and improvisation. Students enroll in the class until the exam is completed, rather than for a specified number of semesters.

In my experience, the excitement of technology came in the educational application, when as an instructor I searched for and created ways for the students to enjoy an interactive learning environment. My goal in general was to make some type of technology assignment about every two weeks. Most of the assignments involved the use of the Master Tracks Pro sequencing program, with occasional work using the Practica Musica drills. The examples that follow concentrate on the areas of repertoire, sight-reading and improvisation, and ensemble work, showing samples of the assignments using the sequencing program only.

Numerous assignments that students find interesting and challenging relate to work with repertoire. Early in the first semester of the class, I found it useful to ask students to illustrate for me one way in which they had used sequencing as a practice tool in one of their repertoire pieces. We would already have discussed possibilities in class, but I also wanted the students to customize ideas in such a way that helped them to learn how to analyze each piece in order to study it most effectively. Students in the group setting typically have limited experience with practice techniques. Thus, an assignment of this type often helps them to think about their practice in more creative ways. A second assignment relating to a more polished repertoire piece always elicited interesting class discussion. I asked the students to record their pieces using the sequencer, adding that

they could record more than once if they wished, but that they should not edit the final version that was saved. Next they were to listen to their final version and write a short description of what they heard, including comments on strong points in the performance, things that needed improvement, and finally what they had learned by listening to their performance. I promised them that I would listen to their recorded example first, then read their comments, and lastly discuss my thoughts with them about what I had heard. The entire experience was always an illuminating one for them, accompanied by comments such as, "I didn't realize that my left-hand chords were so overpowering in that phrase," or "If the tempo is just a bit more steady in this section, my piece will sound really good!" Performance of these pieces almost always improved after this assignment.

Many students in the class find sight-reading to be the most challenging skill to develop. Simple ideas such as using the metronome on the sequencing program can encourage students to overcome hesitations or too many starts and stops in sight-reading. Our students are required to read two non-adjacent lines from a choral score for the exam, and for the students who experienced difficulty in doing this, I assigned a simple score and asked them to record two of the parts using the metronome. They could then read the other two parts, knowing that they had to maintain the steady tempo of the recording. Mistakes in part playing are less important to begin with than looking ahead and keeping a steady tempo. This assignment is easily adapted to other types of music as well, especially if the student has difficulty in reading one particular clef. Students are also required to do several improvisations for the exam, demonstrating their ability, for instance, to play several phrases that could serve as examples for movement activities in an elementary school classroom. Developing improvisational skills can be an intimidating process for students if they possess limited keyboard background. I normally asked the students to work out the harmonic and rhythmic feel for each phrase of the improvisation first. If the student is, however, attempting to illustrate skipping and needs to master an appropriate rhythmic and harmonic pattern in the left hand as well as create a simple right-hand melody, frustration often follows! Instead, I asked the students to record the accompaniment pattern and then to simply practice their melodic improvisation. In this way they are not distracted by the accompaniment, have a consistent harmonic pattern in use, and automatically are forced to develop rhythmic continuity in the melody. Much less frustration and better improvisation skills on the next assignment were the result.

Finally, ensemble work and sequencing create a natural partnership. Obviously, many times we enjoyed playing ensemble pieces in the lab using the resources of the sound modules, but I also wanted students to improve their individual listening skills in ensemble work. I regularly assigned duets to the students, asking them to record one of the parts (using the sound modules for varied orchestration if they wished) and then playing the second part live for the class on one of our performance days. One of the most popular assignments involved taking either an existing ensemble piece or solo piano piece and orchestrating it, complete with percussion, with the help of the sequencer and sound module. Some real masterpieces resulted, and I know that students practiced the parts diligently when making their recordings. Again, improved playing skills through better practicing remained one of my primary goals.

The Future of Technology in the Lab

What has happened in music technology at Bethel during the last few years? Another gift has provided us with the Vivace system, a computerized accompaniment that actually follows the soloist. Vocal students have found the system especially useful in their practicing. At present, further networking of the campus is being completed, and our music lab should be online by the start of the new school year. The music department is excited about new educational potential brought about by the Internet.

As for our initial choice of an integrated lab with both keyboards and computers, we are more than ever convinced that it was the right choice for our school. Creative student work and better musical skills for future performers and teachers convince us every semester that technology in education is an investment in student potential.

Karen Schlabaugh is Associate Professor of Music at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas. She holds degrees from Oberlin College, Ithaca College, and a doctorate in piano performance from the University of Iowa. Her current teaching assignments include piano, music theory courses, and supervising and teaching in a cooperative piano pedagogy program. Dr. Schlabaugh performs frequently as a soloist, accompanist and chamber musician, and in past years has appeared in duo-piano recitals on college campuses in Kansas, New York, and Pennsylvania. She has formerly served on the faculties of Tabor College and Skidmore College, and has held summer appointments on the faculty of Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp and as an accompanist at Suzuki Institutes in Wisconsin and New York. Dr. Schlabaugh is a frequent adjudicator and clinician at piano festivals and contests, and is an active member of the Kansas Music Teachers Association.

The Art of Communication: Nurturing Resourceful and Spirited Students

by Gail Berenson

I still have fond memories of our family vacations to Miami Beach, Florida. My sister, my parents and I had a great time, staying in a lovely hotel located on the ocean front, with the usual amenities, including several swimming pools. One event tarnishes this memory and remains vivid to this day. It was my brief exposure to swimming lessons. My mother, believing it important for us to know how to swim, decided to enroll my sister and me in the swimming lessons offered by the hotel. The instructor, arrogant and egotistical, guaranteed my parents that he could teach us to swim in absolutely no more than five lessons! His approach was high-pressured, pushing us to attempt skills before we felt ready to try them and displaying a demeanor that suggested a total lack of concern for our feelings. Without listing every detail, the result was that after enduring one lesson, I quit. To this day, I refuse to go into the water. My sister made it through the five lessons, and although she did learn to swim, she rarely goes swimming.

It is ironic that an event that happened decades ago, designed to encourage a love of the water, has had the exact opposite effect and continues to affect my life today. The swimming instructor, hired by the hotel, exerted a powerful influence on my future feelings toward water activities. This personal story provides a revealing illustration of the enormous responsibility teachers bear while introducing students to an activity or skill. These initial experiences can influence a student's future feelings toward an activity for years to come. Think of the many "Dear Abby" letters that have been published in daily newspapers around the country describing unhappy piano lesson experiences that have turned people off to musical enjoyment forever.

What is a piano teacher's primary responsibility? The answer appears to be self evident - to teach students how play the piano. While this may be an accurate response, it does not acknowledge two of the most important things we do.

1. Teachers introduce students to the joys of music making: Although a teacher's knowledge of the subject material is crucial, it is just as essential to be able to communicate a love of music and to instill the desire to learn.
2. Teachers help students develop skills to teach themselves: Cultivating student independence is an important goal for every teacher to pursue. To promote this independence, teachers must provide students the tools that will empower them to solve problems on their own and the opportunities to experiment and utilize these tools.

Motivating a student is a challenge and must be uniquely tailored to each student. Where some students will work hard for extrinsic rewards such as stars or stickers, others are more likely to practice in preparation for competitions or recitals. Some want to keep up with their peers, who are also taking piano lessons, while others want to please their parents or teacher. Getting students to reward themselves intrinsically is the ultimate goal. We strive to inspire all of our students to work hard because they want to achieve their best and become better musicians.

