Piano Pedagogy Forum
Volume 4, Nos. 1-2
Volume 5, No. 1

Table of Contents

Piano Pedagogy Forum

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Table of Contents

National Group Piano and Piano Pedagogy Forum

Steering Committee:
Laura Beauchamp, Limestone College
Michelle Conda, Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music
Barbara Fast, University of Northern Iowa
Andrew Hisey, Oberlin College Conservatory of Music

The first National Group Piano and Piano Pedagogy Forum was held August 4-5, 2000 at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. This intensive, two-day forum was specifically designed for college and university group piano and piano pedagogy teachers. The first day was devoted to group piano teaching and the second day focused on piano pedagogy. A unique feature of the forum was an on-sight library consisting of syllabi, proficiency requirements, and other course materials brought by participants. These were available for browsing throughout the conference.

The Forum started with a day devoted to the teaching of group piano. The opening panel discussion topic was "In Synch: Representatives from Five Schools Discuss Group Piano Curriculum Building." Panelists were Tony Caramia, Eastman School of Music; Michelle Conda, University of Cincinnati; Martha Hilley, University of Texas; Fred Kern, University of North Texas; Kenon Renfrow, University of Miami. Small group discussions followed.

The afternoon featured four presentations on group teaching techniques. Participants rotated and were able to attend all four sessions. Presenters and topics were: Laura Beauchamp, "Sightreading: Experiences that Yield Results;" Alejandro Cremaschi, "Technology for Skill Mastery;" Tom Pearsall, "Repertoire: Presentation and Follow Through;" Siok Lian Tan and Andrew Hisey, "Measuring Outcomes: Evaluation, Grading, and Proficiency." A final open microphone discussion concluded the day. Participants discussed issues related to group piano teaching and curriculum.

The second day was devoted to piano pedagogy at the college level. The opening panel discussion topic was "Practical Realities for Setting up Internship and Observation Experiences for your Pedagogy Students." Panelists were Gail Berenson, Ohio University; Rebecca Johnson, Capital University; Marcia Norrman, Northwestern University; Kenon Renfrow, University of Miami; Steve Roberson, Butler University; Yu-Jane Yang, Weber State University. Rotating discussion groups followed.

The afternoon was devoted to small group discussions of the following two topics: "What Aspects of Technology Do You Feel Most Compelled to Include in Your Piano Pedagogy Program," and "How Do You Cover Piano Methods in Your Pedagogy Course?" Open microphone comments with all participants concluded the day.

Click on the link below to return to the Piano Pedagogy Forum homepage where you may access panel presentations from the conference and discussion groups from the second day (piano pedagogy at the college level.)

Panel Discussion: "In Synch: Representatives from Five Schools Discuss Group Piano Curriculum Building."

Reporter: Siok Lian Tan

Panelists: Tony Caramia, Eastman School of Music Michelle Conda, University of Cincinnati Martha Hilley, University of Texas Fred Kern, University of North Texas Kenon Renfrow, University of Miami, Moderator: Andrew Hisey, Oberlin College Conservatory of Music

The First National Group Piano and Piano Pedagogy Forum opened with a session featuring five group piano experts discussing how they adapted their curriculum to the size and nature of their institutions. After the panelists described their individual situations, they fielded questions from the audience.

Michelle Conda shared her views on the importance of including non-major group piano class as a course in a university. Her past experience at the University of Toledo demonstrated that there was a high demand for non-major classes. She initially started off with the beginning level and within a few years had expanded the course sequence to four levels. All four levels of piano classes were filled every semester. The high demand also occurred when she offered non-major piano classes at University of Cincinnati. She stated that teaching these classes was extremely rewarding. She also pointed out that non-major piano classes were useful to some music majors as well; these classes could serve as preparation for music majors who were not ready for standard music classes. They could also be used as group teaching demonstration classes for piano pedagogy students.
Conda expressed her disappointment with many college administrators who cite budget drain as a reason to to eliminate non-major classes from their programs. She argued that the offering of these classes were not a drain at all. The students who signed up for these classes actually brought more general funds from the university into the music department. She pointed out that teaching piano as a class was an effective use of faculty time and energy because the student-faculty ratio was 12 to 1 instead of 1 to 1. She also suggested that music departments could charge a small technology fee from each student who took the non-major class. The fee could be used to maintain equipment in the piano lab. Conda believes that the demand for non-major piano classes will continue to grow because of the current trend toward more general education courses.

Kenon Renfrow discussed how he developed a foundation technology course for all music students at the University of Miami based on the research of his doctoral dissertation. The topic of his dissertation was "Development and Evaluation of Objectives for Teaching Graduate Piano Pedagogy Majors to use Computer and Keyboard Technology." He surveyed all institutions in the United States that offered graduate piano pedagogy degrees and found that most institutions recognized the importance of computer and keyboard technology but most did not do enough to address the subject. From his survey, Renfrow concluded that there was a need for a course to introduce music students to basic music technology. As a result, he designed a course entitled "Computers, Keyboards, and Music," to provide students with an overview of

current computer and keyboard technology as they related to music. The course included a basic introduction to Windows, word-processing, spreadsheet, database management, CD-ROM, the Internet, and music education software. Topics covered at a more in-depth level included MIDI, digital sequencing, and computer-assisted musical. This is a required course for all music majors at University of Miami except students in the BFA degree program. The course was so successful that he was asked to design a series of upper-level music technology courses for the curriculum.

Tony Caramia from the Eastman School of Music pointed out that the high-level of performance ability at his institution did not necessarily impact the class piano program. He stated that although all his class piano students have very high level of performance talent on their own instruments, they still have the same problems as average class piano students from other music schools. Many first-year class piano students cannot find middle-C on the keyboard. He has had first-year cellists who cannot not read in treble clef, violinists who cannot read in bass clef, percussionists and singers who cannot read well at all. Therefore, he advises his teaching assistants to realize to whom they were teaching and to make adjustments accordingly. Caramia also raised a similar issue with respect to the hiring of teaching assistants. Every year he interviews many talented pianists for teaching assistant positions but many of them had difficulties teaching simple piano skills, such as how to introduce a C harmonic minor scale to a class. He closed by remarking that similar pianistic and pedagogical problems occur at Eastman: talented music students do not always make talented piano students, and talented pianists do not necessarily know how to teach beginning piano students.

Martha Hilley shared her experience training and supervising teaching assistants at University of Texas, Austin. She explained that all her teaching assistants are hired primarily based on their performance competence. Many of them know how to play the piano well but have had no prior teaching experience or training. Therefore, she has to train her new teaching assistants on the basics of teaching. All her new teaching assistants are required to attend a two-day, pre-semester workshop where she takes them through many basic teaching skills. In addition to this pre-semester workshop, Hilley requires all her first-year teaching assistants to take Robert Duke's course in supervised teaching. She observes and video-tapes all her teaching assistants at least twice per semester and gives them constructive comments based on her observations. She hopes that her teaching assistants will learn from her comments and be better prepared for their future college teaching appointments.

Fred Kern from University of North Texas discussed his duties as coordinator of the class piano program in one of the largest music schools in the nation. He supervises fourteen teaching assistants who teach twenty-four sections of keyboard skill classes for music majors. There are approximately six hundred students enrolled in keyboard skill classes each semester and Kern has to listen to each of them taking their proficiency exam. Kern divides his four-semester curriculum into a set of forty-eight specific skills, focussing on twelve skills per semester. If a student can do all the forty-eight skills, he or she can pass out of piano class. Kern's curriculum is weighted heavily on sight reading skills. He hopes to move towards a piano proficiency exam where everything has to be played at

sight. Like Caramia and Hilley, Kern faces the same problem with inexperienced teaching assistants. Most of them are good players but do not know how to teach. Therefore, Kern has to dictate the pacing of the curriculum and grading procedures for all his teaching assistants to create a sense of unity among different classes.