The learning environment plays a large role in establishing an intrinsic reward system. If students feel their ideas are respected, they are more likely to begin taking responsibility for their own learning. Self esteem, acceptance, success, status and independence are five basic psychological needs which we all possess. Not every lesson will fulfill all of these needs, but one must always be met Ð the teacher's acceptance of that student, regardless of the student's behavior or performance. Every student must feel valued as an individual.

To avoid the student feeling under attack, it is crucial that we select our words carefully. Offering constructive criticism in a way that builds upon a student's present knowledge promotes feelings of success and self-worth. Students must be able to trust their teacher to feel totally secure, so all comments must be accurate and honest. Although the performance product is highly prized, the needs of the student must come first. It is possible to provide a candid, constructive appraisal of a student's work if one also recognizes effort. Even when a student is not playing well, effort and progress can be rewarded. Commenting in a non-judgmental, non- confrontational manner allows the teacher to offer feedback without the student feeling belittled. The key is differentiating between product and effort; building on the student's strengths, student and teacher can then work together to improve the product.

A student plays through a composition at a lesson and then gazes up at the teacher eagerly, or perhaps not so eagerly, awaiting his/her comments. The teacher's next response is pivotal. This initial feedback can be beneficial, supportive and constructive or can make the student feel inadequate, untalented and a failure. A teacher's feedback can heavily influence a student's enthusiasm for learning and can preclude the willingness to remain open to exploring new ideas. Thoughtless feedback can create hurtful feelings and loss of self esteem that can have devastating psychological effects on a piano student of any age or level of skill. This makes it all the more important for us to maintain an awareness of how well we are communicating with our students, without which important information may go unheard or needlessly rejected out of defensiveness.

Helping students learn how to verbalize and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their own performances is one way to encourage a more pro-active approach to learning. Students, in a collaborative effort with their teacher, can begin to constructively assess their performance and then determine ways to improve it. The challenge for teachers is to provide enough guidance while simultaneously encouraging students to think for themselves and discover solutions on their own. Encouraging students to learn through discovery, by using an appropriate balance of direct and indirect comments, is a vital strategy for creating a learning environment that will be conducive to imaginative problem solving, consistent musical growth and the cultivation of an independent, enthusiastic piano student.

Ned A. Flanders and Edmund J. Amidon, in The Role of the Teacher in the Classroom, have provided an instrument that can assist teachers in categorizing what goes on within a lesson. Using a tape or video cassette recorder, teachers are able to graph their comments, determining what percentage are direct or indirect. This serves as an objective way to monitor and assess a teaching performance. Interaction analysis categorizes verbal

responses into the areas of teacher talk (divided into indirect and direct influence) and student talk (in a piano lesson this may include a student's performance, either self-initiated or in response to a request from the teacher). The indirect categories in the teacher's role include accepting the student's feelings, offering praise and encouragement, accepting and using the ideas of the student, and asking questions. Direct categories include lecturing (in a piano lesson this can include a playing demonstration by the teacher), giving directions, offering constructive criticism, and justifying authority. A final category is identified as silence or confusion. By critiquing one's teaching in each of these categories, one can become student and teacher at the same time thereby creating self-analysis and awareness of one's teaching personality, technique and effectiveness.

Designed initially for use by classroom teachers, these categories can be just as beneficial and easily utilized by the typical piano teacher, whether teaching in group or in an individual lesson format. According to Amidon/Flanders,

".....the system is meant to be used as an in-service training device for teachers. It may be employed by a teacher either as he observes someone else teach or as he categorizes a tape recording of his own classroom behavior. In either case the method is the same."[1]

Summary of Categories for Interaction Analysis

Teacher Talk

Indirect Influence

1. ACCEPTS FEELING: accepts and clarifies the feeling tone of the students in a non-threatening manner. Feelings may be positive or negative. Predicting and recalling feelings are included.
2. PRAISES OR ENCOURAGES: praises or encourages student action or behavior. Jokes that release tension , not at the expense of another individual, nodding head or saying "uh-huh?" or "go on" are included.
3. ACCEPTS OR USES IDEAS OF STUDENT: clarifying, building, or developing ideas or suggestions by a student. As teaching brings more of his own ideas into play, shift to category five.
4. ASKS QUESTIONS: asking a question about content or procedure with the intent that a student answer.

Direct Influence

1. LECTURES: giving facts or opinions about content or procedure; expressing his own idea; asking rhetorical questions.
2. GIVES DIRECTIONS: directions, commands, or order with which a student is expected to comply.
3. CRITICIZES OR JUSTIFIES AUTHORITY: statements, intended to change student

behavior from non-acceptable to acceptable pattern; bawling someone out; stating why the teacher is doing what he is doing, extreme self-reference.

Student Talk

1. STUDENT TALK-RESPONSE: talk by students in response to teacher. Teacher initiates the contact or solicits student statement.
2. STUDENT TALK-INITIATION: talk by students, which they initiate. If "calling on" student is only to indicate who may talk next, observer must decide whether student wanted to talk. If he did, use this category.
3. SILENCE OR CONFUSION: pauses, short periods of silence, and periods of confusion in which communication cannot be understood by the observer.

The Role of the Teacher in the Classroom by Ned A Flanders, Ph.D. and Edmund J. Amidon, Ph.D. Paul S. Amidon & Associates, Inc., Minneapolis, MN.

Teachers can categorize the student or teacher talk/performance that is taking place in frequent, regular increments (Amidon/Flanders recommend 3 second intervals). Doing it frequently makes it easy to determine a pattern.

Striving for a flexible balance between indirect and direct teaching enables the instructor to respond to the unique personality and learning style of the student. It also allows the teacher to shift the balance (more direct, less direct) by assessing where the student is in the learning process and meeting the specific and current needs of the student. More general comments and a higher ratio of indirect teacher responses are evident in the early learning stages, promoting a gestalt type of thinking that encourages students to formulate their own concept of a composition. As a student reaches the polishing stage in working with a composition, teacher feedback may become very specific and quite direct as tiny details are inserted into the overall structure the student has constructed for the piece. Continuous awareness of the student's attitude, preparedness and progress will help the instructor monitor his/her success in achieving the appropriate balance for that student at any given time.

Although indirect teaching may encourage the student to take a more active role in the lesson, it can create frustration and hostility if used all of the time, with students becoming desperate for specific information from the teacher. Artist training has a long tradition of direct, authoritarian teaching, with some students thriving in this environment, a larger percentage may be able to do what is asked but will not be able to figure out why, or be able to transfer and apply this information to other compositions. Structuring one's teaching as 100% direct (autocratic) or 100% indirect (laissez-faire) is inadvisable. Neither extreme is indicative of good teaching.

Applying the technique of interaction analysis will challenge teachers to seek clearer ways to express themselves, to reevaluate the types of questions they ask, to observe whether they are truly hearing and building upon the student's responses to questions, to determine when to provide solutions to problems or when it might be best to simply offer

clearer clues to allow for more student exploration, and to decide the best way to prioritize diagnosed musical and technical problems. While working to improve the final musical product, the teacher strives to achieve the most appropriate balance that will also bolster a student's independence and enthusiasm. The presence of many student-initiated responses in an analysis chart is a reflection that the student is taking an active role in the lesson. Viewing our teaching through this objective instrument can serve as an illuminating and instructive experience. Anything that encourages teachers to objectively assess their teaching is beneficial, for teachers and their students.

Below are several suggestions for establishing a healthy teaching environment and some techniques to facilitate constructive communication. Written for the 1988 National Conference on Piano Pedagogy and previously published in the 1988 Conference Proceedings, these are a series of challenges that can be used as a teaching check list.

Challenges for Teachers

Challenge No. 1: **Have I encouraged my students to be active participants in their lessons?** *The lesson environment should enable students to:*

- Have a say in articulating the lesson's goals, based on what worked or didn't work in their practice.
- Have a voice in selecting the repertoire to be learned and the order in which the compositions will be covered in the lesson (particularly appropriate with older students.)
- Be given the opportunity to assess their performance in the lesson, helping to determine the direction the lesson might go.

Challenge No. 2: **Have I given my students the chance to demonstrate what they have accomplished since their last lesson?** *The lesson environment should enable students to:*

- Play what they've practiced without excessive interruptions.
- Articulate how they worked through any difficulties encountered in their practice, clueing the teacher in on their work habits.
- Have a second chance to play through all, or a portion, of a piece if nerves or difficulty adjusting to the instrument prevent the students from playing as well as they are able.

Challenge No. 3: **Have I stimulated my students to think for themselves?** *The lesson environment should enable students to:*

1. Have ample opportunities to discover and to experiment with solutions to any problems they might encounter.
2. Make comments and respond to questions, comfortable in the knowledge that the

teacher will hear, respond, and build upon these ideas.
3. Receive encouragement when they attempt to make an independent decision.

Challenge No. 4: **Have I imparted some new information?** *The lesson environment should enable students to:*

1. Leave the lesson with a new way of approaching an on-going piece.
2. Leave the lesson with a new musical/technical concept that builds upon what the student already knows.
3. Leave the lesson with additional practicing suggestions.
4. Leave the lesson eager to return to the piano to try out what they have just learned.

Challenge No. 5: **Have I provided a non-threatening environment that motivates and encourages productivity, independence and self-esteem?** *The lesson environment should enable students to:*

1. Have fun and enjoy the lesson.
2. Make an error, experiment,or stumble without fear of humiliation.
3. Be able to accept feedback without the need for defensiveness.
4. Not be overloaded with too many corrections and no clear way to incorporate them into their performance.
5. Feel supported and encouraged by their teacher.
6. Find their efforts honestly rewarded.

Challenge No. 6: **Have I thought through the best way to communicate an idea: appropriateness, priority, awareness of student's learning style, respond in the form of a question or statement, pacing, clarity, non-verbal communication, use of imagery?** *The lesson environment should enable students to:*

1. Clearly grasp an idea.
2. Put it into use fairly quickly.
3. Transfer the idea to similar but different situations.

Challenge No. 7: **Have I inspired musicality, creativity, and an understanding of styles?** *The lesson environment should enable students to:*

1. Explore a variety of sounds - how they are produced and how and when they are used.
2. Have the opportunity to experience repertoire from the different musical style periods.
3. Have a say in musical decision-making.
4. Experiment with the skill of improvisation.

Challenge No. 8: **Have I provided my students with the learning tools to be independent?** *The lesson environment should enable students to:*

1. Understand how musical/technical decisions are made. (Teach concepts rather than simply providing the necessary information - i.e., exploring fingering concepts as opposed to writing in the fingering.)
2. Experience the most efficient and beneficial approaches to practicing.
3. Have the opportunity to make decisions while still under the guidance of the teacher.

Challenge No. 9: **Have I sent my student home with a clear understanding of how to best utilize their practice time?** *The lesson environment should enable students to:*

1. Try a new idea out several times, in different contexts, to insure that they understand and can repeat this on their own.
2. Watch the teacher demonstrate, if appropriate, the specific musical/technical concepts so that the students can go home remembering the proper sound and gesture.
3. Review what was accomplished in the lesson to reinforce important details that need to be included in the coming week's practice.
4. Periodically practice within the lesson itself, under the supervision of the teacher, to insure that they know what to do at home.

Challenge No. 10: **Am I serving as a positive role model for my students?** *The lesson environment should enable students to:*

1. View their teacher as a caring, dedicated, energetic, organized, knowledgeable, fun-loving, ethical, enthusiastic, poised and confident professional.
2. See their teachers continuing to improve themselves by attending professional meetings, reading professional journals, practicing and performing.

References

1. Amidon, Edmund J. and Ned A. Flanders. The Role of the Teacher in the Classroom. St. Paul, Minnesota: Paul S. Amidon & Associates, Inc., 1963, p. 13.

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Imagine Yourself In The Following Scenario...

by Jason Trenary

You are working to finish a project that has your complete dedication. You have completed all forethought and research, and all that remains is to sit at the beloved computer and create the final document that represents the culmination of all of your hard work. While attempting to open the necessary application, the computer provides an error message and you can't find a translation to even know what it means. After trying several procedures to revive the computer, you give up and press the restart keys. A few minutes later after the computer returns to its working state, you open the necessary application and begin your work. Determined not to let the computer steal your enthusiasm, you put aside the failure and return your focus to the task at hand. After a short period of time, the possibility of computer failure has escaped your mind and you are deeply entranced by your work. Thoughts and ideas are swiftly executed with great ease, and the computer is cooperating. "This is wonderful, this is how computers were meant to be." Then "boom," it happens again. Another erroneous message appears on the screen, and you can't even get to your work. Your mind races, "Did I save?" No, you never remember to save when you are deeply enthralled in your work. After realizing that the last hour of work is now gone, evil thoughts enter your mind of what you might do to this traitorous beast. At this point, there is no hope of continuing. Your emotions have taken over, and productivity has come to a grinding halt.

Does this sound familiar? If you have worked with computers for any length of time, then something like this has probably crossed your path. There is great news for the weary. It doesn't have to be this way. It is possible to prevent such a travesty though some computer errors are inevitable. If you would like to keep your computer in optimal running condition, then you need to take care of it. Many are guilty of spending thousands on purchasing a computer, but never maintaining it. It would be the same as buying a car, and never changing the oil or rotating the tires. There are some simple items that, when performed regularly, can help keep your computer in optimal running condition.

Though many parts of a computer are off limits to anyone other than an authorized service dealer, the one that can be serviced by the user is the hard drive. The hard drive is the heart of any computer. Items such as RAM and processors are related to the function and speed of the computer, but without a hard drive they are useless in today's world. The hard drive should be treated with extra respect since it is responsible for storing all of your files and applications. As information is written to and deleted from the hard drive, it begins to wear out. Certain areas can wear out to the point that if a file is written over that area, the file can no longer be read. This can lead to many serious problems, but is easily prevented. There are several programs available that will fix hard drive problems, but the most popular is Norton Utilities. This is not to be confused with any virus protection software or software that only de-fragments. Norton Utilities and other similar programs analyze your hard drive for the purpose of finding and fixing any hard drive problem. The best part is that you don't have to know anything special to run Norton

Utilities. It has an intuitive interface that allows the user to easily search and repair serious problems that might have developed. Running *Disk Doctor* from Norton Utilities once a month is not too often. Many problems can surface over the period of a month of regular use, but Disk Doctor will take care of them. The important item to remember when regularly using Norton Utilities is to always have the latest version available. This can be found on-line at www.symantec.com.