After the panelists gave their remarks, they took questions from the audience. Among the issues discussed were piano proficiency requirements, grading policies, and the number of class meetings per week. While details of all the issues discussed above varied slightly from each school, it was interesting to learn that all five colleges shared the same overall goals and problems in their programs. Each school has minimum proficiency requirements that all music students have to meet in order to pass the piano class sequence. All these experts have the same problem getting experienced and interested teaching assistants to teach class piano because most assistants were hired on the basis of their performance skills. The panelists also talked about what keeps them fresh in college group piano teaching. They all agreed that the ability to change their students' attitude, which usually comes in the form of delayed appreciation, and their influence on the growth of their teaching assistants makes their jobs challenging and rewarding. As class piano coordinators, they have the opportunity to meet and work with all the music students in their schools and they enjoy doing that. Their ongoing efforts to find new and better teaching materials and better ways of presenting concepts helps keep their work interesting and fresh.

Siok Lian Tan, Assistant Professor of Piano; Coordinator of the Class Piano Program; L.T.C.L., Trinity College of Music, London; BM (summa cum laude, Pi Kappa Lambda), MM, DMA, University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music (CCM). A native of Penang, Malaysia, Ms. Tan came to Cincinnati in 1988 as a scholarship piano student of Frank Weinstock at CCM. She has been heard in live broadcasts on Cincinnati Public Radio Station WGUC and has appeared as soloist with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra on the 1993 Young People's Concert and the 1995 Casual Classic Series. She has won numerous scholarship awards and piano competitions, including the Three Arts Scholarship and Clef Music Club Award. At CCM, she has been a teaching assistant for all her five years of graduate studies where she was also assistant to the head of the Secondary Piano Department and Piano Pedagogy. In 1995 she received the CCM "Most Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award" for her excellence in teaching. She was also on the faculty of the CCM Preparatory Department (1992-1998) and University of Cincinnati-College of Evening and Continuing Education (1993-1996). She is active as a clinician and adjudicator and is heard regularly throughout the midwest as soloist and chamber musician.

Panel Discussion: "In Synch: Practical Realities of Setting Up Internship Teaching and Observation Experiences for Pedagogy Students"

Reporter: Cynthia Benson

Panelists: Gail Berenson, Ohio University Kenon Renfrow, University of Miami Marcia Norrman, Northwestern University Rebecca Johnson, Capital University Steve Roberson, Butler University Yu-Jane Yang, Weber State University, Moderator: Barbara Fast, University of Northern Iowa

The following is a summary of the panel discussion on internship teaching and observation for pedagogy students. Panelists were given eight minutes to address the internship and observation experiences at their schools.

Internship Teaching

Generally, the internship teaching described included one to two students per semester, and lessons were usually 30 minutes in length. While the length of internship at each institution varied from one semester to six quarters, internship teaching included children and/or university non-music majors. Internship teaching took place in preparatory programs, community schools, faculty studios, and independent studios. Teaching internships were either part of a pedagogy class or a separate course.

Marcia Norrman remarked that pedagogy students at Northwestern University teach private lessons to students whose group classes are taught by a "master-teacher." The student teachers also gradually work up to teaching an entire group class. These pedagogy students direct a practice session with piano students (free of charge) to help them, among other reasons, decide what level they prefer to teach for their internship.

Steve Roberson shared that his pedagogy students teach at least two students per semester during each of the four semesters they are enrolled in pedagogy track courses. Pedagogy students 'recruit' their own students (with help from the university music office) and arrange their own studio policy, interviews, and fee structure.

Rebecca Johnson successfully set up teaching internships with local independent teachers who were MTNA certified. Some of the advantages described were the "real-life" situations the pedagogy student experienced, and the relationships that developed between student teacher and independent teacher. However, some activities of the teacher's studio such as spring festivals and contests were found not to be conducive to the student teaching experience.

Providing feedback to student teachers was important to all members of the panel. Balancing supervision of student teachers with meeting other university responsibilities was discussed. As Ken Renfrow stated, "...one can only be at one place at one time..."

Some panelists shared that load credit was not given for supervision of student teachers. Each had a unique solution to the problem of giving enough feedback to all student teachers. Panel members addressed the use of video and/or audio recording for evaluation by peers, supervisor, or student teacher. Steve Roberson indicated that he requires his student teachers to videotape each lesson with the camera specifically situated to record the student's face and hands.

In supervising student teachers, Ken Renfrow requires a three-week sequence of teaching including videotape, self-evaluation, and lesson plans to help keep a check on the many number of teaching interns each semester. He remarked that he has learned about his student teachers from the way they evaluate their own teaching. He also stated that student interns observe graduate assistants teaching group piano, which helps him monitor these teachers. Marcia Norrman observes each student teacher ten times during the year. Additionally, she also has another "objective" teacher observe her interns. In contrast to most situations, the internship with local independent studio teachers described by Rebecca Johnson allows for constant supervision.

Gail Berenson described the internship program at Ohio University, where graduate pedagogy students serve as apprentices to the applied piano faculty. The pedagogy student observes, plans and teaches college non-majors or children in the faculty member's studio. By the end of the semester, the intern is teaching the entire lesson. The faculty member is present at all times to supervise. The applied faculty member assigns the grade for the student teaching while the pedagogy teacher supervises the intern's journal and paper. Graduate students enroll in this apprentice program for six quarters. The only drawback mentioned was that the interns were not working with students of their own. However, the advantages of working closely with members of the piano faculty were numerous.

Yu-Jane Yang shared how she makes use of the piano lab in her set-up for supervising intern teachers. Two intern teachers are assigned to each student, and while one intern teaches the lesson, the other observes. The student teachers reverse roles the following week. All lessons take place on headset, and five pairs of interns and their young students are in the lab at the same time, following the same routine. The use of digital keyboards and piano lab controller allows the pedagogy supervisor to walk around the room and monitor the intern teaching and observations. While monitoring the room, the pedagogy teacher makes notes that will be discussed during the next pedagogy class meeting.

Observation Experiences

Observation experiences described by the panelists usually took place before or during the teaching internship. These experiences included a variety of settings such as group piano, private piano, preschool piano, and adult-leisure lessons. Many of the panel members also have students observe lessons for instruments other than the piano. While some panelists had student teachers observe the same teacher(s) throughout a semester, others chose to vary the observations. Gail Berenson described a sophomore-level observation practicum designed to ease them into their teacher role. Students in this

practicum observe a lesson once a week. The lessons observed represent all ages and levels, and include instruments other than the piano.

Panel members also shared guidelines for student teacher observations. Rebecca Johnson outlined the following specifics for observations: student-teacher interaction; how teacher prepares for success; piano methods used; how student is taught to practice; practice goals given in lesson; how student is motivated to practice; technique; studio arrangement; personal reaction; and teaching style. Pedagogy students were to observe two back-to-back lessons and keep an observation diary.

Yu-Jane Yang's observation forms are divided into three areas:

1. Delivery Skills: facial, vocal, gesture, eye contact, energy/enthusiasm, posture
2. Communication Skills: clear directions, senstivity to needs, student/teacher rapport, use of student's name, effective use of language, and balance of verbal/co-verbal/nonverbal
3. Sequence of Presentation: logical order of teaching sequence, variety of teaching activities/strategies, effectiveness of teaching strategies, pacing, ability to diagnose problems, control of physical setting

These guidelines are followed by general comments about what the student teacher liked, new ideas observed, and what might have been done differently.