In addition to running Disk Doctor, users should also de-fragment their hard drive. There are many utilities that "de-frag," and Norton Utilities includes an item called "Speed Disk." The advantages of running such an application include the recovery of additional disk space and a quicker response time when retrieving and saving files. It is a good idea to de-fragment your hard drive every three months.

An item that is often overlooked is dust build-up. Have you ever seen inside of a computer that has been running for three years and never cleaned? Needless to say, if you are allergic to dust mites, this is not the place for you. Most don't know what is needed to clean out the inside of a computer because they are afraid of damaging the circuitry. This is a justified fear, but the only thing that it takes to clean out the dust is compressed air. However, do not, and I mean don't ever, under any circumstance, use compressed air on the inside of a computer until it has been unplugged from the wall for at least an hour. Watching cold compressed air touch the hot inner parts of a computer is not a pretty sight when the motherboard starts to crack and other delicate chips do likewise. Make sure that the inside has had plenty of time to cool down before cleaning with compressed air. Obviously, some people are rather frightened by the idea of even looking inside their computer. Be assured, however, that computers exists just the same whether the outside cover is on or off. Just don't ever touch an inside part of a computer unless you know how to discharge static electricity that might be stored in your body. Since you don't have to touch any inside parts to clean out the dust, discharging static electricity will not be discussed. Compressed air, found at most hardware stores, comes in a spray can and is very simple to use. The hardest part will probably be trying to figure out how to remove the cover from the computer. Please consult your manual in order to find this procedure. Once the cover is removed, use the compressed air to blow out any visible dust.

The last item of attention is software updates. Something that tends to be forgotten is humans create computers and computer software. We aren't perfect and neither are the products that we create. It is an extremely complex task for different companies to constantly keep all of their products in-sync with each other. When a new operating system is released, many software updates are soon to follow. When the software updates are installed, it is soon found out that an additional update is needed. This cycle will never end and it is up to the individual user to insure that all of the software is the correct version and compatible with the current computer configuration. This task was a complete nightmare until the birth of the World Wide Web. Now, updates can be posted at anytime for users to download and use on their computers.

The software updates needed can easily be broken down into two categories, system updates and everything else. System updates should be retrieved from the web site of the

respective creator of the type of system used. The two most popular platforms are Windows and Macintosh, and their web sites are www.microsoft.com and www.apple.com. Both of these sights are very large and have a lot of information including technical tips and updates.

Developers are constantly working out problems that have been found in their software. If you don't download and use their updates, then the problems that they worked hard to fix will remain on your computer. Some updates will only fix minor bugs, but others are essential for your computer to run correctly. Something to remember when downloading is that you should never automatically install any update that you find. Always read the text files that accompany the update. They are usually entitled "Read Me" or something else obvious to get your attention. Don't ignore these documents. They will always have critical information that you need to know before installing the respective software. If this has not yet convinced you to seek, find, and use the updates for your system software, then maybe one more fact will do the trick. Functional updates are always free. Charges only apply to software updates that increase in productivity or functionality. Updates that are required for your system to run correctly will not cost anything.

System updates are by far the most important to pursue. All software, however, has the potential of needing critical updates to make them compatible with your system software or to fix reported bugs. There are several ways to keep up with the latest versions of software, but don't do work that someone else has already done. The web site, www.versiontracker.com keeps up with all of the latest updates for most of the software that is available for the Macintosh. There are similar sights for PC software, but none seem to be as comprehensive as "Version Tracker" is for the Macintosh. Two that are available for PC software are www.zdnet.com and www.winfiles.com. Visit these sights to find the latest version information on any piece of software that you use on your computer. If you can't find it here, use a WWW search engine to find the Web site of the company who created your software. Finding and using the latest updates will ensure that the computer has the best chance possible of running software correctly. Once again, always read the "Read Me" files to learn about the update before installing it on your computer.

A few hours of work every few months will help your computer remain in the best possible condition. The following is a list summarizing the procedures and the frequency at which you should apply them. Happy Computing!

1. Daily - **Restart** your computer
2. Monthly - run **Norton Disk Doctor** or a similar product
3. Bi-Monthly - Check the appropriate Web sites for software updates
4. Quarterly - **Optimize** or **Defragment** the Hard Drive and remove unused files and folders
5. Annually - Clean out the dust from inside the computer

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Playing the Improvisation Game

by Scott Price

The National Association of Schools of Music has mandated that instruction in improvisation become part of the undergraduate curriculum. Most music faculty applaud this decision and then wonder when, where, and how this is going to happen in an undergraduate curriculum that is already overloaded with course work and professional training.

Before attempting to make room in the undergraduate degree for training in improvisation skills, it may be useful to reexamine some of the reasons why training in improvisation is so crucial to the technical, musical and artistic development of young people. The historical musical figures that we revere had one skill in common: improvisation. J. S. Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt and others were all known and documented to have been brilliant improvisers of original music and clever embellishers of existing themes and popular tunes. In the cases of Mozart, Chopin and Liszt, it is known that these persons were creating highly individual and sophisticated improvisations before they fully learned to read music notation. They were also known to have been excellent sightreaders.

Being able to improvise sophisticated and stylized music at the piano at a young age is a marvelous accomplishment; but what does it really accomplish for the pianist at the foundational level? I think it means several things:

1. These pianists were free from the intellectual pursuit of deciphering a score. They were actually involved in truly experiencing and hearing individual tones, hearing the vibration and sound of intervals, experiencing the overtones in harmony, exploring the aural twists and turns of melody. As the eyes and mind were free from the constraints of the score, the ears were free to fully explore the realm of sound.

2. The fingers were relating directly to the sounds that the ears were experiencing. The pianist learned that a particular expressive sound was the direct result of a certain kind of movement or combination of movements of the finger.

3. The eye was free to take the sound combinations of the ear and equate them with the geographical, or geometric, patterns of the keyboard. The hand learned an infinite variety of patterns and explored the relationship of the two different planes of the keyboard.

4. The pianist learned to be vitally aware of the physical activity and sensual nature of touching the keyboard in a wide variety of ways. Attention was given to the way a finger must move from white key to black key in the production of a melodic phrase. Awareness was also given to the way the hand must stretch, contract and shape itself to a particular melodic pattern. In this fashion, the body learned how to measure musical time in a tangible way thereby creating an exact correlation between aural thought and physical response and measurement.

5. Music was not taught, but experienced. Problems were encountered and solved in an individual and creative way. The pianist was free to fully explore the individual musical/creative personality and to develop it fully instead of having to reconcile stylistic constructs with an immature self-understanding.

6. Because these pianists had experienced such a rich and remarkable variety of sounds and patterns and had equated the aural experience with the physical in all of the skills needed to learn music from notation, the learning of music from notation was achieved at an accelerated rate. The teacher had only to point out patterns and musical constructs that the pianist already had experienced. Labels were assigned to those things that the pianist already knew. The notation of the method book or complex notated score became easier to decipher because the student had already aurally and physically experienced types of things found on the page. The teacher had only to put labels on what the students already knew in their ears and in their hearts.

Improvisation at any level of accomplishment gives free reign to the creative spirit and, most importantly, validates the emotional and expressive world of the student in a manner that provides them with a lifetime of personal musical joy and success.

So, when and where can basic training in improvisation be accomplished at the undergraduate level. In institutions where an undergraduate course in keyboard skills is available, a portion of each class can be set aside for work in basic improvisation. Part of the group piano classes for music majors can also be utilized for improvisational training. In the applied piano studio, where the students may not always be ready to perform in the studio class setting after a summer away from school or a break after the holidays, the first two or three studio classes can be an optimal time to introduce students to the basic skills of improvisation.