Steve Roberson helps his teaching interns remember the guidelines for observation using the word PASTE.

- P--Pace of lesson: organization of time, speed of talking or moving
- A--Attitude: teacher-student interaction, personal attention by teacher
- S--Sensitivity: musical sensitivity
- T--Technique
- E--Eclecticism: incorporations of theory or history

Questions and comments followed the panel presentation. One audience member was truly impressed by the unique approaches used by the panelists when designing internship teaching and observation experiences. I found that these panelists had not only worked within their respective situations, but they had also dealt creatively with challenges, used available resources wisely, and created essential opportunities for their students.

Cynthia Benson, Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Group Piano at Bowling Green State University, holds a bachelor's in music education from the University of Central Arkansas, a master's of music in piano performance from Rice University and a doctorate in music education with an emphasis in piano pedagogy from the University of Texas at Austin. Benson has presented research at state conferences of the Music Educators Association in Illinois, Ohio and Texas. Presently serving on the National Advisory Board for the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) Student Chapters, she has participated in presentations at MTNA National Conferences and the state MTNA conventions in Texas, Illinois and Wisconsin. Articles by Cynthia have appeared in *Texas Music Education Research*, *Illinois Music Educator*, *American Music Teacher*, *Keyboard Companion*, *Piano Pedagogy Forum* and Roland's *Keyboard Educator*. She and

husband, Michael Benson, frequently perform duo recitals as the Synergy Duo, most recently on the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series in Chicago.

Group Discussion: "Observation and Internship Teaching Experiences"

Reporter: Michael Benson

The following is a summation of two piano pedagogy morning discussion group topics: Observations, and Internship Teaching Experiences. The comments reflect my interpretation of personal hand written and typed notes submitted by the various discussion leaders.

OBSERVATION.

Who Should Pedagogy Students Observe?

The most common answer is that pedagogy students should observe independent piano teachers. However, there were many creative suggestions made with respect to designing observation experiences. Recommended observations were: Dalcroze Eurhythmics classes, group piano classes, Suzuki lessons, college-level studio and performance classes, non-piano lessons, and public school choral, band and general music classes. The numerous and varied suggestions are significant because they reflect the abundant choices available to piano pedagogy teachers. Also, the issue of "where" piano pedagogy students observe was considered. University and independent studios or "real world" teaching situations were high on the list.

What Ages and Levels Should Piano Pedagogy Students Observe?

All five discussion groups suggested pedagogy students observe beginners, intermediate students, and adults. Another conclusion was that observations should focus on more than one lesson. Pedagogy students should observe the same student on multiple occasions in consecutive lessons. Within this context, several other questions were raised: Who are the piano pedagogy students observing? Are they focusing on the teacher's instructions or are they listening and watching for student success? For the novice observer, it was suggested that pedagogy students learn to observe one area (teacher directives or student success) at a time.

How Many Students Should Be Observed and For How Long?

The answers varied from group to group. The one constant was the emphasis on having students observe multiple lessons at all levels. Here again, the question might be, whom are the piano pedagogy students observing? If we are watching a teacher's verbal instructions, maybe we only need to see one lesson - either the student was able to achieve a proximal musical goal during the lesson because of teacher instruction or they were not. This, according to the discussion groups, helps define good teaching. However, if we are listening and watching for student success, maybe we should observe at least two lessons. These issues were debated. In any event, learning to be a trained observer is a skill that should be developed.

INTERNSHIP TEACHING EXPERIENCES

What follows is a representative group of questions or concerns that were raised during the breakout sessions.

1. What is the optimal internship teaching experience for an undergraduate or graduate piano pedagogy student?
2. When a preparatory program is not available, what are some internship teaching experience alternatives?
3. How does a pedagogy professor provide a variety of different teaching levels and settings?
4. Having provided an internship teaching experience, how often does the pedagogy professor observe and comment on the live teaching sessions or videotaped teaching excerpts?
5. What does a pedagogy teacher do when there is little or no support from other music faculty to help provide internship teaching experiences?
6. What load credit is granted for providing internship teaching experiences?
7. Do you ask independent teachers to allow university students to teach in their studios?
8. Do group piano classes offer internship teaching experiences comparable to private lessons?

There was not a comprehensive answer given for each of these questions. Below are related suggestions and comments made by group discussion members.

Suggestions from the discussion groups focused on finding a group of students that desire piano instruction. Many of the institutions represented have preparatory programs. These provide on-campus teaching experiences and can be ideal. In addition, home-schooled students were considered, along with university students who are not music majors. The university students were found by advertising in university newspapers. Another recommendation was to provide piano lessons for children of university faculty and staff at no charge. If money was collected for these lessons, it was suggested that it be used to improve the piano pedagogy library holdings or to provide scholarship money for incoming piano pedagogy majors. Other successful internship situations mentioned were local music stores and retirement communities. Peer teaching of fellow pedagogy students was also discussed. This type of experience would allow a novice teacher to practice teaching both basic music concepts and advanced literature. One group commented that given the difficulties encountered in teaching beginners, it might be ideal to have pedagogy students first teach their peers because they are playing repertoire similar to their own.

As Visiting Assistant Professor of Piano in the Department of Music at Ohio State University at Lima, **Michael Benson** is pursuing a dual career as teacher and performer. As soloist and collaborative pianist, he has performed at the Smithsonian Institution during the *International Schubert Symposium*, Steinway Hall as a winner in *The Pinault Biennial International Piano Competition*, and Preston Bradley Hall on the *Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series* heard on National Public Radio affiliate WFMT 98.7 FM in Chicago. He has presented lectures, adjudicated and performed for national and state conventions of *Music Teachers National Association* and contributed articles to *Texas Music Teacher*, *American Music Teacher*

and *Clavier*. He has taught on the faculties of Carl Sandburg College, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, and Oakland University as well as pre-college piano camps in Texas, Wisconsin and Ohio. Mr. Benson holds degrees in piano performance from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and The University of Texas at Austin.

Discussion: What aspects of technology do you feel most compelled to include in your piano pedagogy program?

Reporter: Carlyn Morenus

Technology has become, in a just a few years, a huge topic for those in the teaching profession. Electronic piano labs, of course, have been around for quite some time. The development of personal computers has brought with it an ever-increasing array of music programs. And the internet has created an explosion of information, recorded materials, software, learning and teaching options, and responsibilities that are new to our profession. Many different technological devices and strategies were discussed in the afternoon session centering on the question "What aspects of technology do you feel most compelled to include in your piano pedagogy program?" The discussions are summarized here.

All discussion groups agreed on the need to incorporate a variety of technology-related topics in pedagogy classes. Pedagogy students should be cautioned, however, that technologies should be used as tools, not as ends in themselves. Technology does not replace the teacher, but it can enhance the teacher's work. It is important for teachers to recognize the vast and constantly-increasing offerings of technology, and to be receptive to new possibilities.

Many specific types of technology were discussed. They can be broken down into a few general categories: group piano labs; digital instruments/sequencing equipment and other recording instruments; computer software and technology-centered courses; the internet; and other miscellaneous items.

Group Piano Labs

The group piano lab is not particularly new to us, though labs have certainly changed over the years. Today, some labs include computers at every keyboard; many have either add-on or built-in sequencers for the digital keyboards. The Key-Note Visualizer is a fixture in many labs across the country, though this may be rendered obsolete by the latest generation of digital pianos, such as the new Clavinovas, which have displays that can be projected to a TV monitor, allowing the teacher not only to show keyboard positions, but to demonstrate sequencing steps and other technological applications.

Currently available lab equipment allows teachers to use sequencers in group lessons, providing MIDI backgrounds and model performances; piano students can be assigned sequencing projects, either individually or in groups. This results in a generation of music students who will be prepared to work in the 21st century world.

Digital Instruments/Sequencing equipment and other recording media

Digital instruments do not replace acoustic pianos, but they serve many important and useful functions. For many people in today's society, a digital instrument is the only one they will ever own. Is it right, then, for us to refuse to teach those who play only digital keyboards? Does the recreational pianist really need an acoustic instrument?

These questions were raised in discussion, though not answered. These are questions that each teacher must consider when deciding who will or will not be accepted as a student, and in deciding how the student should be taught. It was generally felt that students should be given exposure to both digital and acoustic instruments, but that students should not be denied access to instruction for lack of an acoustic practice instrument.

Digital instruments and sequencers can be used beneficially in private instruction as well as in a group piano situation. Sequenced materials enhance a simple piece, aid in keeping a steady tempo, or provide concerto accompaniment. Digital pianos with built-in recording capabilities provide a useful method for recording a student's playing, and the student gets immediate and accurate playback, so that he/she can listen for balance, rhythm, tempo, musicality, pedaling, or any other element. We all know how difficult it is to hear our own playing accurately while we're playing; it's certainly harder for our students than for us. This frees them from that problem.

Other recording instruments, such as the Disklavier and other recording acoustic pianos, have the same capabilities for recording and playback of performances. Here there is the added opportunity to watch the keys or pedals move during playback, often very telling when dealing with such issues as evenness of tone, technical control, or use of pedal.

More traditional recording media, such as video and audio taping, were also mentioned.

Computer Software/Technology Courses

There are two categories of software with which pedagogy students should be familiar. There are many programs available to help students with note reading, music theory, ear training, basic music history, and simply to have fun using the music knowledge in their possession. Pedagogy students need to be aware of these resources as they contemplate setting up studios.

Pedagogy students also need to be familiar with software that they can use themselves. MIDI software such as Cakewalk, music notation software such as Sibelius, web authoring software such as Dreamweaver, and business software for operating a studio are all important applications for the current generation of teachers. Multi-media software such as Director for creating computer 'movies' may be too complex to learn within a pedagogy course, but finished products should be shown. Whether students are taught to use these programs as a part of pedagogy courses is negotiable, but the students certainly need to know about them.

'Computers in the Arts' and 'Introduction to Technology' courses are now being offered at many universities. Some universities also offer courses on specific software applications such as Dreamweaver or Director. These courses provide opportunities for pedagogy students to explore computer technology more deeply than the time constraints of a pedagogy course allows.

Degree programs such as Arts Technology and Music Technology are being developed at various universities around the country.

The Internet

The internet has exploded into our lives, putting the world quite literally at our fingertips. New possibilities develop practically on a daily basis, so we can hardly hope to teach our pedagogy students about everything that is on the web. What we can and should do is educate them to the possibilities of the web, teach them how to explore it, and also include cautionary notes. Anyone can put information on the web, so one must be on guard. "Is this really a reliable source?" should be a question often asked when surfing the net. Students also need to be educated about copyright implications for downloading/uploading music and other web materials.

All that aside, there are tremendous materials available to us via the internet. MIDI recordings for quick downloading or on-line play, and MP3 recordings of concert repertoire for quality sound reproduction, are available in abundance. The internet is being used for distance learning, as a virtual classroom, for research, for distance listening, for email or web-board courses, and for computer-assisted learning. Email keeps communication lines open between students and teacher. The teacher of the future -- and of the present -- will have a studio website. As pedagogy teachers, we should be sure our pedagogy students are aware of these resources, and know how to utilize them.

Miscellany

With all these technological resources, we have a responsibility to our pedagogy students to introduce them in our pedagogy classes. This can be done in a variety of ways. Guest speakers provide expert information on specific areas: a music store representative demonstrating the capabilities of the piano lab may educate teacher as well as students; a web designer can get students building their own websites in a single class period; students can give presentations about their own experiences with technology; projects can be assigned utilizing specific technological resources.

Technology should be considered when choosing piano method books as well. Many children's methods, as well as group piano textbooks, now offer MIDI disks, CDs, tapes, web support, or other enhancements. Some keyboard literature is written specifically for digital keyboards.

Technology may be useful in teaching students with disabilities. Tremendous possibilities exist for experimental research using computers, digital keyboards, and the Disklavier.

There is no longer any question about whether or not to include technology in pedagogy study. The challenge is deciding what to cover in classes, and what students must discover for themselves. Teaching an awareness and openness to new technological developments is the most important thing we can offer our students.

Carlyn Morenus is Keyboard Area Coordinator at Illinois State University. Dr. Morenus joined the ISU faculty in 1999 as Assistant Professor of Piano and Coordinator of Group Piano. While completing doctoral studies at The University of Texas at Austin from 1996-1999, she was an Assistant of gorup piano. From 1990-1995 Dr. Morenus served on the Vincennes University (Indiana) faculty as Assistant Professor of Piano, where she taught studio and group piano, organ, keyboard chamber music, and other music courses. In addition to numerous recitals at the university and around the city of Vincennes, she presented annual duo-piano recitals at Vincennes University and elsewhere in Indiana with California-based duo partner Marc Steiner. In addition to university teaching, Dr. Morenus has run independent piano studios in Austin, Texas and in her native Long Beach, California. She maintains an active performing schedule as a solo pianist, collaborative pianist and chamber musician. Dr. Morenus has embraced technology in both her teaching and her research. Her group piano students complete MIDI recording projects each semester; pedagogy students not only complete MIDI projects and do web-based research, but create their own websites. Dr. Morenus' university website includes examples of student projects in addition to MIDI files for all university group piano classes, MP3 files of her own concert performances, and links to group piano tutorials. Her dissertation research utilized the recording capabilities of the Yamaha Disklavier, in combination with computer analysis, to study advanced pianists' pedaling practices. Carlyn Morenus holds a D.M.A. in Piano Pedagogy from The University of Texas where her principal teachers were Martha Hilley, Sophia Gilmson and Lita Guerra. Influential teachers in music education included Robert Duke, John Geringer and Judith Jellison. She holds an M.M. in Applied Piano from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she studied with Howard Karp, and a B.M. in Piano Performance from the University of Southern California, studying with Robert Ward. Other influential teachers have included Dorothy Judy Klein, Malcolm Hamilton and Jean Barr. Along with her piano activities, Dr. Morenus has continued her life-long interests in organ and singing. She has sung with the Los Angeles Master Chorale and the Roger Wagner Chorale, and is currently a member of the New Texas Festival Conspirare Choir and the Victoria Bach Festival Choir. Tours have included appearances around the United States and Brazil. Dr. Morenus has held church organist positions in California, Wisconsin, Indiana and Texas, and is currently a free-lance organist.

Discussion: How do you cover Piano Methods in your Pedagogy classes?

Reporter: Carlyn Morenus

The final session of Saturday's Piano Pedagogy day dealt with piano methods. Participants discussed a variety of issues related to piano methods, with the majority of discussion centering on presentation, categorization, means of evaluation, selection of those to cover in class, supplementary materials and post-method literature, and choosing a method for pedagogy students to use in their own teaching.