Lastly, how is someone who does not have much experience with improvisation or with teaching the skill to begin the exploratory experience? I have found the following steps to be wildly successful in aiding students to explore themselves and music through improvisation at the keyboard. Of course, the time in which success may be achieved varies with the age and ability of the student.

1. Begin with modal scales. They are easier to visualize at first because they occur on the white keys of the piano. Modal scales are also less intimidating as students don't perceive them as being tied to complex and advanced harmonic and form constructs. Modal scales are also very close to the sound constructs that younger students hear on the radio and are therefore part of their life experience. The ear hears something slightly different from major or minor and it is forced to listen more carefully instead of relying on commonly experienced musical formulas.

2. Begin with Dorian Mode (D-D on the white keys of the piano.) Set up a rhythmic construct such as 3/4 or 4/4 and have the students begin improvising step-wise melodies that begin and end on D. As they begin to sense the tonic pitch, have them split the melody into two parts with the consequence ending on the dominant and the antecedent

ending on the tonic pitch.

3. As the execution of the right hand melody becomes more comfortable, experiment with adding more passing and other non-harmonic tones to the melody.

4. As the students begin performing their own melodies, experiment with adding the left hand. The left hand can add a D-A perfect fifth that is played with the left hand on the first beat of each measure or rhythmic group. The instructor can then ask the students to begin improvising two-handed pieces that are four, eight or any number of measures long.

5. Now that the students have a sense of how to create the contours of a melody that utilizes tonic and dominant function, and know how to add a simple left hand harmonic base, they are ready to take their hand position and transfer it into Lydian mode (F-F on the white keys of the piano.) The same process is repeated on this new scale. (It always amazes me how the melodic and rhythmic character of the student improvisations changes dramatically with the introduction of this mode from Dorian.)

6. Once the students are comfortable with Lydian mode, it is time to start building more complex forms in their improvisations. Experiment with the students improvising an eight measure melody (complete with tonic and dominant functions) in Dorian for the A-section of their piece. For the B-section, have them switch to Lydian mode and improvise another eight measure creation for the B-section. They then move back to Dorian mode for the ending A-section of the piece. Once they have a sense of how to unfold the form of the music, see if they can keep a rhythmic or melodic fragment going throughout the improvisation that will create some cohesiveness in the musical design.

7. Once the students are comfortable with this process, the limits are infinite. They can introduce left hand accompaniment patterns, hand crossings, canonic and contrapuntal voices, and they can even experiment with different cadence patterns.

8. To teach more complex musical constructs, it is often beneficial for the instructor to perform the improvisation and have the students perform a counter melody. They almost intuitively respond to the melodic, harmonic and rhythmic creations of the teacher. The teacher can guide the next step of the student's develop through sound and experience as opposed to the sometimes empty and tedious spoken word.

The joy in teaching basic improvisation in this manner is that the students are inspired to go off on their own and create music without constant external motivation from the teacher. I have found that the very young student through the adult student responds very well to this type of creativity. Of course, younger students must go through a more comprehensive and longer period of development before they can construct basic improvisations. However, they experience new sounds in a wonderfully exciting way and always come to the lesson eager to show me the new and neat sound they discovered at the keyboard. This always leads to new discoveries that allow the students to teach themselves with the teacher acting as friend and guide.

Improvisation is certainly a rewarding and creative musical activity. When taught in a carefully planned manner, it can facilitate the comprehension of the entire music curriculum in a way that is not only intellectual, but physical, aural and emotional. After all, isn't the inspired and improvised phrase or musical idea the way all great musical works of art begin their existence? Perhaps we may discover that our students are not only pianists, but composers as well and maybe, they are capable of exploring themselves fully as musicians, as people of worth, and as true and vital individuals who have a contribution to make and a meaningful place in the world.

Scott Price is Assistant Professor of Piano, Piano Pedagogy, and Coordinator of Group Piano at the University of South Carolina. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and Bowling Green State University, he has studied with Jane Magrath, Thomas Hecht and Virginia Marks. He has performed at the national conventions of the Music Teachers National Conference, Music Teachers National Association, the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, and has given performances and seminars at the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas TX, the University of Oklahoma Seminar for Piano Teachers, the North Dakota State Music Teachers Convention, the South Carolina State Music Teachers Convention, and the Bowling Green State University Summer Music Institute. He has served as repetiteur with Lyric Opera Cleveland, and as music director for Lyric Opera Cleveland's Educational Outreach program. He has been a faculty member of the Cleveland Music School Settlement and the Bowling Green State University Creative Arts program. Dr. Price is Co-Editor of Piano Pedagogy Forum.

A Discussion of Left-Handed Literature for the Piano

by Annemarie Schuessler

I have been compelled to use my left hand because I've had a stroke. Much to my delight my playing has gradually improved to where I'm already at a different level from last year. If I had known that I would be dependent upon only my left hand for performing, I would have made my right hand and left hand equally proficient. Knowing what I do now, I recommend that teachers emphasize children's dexterity with left-handed abilities. For this reason, I would prefer to discuss left-handed literature in relationship to:

1. **Injury** - As the field of sports medicine and injuries of the athlete has developed, so has the field of medical injuries of the performing artists. In fact, the journal Medical Problems of the Performing Artists focuses on this area, mostly for Carpel-Tunnel Syndrome and tendonitis, which may occur in one or both hands. Perhaps less talked about at present, stroke typically affects only one hand. Although such injuries do not apply to everyone, one can use the left-handed literature to strengthen left-handed playing skills and gain greater facility.

2. **Technical Development** - An important capability for any young student is to be able to maintain the balance of chords, keeping the melody more resonant than the bass and the middle voices barely audible. This should be addressed at a young age as the ears become dull and students lose the ability to differentiate between the melody, the bass, and the accompaniment. One way to teach this skill (also facilitating left-handed skills) is to have three students play "Mary Had a Little Lamb" with only their left hand. Assign each student one part - melody, bass or supporting chords (accompaniment) - giving the individual student the opportunity to play each part. Increase the challenge further by giving each student more than one part to play. In addition to learning how to recognize textures the music, they are learning to maintain the balance of chords with their left hand only.

3. **Compositional Challenge** - There are several important characteristics to note in left-handed literature. One is the monodic style where single-note passages are utilized. An example would be Saint-Saen's, *Moto Perpetuo* or Benjamin Britten's *Diversions*. The opposite of the monodic style would be the use of the contrapuntal style. Important techniques used in this style are the employment of polyrhythms, polydynamics, and polyphonics.

4. **Deportment** - Let me describe the way in which one is sitting at the piano when one is performing left-handed literature. Normally, when one is playing the piano, one sits halfway between either side of the instrument. In left-handed literature one sits towards the right side of the piano.

Nine Pianists

Each of the following pianists contributed in his/her manner to the left-handed literature. There were nine pianists, two of whom were two-handed pianists, who focused on left-handed literature. The two-handed pianists that contributed to left-handed literature were:

Alexander Dreyshock (1818-1869) was a pianist from Czechoslovakia. His thirds, sixths, and octaves were unsurpassed. Dreyshock had prepared himself to play Chopin's *Revolutionary Etude Op. 10 #12* in octaves, by practicing twelve hours a day for six weeks. After witnessing his rendering, Mendelssohn was amazed by Dreyshock's achievement. Dreyshock was invited to be a member of the faculty at the St. Petersburg Conservatory in Russia by Anton Rubinstein. His compositions are lavish, superficial, and extravagant in keeping with the Romantic tradition.