Presentation of Piano Methods

A wide variety of presentation ideas was shared in all discussion groups. Many use traditional teacher lectures in combination with individual or group student presentations. Some teachers choose to present their own favorite method, or one they have authored; others did not wish to influence their students' decisions about choosing a method. Methods most often covered in classes are Alfred, Faber & Faber Piano Adventures and Music Tree; Bastien, Music Pathways and John Thompson also received attention.

Teacher lectures are usually combined with another form of presentation. Many teachers present one example of each major type of reading approach, and have students review others. Several teachers mentioned working with students to help them develop interesting presentations. Some pedagogy teachers involve local piano teachers, either having students observe teachers in lessons or inviting the teachers to come to class and talk about the method they prefer. Other ideas include browsing the methods together and sharing observations; using the traditional card file; or assigning reading of reviews from older *Piano QuarterlY* magazines for the older methods, saving class time for contemporary methods.

Because pedagogy courses vary in duration from one school to another, from one to four semesters, some schools are able to spend more time on methods than others. A typical pedagogy course will spend four to six weeks evaluating methods; at least one university has a separate course dealing with methods and pedagogical literature. For a teacher with limited course time, *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher* was mentioned as a methods reference. Many schools have students review only lesson books, while others include theory, repertoire, and/or activity books as well. At the far end of the spectrum, at least one school has students review every book of every method. Schools with more time available sometimes include adult methods in their study. Group piano methods are covered in a specific, usually graduate-level, group piano pedagogy course if they are covered at all.

Categorization and Evaluation of methods

Most pedagogy teachers categorize methods according to the approach to reading. When introducing representative methods, usually one example of each reading type is given.

With the addition of so many technological options, and the availability of so many supplemental books, some are now categorizing according to types of material or peripherals that are offered. Some consideration is given to historical versus contemporary methods, stressing the importance of understanding the development of piano methods over the years.

Although the grouping of methods is consistent, the means of evaluating them is quite varied. Students need the skills to evaluate new methods in the future as well as in pedagogy class. Some teachers provide a list of questions for students to answer about each method, and have the students study them individually. Others challenge students to develop their own set of questions to answer as they review methods.

A popular choice is to direct the evaluation starting from the reading approach. Other teachers guide students to look at each method to see what the author has used as key elements, then evaluate from that perspective. Another way to approach evaluation is to look at major topic areas, such as theory, rhythm, or technique, and evaluate each method in these areas. Alternatively, the quality of the music can be the focus for evaluation.

A particularly hands-on approach is for students to develop their own method concept first, laying out pacing and content in various skill areas; then look at existing methods to search for a method that fits their criteria. With this approach, students' own methods concepts evolve considerably over the course of a semester.

In another strategy, pedagogy students examine a method, asking what a pupil will have learned in 3 months or 6 months. They consider the type of student for which the method would be appropriate. Students consider what a particular student will need, and which method will meet that need.

Multiple methods and supplemental materials

After many methods have been reviewed, students are generally encouraged to consider different methods to fit different pupils. Increasingly, students are encouraged to consider mixing different methods with a single student. Supplemental materials, such as sheet music and holiday or popular books, are also encouraged. Extra challenges are inherent in mixing methods. Level 3 in one series does not necessarily correspond with Level 3 in another, and even if the general level is the same, some concepts may not have been introduced in both methods.

As pupils advance, it becomes especially important to use supplementary repertoire. This helps prepare both teacher and pupil for the day when the method books will be finished. This is a challenging transition for many teachers, as they often feel uncertain about how to choose appropriate repertoire when it is no longer prescribed for them by the method book. Choosing appropriate materials is a challenge, and pedagogy students need guidance in this area. Most pedagogy classes have little time available to treat this subject.

Some pedagogy courses include card file assignments, having students go through a variety of materials to evaluate their level and content. Jane Magrath's book on intermediate repertoire has been found to be very helpful; *Intermediate Piano Repertoire* by Alexander and Albergo also received mention. At least one pedagogy teacher has students compose pieces to satisfy particular techniques and concepts, as an aid in recognizing content and level in existing repertoire.

Choosing a method for student teaching

Pedagogy courses are intended to give students new information about piano teaching. Thus, it is no surprise that most pedagogy teachers require students to teach from a method they haven't used before. Some teachers require all pedagogy students to teach out of the same method, but most encourage individual choices. In fact, some guide students to choose a different method for each pupil.

Covering piano methods in a pedagogy course has the potential for being either overly challenging or boring. From the discussions that took place, however, it is clear that there is an abundance of material and a wide variety of approaches that can be used. In the words of one group leader, Ivan Frazier, "the boring methods survey can be gone forever."

Carlyn Morenus is Keyboard Area Coordinator at Illinois State University. Dr. Morenus joined the ISU faculty in 1999 as Assistant Professor of Piano and Coordinator of Group Piano. While completing doctoral studies at The University of Texas at Austin from 1996-1999, she was an Assistant of gorup piano. From 1990-1995 Dr. Morenus served on the Vincennes University (Indiana) faculty as Assistant Professor of Piano, where she taught studio and group piano, organ, keyboard chamber music, and other music courses. In addition to numerous recitals at the university and around the city of Vincennes, she presented annual duo-piano recitals at Vincennes University and elsewhere in Indiana with California-based duo partner Marc Steiner. In addition to university teaching, Dr. Morenus has run independent piano studios in Austin, Texas and in her native Long Beach, California. She maintains an active performing schedule as a solo pianist, collaborative pianist and chamber musician. Dr. Morenus has embraced technology in both her teaching and her research. Her group piano students complete MIDI recording projects each semester; pedagogy students not only complete MIDI projects and do web-based research, but create their own websites. Dr. Morenus' university website includes examples of student projects in addition to MIDI files for all university group piano classes, MP3 files of her own concert performances, and links to group piano tutorials. Her dissertation research utilized the recording capabilities of the Yamaha Disklavier, in combination with computer analysis, to study advanced pianists' pedaling practices. Carlyn Morenus holds a D.M.A. in Piano Pedagogy from The University of Texas where her principal teachers were Martha Hilley, Sophia Gilmson and Lita Guerra. Influential teachers in music education included Robert Duke, John Geringer and Judith Jellison. She holds an M.M. in Applied Piano from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she studied with Howard Karp, and a B.M. in Piano Performance from the University of Southern California, studying with Robert Ward. Other influential teachers have included Dorothy Judy Klein, Malcolm Hamilton and Jean Barr. Along with her piano activities, Dr. Morenus has continued her life-long interests in organ and singing. She has sung with the Los Angeles Master Chorale and the Roger Wagner Chorale, and is currently a member of the New Texas Festival Conspirare Choir and the Victoria Bach Festival Choir. Tours have included appearances around the United States and Brazil. Dr. Morenus has held church organist positions in California, Wisconsin, Indiana and Texas, and is currently a free-lance organist.

Using Video Feedback and Music Performance Checklists to Teach Student Self-Assessment "LIGHTS! CAMERA! ..."

by Michael Benson

We all remember our first experience with either being videotaped or videotaping someone else at play or in performance. I'm no different. I recall my mother and father purchasing a video camera and recording various family activities such as Christmas and birthday parties. Eventually, the video camera was focused on my sister and me at the piano and as you might discern, we were not overly excited about this opportunity to record our youthful musical indiscretions. I remember a comment my sister made while in the middle of a video session following an end of the year recital, "maybe these will be good for something when we are old." Little did we know how much we would listen and learn from those videotaped performances. The purpose of this article is to share how and why I prepare my independent and college studio as well as group piano students to grade or assess their own performances at the piano using video feedback and music performance checklists.

Five years ago I began videotaping my own teaching in applied and group piano lessons as a part of a graduate music education class designed to improve teaching skills. As I learned to assess my own videotaped teaching and became aware of the changes in my teaching, I was motivated to begin videotaping my group and applied piano students performances as well. After an initial adjustment period with videotaping, the students enjoyed viewing their taped performances and began to listen for important changes and musical characteristics they had rehearsed and I had modeled in class. Since grades were associated with these performance tapes, we needed specific goals or behaviors that were clearly defined and observable by every student. As I began preparing these music performance checklists, I realized that they represented personal musical values associated with each repertoire piece or functional skill and that this was being shared with them in written form. Since these checklists were designed to improve the acquisition of their respective musical skills at the piano, I wondered if it might be possible to have them grade their videotaped performances throughout the semester. In effect, their grades would be decided by the checklists that were developed and sequenced by me; and, since I was asking them to consider performing every behavior the way I would perform it, a *yes* and *no* checklist was sufficient. Either they performed the behavior listed on the checklist correctly and were given points accordingly or they did not (See Fig.1). This experience with my students was motivational for all of us and worked to improve student understanding of my musical expectations and in most cases, enhanced student success.

RESEARCH LITERATURE

Having shared these thoughts, it may be appropriate to review a portion of the research literature associated with video modeling and self-assessment.

Wetzel, Radtke, and Stern (1994) suggest that an important characteristic of video is its ability to convey a wide range of different types of information, and that these many functional forms are conveyed in realistic ways that combine motion and a variety of visual, audio, and textual information concurrently. Observation and research support the belief that video-based instruction has a positive effect on learning and that many capabilities of video would be difficult to achieve in alternative media such as books or verbal instruction only. Common applications of video recordings are data collection and analysis, instruction and information, modeling, scene setting, feedback and self-modeling (Dowrick, 1991). Video feedback provides knowledge of oneÕs actual performance which is an important role in learning motor skills (Adams, 1987; Carroll & Bandura, 1982) and also provides a basis for evaluating discrepancies that can be used to correct performance inaccuracies or behaviors.

The use of video media has also been researched and combined with self-assessment to reveal a substantial increase in defined skills of music fundamentals (Simpkins, 1981), music therapy students (Alley, 1980, 1982) and conducting students (Johnston, 1993; Yarborough, 1987; Yarborough, Wapnick, & Kelly, 1979).

The general conclusion to be drawn from this collection of music research studies is that visual based training that provides modeling and a self-assessment component can be an effective technique in learning motor skills (Wetzel et al., 1994). Video feedback has also been found to provide instructional information that can be used in making corrective changes during various skill acquisitions in music and other educational and recreational disciplines as well. For example, these video research techniques have been adopted in field studies on athletic skills or movements to provide a video demonstration as a form of mental practice or discrimination training prior to performance, or to provide video feedback during or following performance as a kind of corrective step. Also, the effectiveness of a video demonstration depends on the observer being trained to attend selectively to the videos critical performance features in order to form a cognitive representation of the skill to be performed or improved (hence, the music performance checklists). Several studies illustrate the use of video for repeated demonstrations given as a form of rehearsal and discrimination training to prepare the student to execute a skill. These studies investigated baseball pitchers (Burroughs, 1984), response time of tennis players (Haskins, 1965) and racquetball skills (Gray, 1990).

MUSIC PERFORMANCE CHECKLISTS

With these research studies in mind, I began to consider the benefits of video modeling and self-assessment in many areas associated with teaching beginning piano. First, let us consider using the video camera and a checklist as a teaching tool in the independent studio and group piano class. This is done by preparing a checklist of musical behaviors that should be taught during the lesson and reinforced while watching the videotaped performance. For example, for a beginning piano student it would be helpful to videotape one of the early repertoire performances and then ask him/her to consider issues associated with his/her physical adjustment (posture) to the instrument. I have composed a checklist of ten behaviors (See Fig. 1) for them to observe and asses during their first

video self-assessment.

Figure 1: Checklist - Proper Physical Adjustment to the Piano/Keyboard (Video Self-Assessment)

YES NO

____ ____ 1. Proper sitting position on bench (front half of bench, closest to piano)

____ ____ 2. Knees below front edge of keyboard

____ ____ 3. Bottom of feet on floor

____ ____ 4. Elbows at key level (adjust bench up or down)

____ ____ 5. Hands in lap (starting position)

____ ____ 6. Fluid motion in arm and wrist (during performance)

____ ____ 7. Finger leads to the keyboard before each note (during performance)

____ ____ 8. Curved fingers that support weight of arm (during performance)

____ ____ 9. Wrist leads away from keyboard after each note (during performance)

____ ____ 10. Hands in lap (ending position)

*GRADE: _____

*Each "Yes" answer is worth 10 points. So, multiply the number of correct behaviors times 10 to find out your grade. For example, if you had 9 "Yes" answers you would multiply 9xl0=90 and your grade would be an A-.

USING MUSIC PERFORMANCE CHECKLISTS

I provide this particular checklist during the first weeks of the term so the student in the group piano class can begin evaluating their posture or physical adjustment at the keyboard immediately. This is their first opportunity to evaluate their performance through video self-assessment and is a way of reinforcing the written and verbal instruction they have received in class. At this point, I have also modeled and verbally talked them through the steps of correct physical adjustment to the instrument in class and with class models (peers). As you might determine, if each of these behaviors is worth 10 points (on a 100 point scale) the student in the beginning group piano or applied studio lesson will usually decide that this is in their best interest and important to their

grade. In most cases the students do well because they know what is on the checklist and what will be expected when they are being evaluated or graded on future exams.

The checklist for a repertoire piece is an enjoyable one to create and sequence because you (the teacher) ask them to recognize musical concepts and markings that you value and listen for in performance. While they are watching and noticing correct performance behaviors, they are learning to be trained listeners and observers as well as developing good musical habits. This is rewarding if the ultimate goal of your class or teaching is to develop independent learners. Following is a checklist of 10 behaviors (See Fig. 2) for the video self-assessment of a repertoire piece for a beginning applied or group piano student. I also include the general topic of proper physical adjustment to the instrument on this checklist to reinforce proper posture and ultimately a healthier physical approach to the piano.

Figure 2: Checklist - Performance of *Scherzo*, Op. 39 No. 1, by Dmitri Kabalevsky (Video Self-Assessment)

YES NO

____ ____ 1. Proper physical adjustment (See checklist from Quiz 1)

____ ____ 2. Did you perform all the notes correctly?

____ ____ 3. Did you perform all the rhythms correctly?

____ ____ 4. Did you perform the left-hand *legato* throughout?

____ ____ 5. Did you perform the right-hand *staccato* throughout?

____ ____ 6. Did you start the performance *mezzo forte*?

____ ____ 7. Did you perform the *accents* in both hands in measure 8?

____ ____ 8. Did you perform a *cresc.* from measure 9 to measure 13?

____ ____ 9. Did you perform a *dim.* from measure 13 through measure 15?

____ ____ 10. Did you accent the *c* in measure 16 with the left hand?

*GRADE: _____

*Each "Yes" answer is worth 10 points. So, multiply the number of correct behaviors times 10 to find out your grade. For example, if you had 10 "Yes" answers you would multiply 10xl0=100 and your grade would be an A+.

The repertoire music performance checklists also serve as an opportunity for more music and attitudinal specific questions. For example, below the checklist I might ask these questions with regard to Kabalevsky's *Scherzo*. Were there any musical phrases that repeat? What type of musical shapes (patterns) are the left- and right-hands performing? What is your favorite musical part of this piece and why? Would you like to perform other pieces like *Scherzo*? How many times did you watch your performance video while grading your performance? If allowed the opportunity, would you videotape this piece again and why?