Adolf Fumagalli (1826-1856) was an Italian pianist. He was noted for his bravura transcriptions of Meyerbeer's operas *Robert le Diable* which is a left-handed piece. He was contracted cholera and died at the age of 28.

Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915) enjoyed the use of both hands throughout his career except for an interval of time when he experienced tendonitis and only had the use of single hand.

Harriet Cohen (1895-1967) was the victim of a domestic kitchen accident. As she was pouring a glass of water, the glass shattered in her right hand. This inspired Arnold Bax (1883-1953), to create his *Concertante*, a Neo-Classical work.

Count Geza Zichy (1849-1924) will be discussed in greater detail later, but he is the first one-armed pianist ever documented.

At the age of 60, after composing his *Paraphrases on Chopin Etudes*, **Leopold Godowsky (1870-1938)** was afflicted with a stroke. Although he had composed many pieces for one hand, he vowed never to play one-handed.

Paul Wittgenstein (1887-1961) the second of the one-armed pianists, followed a different path than Geza-Zichy, which will be discussed later.

Cor de Groot (1959-1960) accepted commissions from six Dutch colleagues, but he only had to do this for a limited time. Cor de Groot was later able to use his right hand again.

In current times, **Leon Fleisher (b. 1928)** and **Gary Graffman (b. 1928**, both diagnosed with Carpel-Tunnel Syndrome, have had to meet the challenges of the left-handed literature. Fleisher has since returned to playing with two hands. He has made countless recordings and arranged commissions of left-handed music. Fleisher has remained active as a pedagogue and teaches at the Peabody Conservatory of Music. Graffman is active as a pianist and teacher at the Curtis Institute.

Whether due to tendonitis, Carpel-Tunnel Syndrome, amputation or stroke, these artists sought to continue performing despite only having the use of a single hand. The literature

that has developed because of injuries is as exciting and complex as any other literature.

Left-Handed Literature in the Baroque Period

Although there were not many left-handed compositions composed during the Baroque period, there are two names I should mention, J.S. Bach and C.P.E. Bach.

It was said that J. S. Bach, while playing the violin, sometimes accompanied himself with his feet on the pedal-board of the organ. n 1, The keyboard player is advised by R. Lewenthal in his book Piano Playing for One Hand, to play all of the string sonatas, followed by the string concertos and woodwind concertos by J. S.Bach. While J.S. Bach laid the foundation, he left the composition of left-handed music to his son, C .P.E. Bach.

C.P.E. Bach marked a milestone in the left banded keyboard literature with his *Klavier Stuck* for the right and left hand. Composed before 1770, the *Klavier Stuck* is brief, being only 32 measures long. Set in 6/8 time, the piece contains solely eighth notes.

Solfeggietto, a piece that was originally composed by C.P.E. Bach was arranged for the left hand by A. R. Parsons. When played, it is often recognized because of its familiarity. It is excellent for the left hand to be able to play this kind of piece due to its difficult fingering.

While there are many pieces of music in the Baroque period that lend themselves beautifully to transcription for the left hand, these were not produced by the composers themselves due to the contrapuntal style common to the period.

Left-Handed Literature in the Classical Period

There is virtually no left-handed literature that came out of the Classical period. A likely reason for this may relate to the fact that in most Classical music, the melody is played with the right hand and the accompaniment with the left hand. To play these pieces with the left hand alone would diminish the richness of the texture.

The etude, or study, prominent in the later Classical and Romantic periods provides the strength, subtlety and precision needed for left-handed music.

Karl Czerny (1791-1857) was one of a few composers to write Classical pieces for the left hand. Though much is known about his *School of Velocity*, little is known about his *Left Hand Studies Op. 735*. He was one of the most prolific piano composers and teachers in history. Although, Czerny evidently imagined the etude to be played by either hand, the passages are fairly comfortable for right hand but extremely troublesome for the left.

Beethoven considered Czerny's works to be the foundation on which the more complex pieces were laid. It is better for a student to commence with Czerny's music and master it before moving on to more ambitious pieces like the Sonatas, Variations, or Concertos by Beethoven. One example of Czerny's work, the *Etude for One Hand* begins "Presto" and demonstrates a variety of tempos from there. It is an involved piece including single

notes, double notes, arpeggios, trills, and a two-voiced versus a staccato background. This thrilling piece deserves more recognition than it is typically accorded.

Isidor Philipp (1863-1958) revised Czerny's *Etude for One Hand* with a diversity of fingerings from which the student should select the one that is the most practical for their left hand. The pedaling is straightforward as would be expected of the Classical style.

While they are considered dazzling virtuosos, Clementi, Mozart, Hummel and Beethoven are not known for their one-handed artistry. Hummel was a considered a virtuoso talent and rival to Beethoven, and did compose a number of left-handed works. While the Classical era provided us with a number of brilliant pianists with balanced skills, it was not a prolific period for left-handed literature.

Left-Handed Literature in the Romantic Period

During the Romantic period, the piano was the "king of all instruments," and this was perhaps the most prolific period for left-handed literature.

By the time he had composed his *Studies, Op. 13*, **Ludwig Berger (1777-1839)** had suffered a nervous disorder. He was on the faculty at both the St. Petersburg (Russia) and the Berlin, (Germany) Conservatories. Mendelssohn was his pupil, and he is said to be the influence behind Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words*. Berger's, *Etude for the Left Hand* is primarily a cantabile, or singing piece. The piece is challenging in its use of major and minor modes.

Louis Kohler's (1820-1886) *Melody from Weber's Freischutz* is a transcription piece. While a familiar air, its prominent arpeggios challenge the artist to make the piece sound free-flowing and effortless. Initially, there are no fingering indications, however, as the piece becomes more difficult the fingering and the pedaling are included.

Originally, **Johannes Brahms' (1833-1897)** teacher, Edward Marksen, encouraged him to study left-handed techniques. J. S. Bach's *Chaconne* was written for solo violin and Brahms transcribed it for piano left-hand with Clara Schumann in mind. The only exception to the original composition was that it was transposed one octave lower.

As Brahms explained in his writings:

"To me, the *Chaconne* is one of the most wonderful, inconceivable pieces of music... If one has not a violinist of the greatest eminence at hand, quite the finest enjoyment one can have is simply to let it sound in one's mind... Only in one way do I find that I can procure a much diminished, but approximate and entirely pure enjoyment of the work - if I play it with the left hand alone!... The similar kind of difficulty, the sort of technique, the arpeggio-work, all combine to make me -feel like a violinist!"[1]

Several composers transcribed J. S. Bach's *Chaconne* utilizing many octaves and virtuoso passages for orchestra. Paul Wittgenstein and Ferruccio Busoni transcribed the piece for

solo piano.

Moritz Moszkowski (1854-1925) studied with Kullak in Berlin and was known for his sparkling and brilliant left-handed works. He follows in a direct line of technical study from Czerny. As Theodore Edel stated, Many modestly equipped students clumsily practicing Chopin's *Revolutionary Etude* would gain a lot from the G minor study." He goes on to declare, "Moszkowski knew how to codify a particular technical problem."[2] With each etude, Moszkowski selected a particular characteristic to emphasize. His *Etude, Op. 92 #2* is an example of the monodic style with repeated notes. The twelfth etude highlights octaves, while the ninth and tenth etudes emphasize repeated notes.

Isidor Philipp (1863-1958) was to take a massive amount of music originally written for the right hand and transfer it to the left by simply leaving out all of the accompaniments. There are many more versions, the most exquisite of these is J. S. Bach's *Chaconne in D Minor*.

Hermann Berens (1826-1880) composed a large number of exercises that a for the study of young students. He composed, for example, those to be played with a resistant touch. I would suggest that the student play it with a malleable touch Only then, can stamina and strength be balanced in the hand.

In 1891, as **Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915)** was practicing Franz Liszt's *Reminiscences de Don Juan*, his teacher instructed him to sink into the keys. He took this to heart resulting in tendonitis of the right hand. His physicians predicted that he would never play again with his right hand, but he went forward with his performing career. The result was his poignant *Prelude, Op. 9 #1* and his lyrical *Nocturne, Op. 9 #2* . They are built upon two Russian folk songs, "I Don't Know Why I'm so Sad" and "Reverie Under a Birch Tree." The *Prelude* requires careful balance of chords. Once a student has achieved facility maintaining the balance of chords in "Mary Had a Little Lamb," as discussed earlier, they are ready to address this *Prelude* which is a more difficult study.

The *Nocturne* involves specialized techniques in pedaling including half-pedal, gradual depression of the pedal, and gradual lifting which are essential and necessary when playing Scriabin's works.

Count Geza Zichy (1849-1924) was born into a Hungarian,aristocratic family. At the age of ten, he was involved in an unfortunate hunting calamity resulted in the loss of his right arm. Prior to this accident, Geza Zichy had already demonstrated his musical prowess. But now, with only one arm, he fostered his musical direction by cultivating a left-handed repertoire.

Count Geza Zichy was an eminent performer in all of the courts of Europe and an altruistic patron. He was befriended by Liszt, who wrote the work *Hungary's God* which was dedicated to Zichy. Hanslick, the music critic, wrote of Count Geza Zichy's playing "the greatest marvel of modern times on the piano. Zichy has attained a perfection

astonishing with five fingers. He is able to imitate the play of ten, with the art of arpeggios actually worked out by Be aid of perfectly graduated nuances from piano to forte." [3]

There are 200 works that are attributed to him, but many of these have been lost . One of these works, *Viennese Prank* is published in R. Lewenthal's *Piano Music for One Hand*. The name of this composition fits the nature of the piece, which is merry, light, and jovial. This piece is challenging because of its intermittent octaves, arpeggios, trills and frequent tempo and dynamic changes.

Moto Perpetuo by **Camille Saint-Saens (1862-1931)**, from *Six Etudes for Piano Left-Hand, Op. 135*, is written in a monodic style. The entire piece is composed in single notes, yet, it is very difficult to play while maintaining equalized touch. It is marked, "Gentle and tranquil, not fast, and very evenly, without pedal." Unlike Godowsky ,who had written in several options for fingering, Saint-Saens provides only a single fingering.

The etudes are composed in a Neo-Baroque style distinct types of writing. The first etude is titled "Prelude." The second, "Alla Fuga," changes key from G major to the key of B-flat and then back again. The third, "Moto Perpetuo" has already been mentioned. "Bourree," no. 4, is in the form of a Bourree, complete with 2/2 time signatures and characteristic phrases. The fifth etude "Elegie," is purely a Romantic piece, indicated with "Poco Adagio" markings. It flourishes into a dramatic repetition of running 6ths. The final etude, "Gigue" typically is indicated by "Presto" and with 3/8 tempo markings for dance like, energetic movements. Saint-Saens composed with impeccable attention to fingering, touch, phrasing, pedal, and dynamics.

Felix Blumenfeld (1862-1931), lived in St. Petersburg and was one of the teachers of Vladimir Horowitz. Blumenfeld composed a sumptuous and opulent melody for the left-handed literature with his *Etude*, which features accompaniment figures both above and below the melody. Scriabin was an esteemed colleague of Blumenfeld's. His influence can be seen in the cadenza section of Blumenfeld's *Etude* which is nearly an imitation of Scriabin's *Nocturne Op. 9. # 2* only on a much grander scale.

In opposition to the monodic style used by Saint-Saens, Leopold Godowsky, the epitome of left-handed composers, employed the contrapuntal style. Unlike his predecessors in the Baroque Period, who utilized only polyphonics, he also incorporated polyrhythms (to a greater degree) and polydynamics as well. The intricacies of his compositions make them unfeasible for all but the elite pianist. An example of such a work would be the *Paraphrases of Chopin's Etuden* which were transcribed by Godowsky. The most renowned of all the left-handed composers, he composed the *Three Volume Exercises,* which are over twenty pages long. It was his opinion that the left hand stirred the emotions and awakened the imagination. At the age of 60, he sustained a smoke and never played again.

Leopold Godowsky stressed the significance of the left hand with the following points:

1. In contrast to the right hand, the left-hand thumb is our strongest finger.
2. In contrast to the right hand, the left hand is more elastic and therefore more flexible.
3. Because in left-handed music the entire keyboard must be utilized, it becomes even more essential that the bass be voiced.

For a teacher who is determined to improve the left-handed efficiency in their students, it might be advantageous to study Godowsky's *Meditation* and Chopin's *Elegy* which are less intricate than the *Paraphrases of Chopin's Etuden*, but still demand a high level of competency. Godowsky enlisted fingering options in his compositions suggesting that others use the ones most suitable for them. He also emphasized the employment of the pedal. Godowsky also supplied the pianist with flexibility in the selection of pedaling to ascertain how the piece will sound.

In short, Godowsky elevated the transcription literature to a new height. Godowsky's work by itself represents a dying art. No one could match his intricate and complicated pedaling, fingering and contrapuntal style of composition. Godowsky was the quintessential example of left-handed composers.

Paul Wittgenstein (1887-1961), an affluent World War I amputee veteran, had over 40 left-handed works dedicated to him. While Count Geza Zichy's amputation occurred at the age of 10, Wittgenstein had already established a professional career.

Richard Strauss, Prokofiev, Benjamin Britten , Paul Hindemith and Maurice Ravel all composed concertos for him. It should be noted that Paul Wittgenstein was constantly modifying these compositions due to his conservative musical preference. Paul Wittgenstein did not approve of Prokofiev's composition, so he refused to perform it.

Wittgenstein devised all sorts of fingering exercises and he composed a *School for the Left Hand*, which contained many transcriptions. He devised symbols for specific left handed techniques such as an "o" which indicates that certain especially strong notes are to be played with the fist, and a "4/3" meaning that a note should be played with both the third and fourth fingers together.

Maurice Ravel's (1875 -1937) *Concerto pour le Main Gauche* was composed for Paul Wittgenstein and is considered to be the apex of left handed literature. In a quote from the Boston Evening Gazette Ravel said "It is essential to create the effect not of a light, delicate texture but of a score written for both hands." Ravel considered several details in Saint-Saen's, *Six Etudes for the Left Hand* and Godowsky's, *Paraphrases on Chopin Etuden* and he expanded them into his own, personal Impressionistic style.