The physical adjustment (Fig. 1) and repertoire (Fig. 2) music performance checklists are meaningful because they ask the student performer to evaluate their videotaped performance using music criteria I provide for grading. It is educational for me to watch the student tapes and read their comments because I am more aware of musical concerns the students have and am able to address these issues in class rather than after an exam has taken place. I would like to add that I prepare checklists for most skills the students are practicing for their exam. The sequence of events associated with the checklists and grading is this:

1. prepare the assigned material after the initial class introductions and rehearsals;
videotape and grade the performance using the music performance checklists;
2. share their videotaped performance and self-assessment checklists with me for final thoughts and comments before the exam or proficiency;
3. final exam or proficiency.

Obviously, there are many opportunities for student success and improvement through teacher instruction, video feedback and student self-assessment.

In the five years I have employed this form of student self-assessment using video checklists, I am happy to report a positive student attitude toward these performance checklists and self-assessment exams. I believe it is due in part to the students realizing to what I am listening and observing (because of the music performance checklists) during the evaluation period. This instructional technique is time consuming but worth the effort. It is important because it reinforces class instruction and rehearsal, therefore, essential to the students becoming independent learners and musicians. This past year, I began requiring students in all my group piano classes to prepare their own repertoire checklists following the model repertoire checklists and mid-term exam. What I have observed is that students do transfer musical knowledge (when instructed to do so) from one checklist or performance to another and that they enjoy their piano experience as well as performing their respective pieces with more confidence and musical expression. For me, exams are much more enjoyable when I know the students are going to do well, and for them, it is success in music. So, "LIGHTS! CAMERA! MUSIC!"

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Challenging the Conservatives: Rationale for the Trial and Development of a Group Teaching Model at Tertiary Level

by Ryan Daniel

Since early times, people have been influenced by music of a variety of genres and styles, with its effects reaching across all ages, races and nationalities. Music today exists in a myriad of styles, including classical, jazz, indigenous, popular and others, and it continues to have a profound effect on human existence. Part of the cultural life of a nation is defined and shaped by its musical heritage, be it in the preservation of its traditional musical culture, the creation of new individual styles, or the eclectic development of alternative and new music. In the twenty-first century, all forms of media are saturated with music, the boundaries between traditional musical 'styles' continue to be eroded, and its influence continues to percolate. Music infiltrates homes, shopping centers, public transport, social activities and, indeed, is rarely absent from people's lives. In the western world in particular, the majority of people have access to or experience of learning a musical instrument, in either one or often many styles. Many study an instrument at school, whilst others take on the challenge of musical training later in life. Music has a prominent place in the world's cultures and the artistic output and education of its people.

Scientific research demonstrates the fact that music has a positive effect on the development of intellect, co-ordination and problem solving skills. As a result, many parents see it important for their children to engage in music lessons. Consequently, there exists a strong music lesson 'culture' in Australia. Thousands of private studio teachers operate throughout the country, in a distinct industry concerned with music teaching and the music lesson. The music lesson is now firmly entrenched as integral to arts education, and teachers, parents and children accept the basic tenets of the music lesson as standard. Whilst teachers vary in approach and method, the basic premise of the one to one lesson as being the most effective form of tuition is as yet uncontested, particularly in Australia. Whilst the content of music study and, indeed, lessons remains a focus for individual examining bodies and/or tertiary institutions, the structure and format of the traditional music lesson continues to focus primarily, if not exclusively, on the one to one approach. If only for this reason - and in the absence of substantial research evidence about the efficacy of this methodology vis a vis others, there would seem to be an urgent need for arts educators to subject the format and structure of the traditional one to one music lesson to research scrutiny. It is suggested here that in Australia in particular, there is relatively little current research concerning the music lesson, its content and format, and the possibilities of enhancing this model of instruction. As Ian Horsbrugh (1998) from the London Guildhall stated in his 1998 address to the National Heads of Tertiary Music in Australia:

Where then does this leave the traditional "master and apprentice" relationship that represents so much of the core of music education? That is the big challenge for all of us. Is the one-to-one lesson with a regular teacher so sacrosanct that we cannot at least examine whether it is the most efficient way of learning? Are there choices that provide

the continuation of the principles of the individual lesson but which seek out different ways of achieving the desired ends? (Horsbrugh 1998: 9)

In the standard one to one music lesson format, the teacher explains to the individual student orally and/or through demonstration various aspects of the discipline of music practice. The disciplines covered may include the techniques of fingering, articulation, phrasing, style and interpretation. In reality, a pedagogue with several students who learn via the one to one approach, will cover similar principles with each student. By taking into account the amount of information that is repeated by one teacher from lesson to lesson, the time that accumulates due to repetition is considerable, not only in terms of the same student from week to week, but in particular from student to student during any week. Some argue that it is necessary to observe each student's assimilation of the approach and the skills learnt via approved demonstration. It is suggested here that the practice predominantly in use at present is unnecessarily wasteful, probably inefficient, and leads to the student relying on the teacher for approval of all aspects of playing.

In fact, it is worth questioning the belief of many teachers that it is essential to hear every note that a student plays. Perhaps there is not enough faith shown in music students that they can develop to the degree that they do not need to have every sound and indeed performance approved by the mentor. Many teachers feel that their students are only worthy of public performance and/or approval when the teacher themselves feel the playing is appropriate. Does this not immediately create a potentially unproductive nexus between the student and the teacher, whereby the student feels that their playing always requires approval before venturing beyond the teaching studio, and they therefore become completely reliant on the teacher? As a result of this, their self-criticism and self-reflection in respect of their own playing remains essentially dormant and under-developed, unless the teacher takes a specific course of action in their teaching which will ensure that the necessary reflective skills are developed. At the same time, one can question the validity of a teacher's strict approval of any student's performance of a work, given the fact that it is usually the teacher's interpretation and not necessarily what the composer would have wanted. Might not student creativity and individuality often be stifled by the demands and, indeed, presence of some teachers? What are the reasons for many students being unable to progress and continue beyond their lessons at tertiary level? Are teachers guilty of neglecting the nurturing of self-teaching skills needed by students so that they can progress beyond their training? Are too many teachers taking an overly controlling interest in their students which, in turn, creates a dependency which becomes difficult, if not impossible, to break?

The inherited piano teaching approach

The piano lesson first came about in the 19th century, primarily as a result of the rapid dissemination of pianos and printed music, and the subsequent need for piano teachers. The industrial revolution and improvements in piano construction and design led to the rise of the piano as the prince of all instruments of the Romantic era. It became the vehicle for the virtuoso, the solo concert, and subsequently, a much sought after skill for many of the aristocracy and the general populous. The rise of the middle class saw the

influx of the upright piano into homes and the increase in the amount of entertainment centered around the piano. The result was the need for piano teachers, and they came forth in droves. Many were poorly qualified and as a result, a great body of pedagogues emerged that influenced the generations that followed. Of course, there were the 'master teachers', such as Czerny, Liszt, Leschetizky, Schnabel and others, who themselves and via their students produced pianists and pedagogues by the thousands. However, their methods remained centered on the master as the crux of the pedagogical model - most of the learning took place via the discussion, demonstration or the demands of the teacher. These pedagogues were, in fact, revered as gods, and by the middle of the 20th century, the development of a musical culture focussed on the teacher had reached its pinnacle.