Alexis Hollaender, who composed in the style of Schumann, composed several interesting pieces. *Evening Song*, *The Hunt*, and *Waltz*. *Evening Song* begins "espressivo" and contains a series of secondary dominants. Robert Schumann's *Jagerlied* (The Hunt) is a two-handed piece from the "Album for the Young" which is exactly mirrored in the Hollaender's left-handed version. *Waltz* is the most accessible of the collection.

Notes

1. Neimann, Walter. Brahms. New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1937, pp. 245-246.
2. Edel, Theodore. Piano Music for One Hand. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 79.
3. Schonberg, Harold. The Great Pianists from Mozart to the Present. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963, p. 252.

Left-Handed Literature in the Twentieth Century

Bela Bartok's (1881-1945) Berlin debut December 14, l903) included his own left-handed piece, which was a verifiable smash. Among numerous things, it called for octaves, power, and stamina. Other movements were planned, but could not be completed prior to his debut. The other pieces on his program included compositions by Liszt and Strauss. As a young boy of 22, Liszt was Bartok's idol. Both Godowsky, the prince among pianists, and Busoni were in the audience.

Bartok's composition represents a major work for which there is no precedence. The virile *Etude for the Left Hand* and "energico"is composed in Bartok's earlier style with many syncopated patterns. There is almost an improvisational feeling to this work. The complexities are enormous and each left-hand octave must be a precise, direct, attack - almost biting.

Frank Bridge's (1871-194l) *Three Improvisations* is a piece that is recommended for the intermediate level. *At Dawn* is is marked "Poco Adagio" with an impressionistic, elegant, delicate style, featuring gossamer triplets.

A Vigil is probably the most accessible of the set. Inscribed "Ben moderato e tranquillo" it lends a serene and expressive charm. The "Espressivo," harp-like, arpeggios give this piece a sustained quality. One has to be sure of holding the noes down long enough, in order to attempt a true "legato". I would recommend that one study this kind of piece to acquire this technical skill.

A Revel, marked "Allegro" is a composed in a monodic style, and incorporates triplets. Beneath that, an espressivo melody is sustained throughout the piece, culminating in a forceful "Forte" climax near the end. Three beats before the end of the piece there is an unexpected turn, and the piece breaks into arpeggios with accompaniment.

More Left Alone - Right On was written by **Joyce Grill** for left hand alone or right hand alone. This is a delightful piece of music, sure to charm young students. *Left Alone Rag* employs a syncopated rhythms. *Back an the Saddle* employs dotted-quarter and sixteenth notes providing the impetus for this quasi-folk western tune . *Locomotion* is composed in monodic style suggesting a locomotive. *Ah, Spain* is marked "Dramatically " until it

comes to a cadenza, where the soloist should improvise on the thematic material. The teacher may want to expand on this idea, requesting that the student bring in a composition where he/she is given free reign to use the imagination.

Hands Separately by Eugenie Rocherolle is comes from a set of four pieces each written for the right or left hand. In the *Waltz for the Right Hand*,the composer has left the interpretation to the performer. For example, she is purposefully vague in dictating the pedaling with this piece, which is in contrast to many of her other compositions. The more difficult *Etude For the Right Hand*, is excellent transitional material before introducing the student to the Chopin *Etudes*, and includes specific pedaling instructions. Flashing through a myriad of keys, the *Adagio for the Left Hand* is marked "rubato" and "legato." The entire piece should be played expressively and freely. In the *Fantasia for the Left Hand*, one can sense Iberian or Spanish influences. It would be ideal to juxtapose the *Fantasia for the Left Hand* with Enrique Granados' *Spanish Dances*.

Etude Fantasy by John Corigliano (b. 1938) was composed for James Tocco. Corigliano had just heard Tocco perform the Blumenfeld *Etude for the Left Hand* on his Town Hall program. In a moment of inspiration, Corigliano composed the *Etude Fantasy*. One piece is composed for the Left-hand alone, while the other five pieces are for two hands.

Silk Water (1992) was composed by **Jean Hasse**. In the Preface, Hasse writes "The overall mood of *Silk Water* relates the calmness of suspended time. While composing the piece I visited the Atlantic ocean, and standing deep in the water moved my hands across the dark, tranquil surface." *Silk Water* was composed for Leon Fleisber, who gave the premier on October 12, 1992. There is an Impressionistic aura to the composition including polyrhythms, triplets, and parallel motion.

In composing his *Toccata and Fugue, Op. 56*, **Jeno Takacs** used the compositions of J.S Bach as a point of reference. The *Toccata* sounds improvisatory, while the *Fugue* is in strict Tempo. The *Toccata* opens with a "rapid" tempo, and subsides to a more relaxed tempo .It deviates into a "Tranquillo" section, all in the space of about three pages. In the *Fugue*, the pianist can work on his contrapuntal techniqesfor the left hand. The *Fugue* begins "Andante Tranquillo" in a "pianissimo" and "sempre legato" mood. It also contains mixed meters.

There have been two compositions written for me. One was by a colleague, **Jody Nagel** and the second was composed by a **Dmitry Schirin** They are both three pages apiece. Approximately two years after my stroke I was engaged to go back to St. Petersburg, Russia. Dmitry Schirin had invited me to perform a lecture-recital at the Rimsky-Korsakoff Conservatory on left-handed piano literature. While I was there, I performed a piece by Jody Nagel entitled *Final Episode*. The piece begins "Dramatically" and continues into a "rubato" section. After two long years of absence from performing, I used it for my "Re-Debut" as a pianist.

Dmitry Schirin was inspired for his composition by Jody Nagel's work. In a Neo-Romantic style, his own *Ein Gedicht fur Klavier* or "Poem for Piano" is indicated

"Moderato". The recurring "C" creates a feeling of dread and fears of the unknown, which are characteristically "Russian".

The moment one arrives on stage, the music takes over, and it doesn't matter whether one is performing a one-handed composition or a two-handed work. It only matters if one **makes music**. With only the left hand, substantially more work is required to achieve the same level of musical excellence and quality. Here's hoping that your venture into the left-handed literature will be a fruitful and insightful journey.

Annemarie Schuessler maintains an active schedule as performer, lecturer, and clinician. In 1990, she was Lecture/Performer in Piano Pedagogy at the University of Kang Reung Summer School, South Korea, and returned to Teagu in 1993 for more workshops and performances sponsored by the Korean music journal, *Musica de Pianoforte*. As a participant in the first Russian-American Piano Seminar, she was one of four pianists selected to perform in Maly Hall, St. Petersburg, Russia. In 1997, she was reinvited to St. Petersburg where she gave a lecture-recital at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. In 1991, she was Lecturer Performer for the European Piano Teachers Association in London. Dr. Schuessler has served as Music Director for the United States Military Community in Kitzingen, Germany, where she received numerous awards from both the U.S and German communities for her work as cultural liaison. Dr. Schuessler received degrees from Manhattanville College (B.M.), Northwestern University (M.A. and D.M.), and the Artist Diploma with highest honors from the Hochschule fur Musik in Wuerzburg, West Germany where she was invited for a solo debut. Performance teachers have included Martin Canin, Kirsti Hjort and Donald Isaak. A frequent contributor to **Clavier** and other music journals, Dr. Schuessler has been a member of the keyboard faculties at Ball State University, DePaul University (Chicago), Louisiana State University-Baton Rouge, Ithaca College and the Eastman School of Music. She has held office with the College Music Society and currently serves as a board member of the Indiana Music Teachers Association.