These traditions have continued into the 21st century and they continue to dominate current teaching methods. Many instrumental music pedagogues have simply adopted and perpetuate an inherited approach to teaching. The staunch conservative institutions and pedagogues often refer to the traditions of the "great masters" of the European schools of the late 18th and early 19th century, and the long line of master teachers that goes back as far as Beethoven. In many circles however, methods have changed, and experimentation takes place. Why is it that music pedagogy in many institutions still exists as the dinosaur of tertiary education?

The problems of one to one teaching

The emphasis on one to one teaching, accepted as the norm in most music circles, can lead to significant problems. The most common of these is the reliance of the student on the teacher, and thus without the teacher, the student is not able to operate as a self-directed learning entity. Thousands of music graduates leave tertiary institutions after years of expert training, only to find that they cannot cope on their own, that they are unable to continue playing without the guidance and motivation of their "guru". The subsequent drop out rate is extremely high, with thousands of students left floundering or pursuing different careers. The one to one approach is often based around spoon feeding, demonstration, repetition, and the pedagogue supplying the answers and the direction by which the student should practise and perform. What is being done to promote independent thinking, self-appraisal and self-teaching techniques, and the internal processes towards performance, so that the student can become an independently operating entity on leaving their teacher? These issues seem to be neglected amongst piano pedagogy circles.

The antipodean approach

Australia in particular retains a conservative attitude towards music pedagogy, particularly at tertiary level, where the majority of instrumental instruction for first-instrument majors takes place via one on one lessons. This is partly a result of the history and development of Australian tertiary music schools, which for many years was based on European models and on the pedagogical attitudes of England in particular. For the majority of its relatively short history, Australia has looked further afield for the formation of its cultural training grounds. In fact, it is only recently that severe economic

rationalism has forced the refocus and revision of many tertiary music institutions courses and offerings. There is no better time to investigate the most pedagogically valid, time and cost effective methods of instrumental instruction.

Many other parts of the western world are experiencing and engaging in alternative approaches to the one to one model. This is most noticeably the case in the United States, where a great deal of experimentation as to the most effective means of teaching is taking place. Australia is lagging behind in pursuing similar investigations, clinging instead to the traditionalist model. Perceptions of the history of piano pedagogy are often misguided - it is interesting to note that the great "master" teachers are often thought of as having only taught in the one to one setting. However, history documents the fact that Liszt, Leschetizky and Schnabel, all formidable pedagogues, taught in both small and large groups, in addition to their work in one to one settings. There is also a great paradox in existence in the attitudes of many parents with regards to musical instruction, with many complaining of the high cost of instrumental instruction, but at the same time maintaining the attitude that to learn "properly', their son or daughter must go through this traditional process. Many educators in a variety of fields have engaged in thorough investigations as to the most effective means of dissemination of skills and information - it is time for musicians in this country to break free of traditions, to experiment and to explore alternatives.

New research in practice

My research focuses on alternative strategies for the teaching of piano at tertiary level. As a result of background research, literature review and initial data collection via interview which reveals significant shortfalls of teaching via the one to one method, the methodology has involved the rationale, design and trial of a new pedagogical model based around small group teaching. The focus of the small-group method is on developing the independent thinking, self-critical and reflective skills required by students for the ongoing development of performance skills. Piano majors in groups of three engage in weekly sessions lasting a maximum of an hour. The students are grouped according to their skill level and students are encouraged to attend other groups' sessions. For every student, each weekly session is mapped out in terms of requirements for background reading, research and/or listening, technical work and repertoire, in addition to sight reading or the presentation of quick studies. Students are thus able to prepare work well in advance and set themselves goals, The students are encouraged to work and practice together; they study similar repertoire at an appropriate level, engage in critical appraisal of their own and their colleagues' work, and actively pursue written documentation of their skill development by means of a practice journal. Potentially, this pedagogical model has the capacity to break the traditional reliance on the teacher for direction and approval. The priority is to make students learn to think for themselves, to teach themselves, and develop a musical independence that will serve them well on leaving tertiary study.

The pedagogical model has now been tested for one year and demonstrates enormous potential. The model is currently being revised and analyzed for its benefits and

implications for music pedagogy in the 21st century, with the intention of implementing this teaching model more broadly across the instruments within the Bachelor of Music program at James Cook University. The entire project thus far has generated considerable controversy - it has rocked the traditionalist music boat, irritated the conservatives, and bamboozled those students that have relied on one to one teaching for many years. It has been extremely surprising to encounter such conservative attitudes amongst students, other pedagogues, and especially musically untrained parents, who assume that pedagogy can only be effective using the one to one format. Whilst in its initial phase, the preliminary research proves many of the current attitudes wrong and students are beginning to see that there is more than one way to achieve high level performance skills.

Reference List

Horsbrugh, Ian 1998. Shape the future... rather than walk backwards into it. Lecture presented at the Queensland Conservatorium, October, pp. 1-13.

Australian pianist **Ryan Daniel** graduated from James Cook University in 1994 with a Bachelor of Music degree with First Class Honours and a University Medal. Whilst a student in Australia he was winner of numerous competitions and prizes including the Great Barrier Reef Piano Competition, the Douglas Smith Prize in Music, the Hugh Brandon Memorial Scholarship, and the North Queensland Concerto and Vocal Competition. In 1995, Ryan was awarded a postgraduate scholarship to study with Lamar Crowson at the University of Cape Town. Whilst in South Africa, he was a finalist in the Oude Meester National Music Prize, the ATKV Forte competition, and he recorded and broadcast for the SABC. For four years he was employed as a part-time teacher of piano, aural training, basic materials and harmony at the South African College of Music, University of Cape Town. Ryan holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Cape Town, with distinction for both practical work and his dissertation on the Beethoven Cello Sonatas. In 1999 Ryan returned to Townsville to take up a tenured position as lecturer in Music at James Cook University, where he is now responsible for the performance and professional studies subjects within the Bachelor of Music degree. Since returning to Townsville, Ryan has given numerous solo and ensemble recitals and was official accompanist for the Australian Festival of Chamber Music masterclass series in both 1999 and 2000. In 1999 and 2000, Ryan was invited to present masterclasses at the International Music House in Kuching, Malaysia. He is currently artistic director of the JCU/TCMC "Spring Chamber and Song Series", board member of the Concert Orchestra of North Queensland and professional member of the Music Teachers Association of Queensland Townsville Branch. He is currently a part-time Ph.D student at James Cook University where he is researching alternative strategies for tertiary piano teaching.

Memorization: Preparing for the Perfect and Not-so-Perfect Performance

by Ann Milliman Gipson

Although a perfect performance is certainly a desirable goal for all performers, for some pianists, a perfect performance may only be wishful thinking. While musicians strive to learn and perform music with as much accuracy as possible, a pianist should also be aware of the pitfalls that may occur during a performance. A slip of the finger or a missed note may confuse the tactile memory while the mind may wander and aural memory may be lost causing the performer to forget where he or she is in the music. Young performers as well as those musicians with years of performing experience all may be susceptible to memory slips and occasional mistakes. For some pianists, the ability to cover memory slips and play through mistakes seems quite easy and natural. For others, a memory slip or wrong note can impose an enormous obstacle, bringing the musical performance to a momentary halt. While this can be devastating for the performer, it is also unpleasant for the listener. The successful performer, however, in spite of mistakes, knows how to musically cover those mistakes to create a satisfying performance, for both performer and listener.

Ideally, prior to a public performance, the pianist should find performing opportunities for the purpose of testing his or her memory of the piece. Although perfect execution of the musical score must be demanded when memorizing music, such attention to detail may get in the way of the performer seeing and hearing the big picture of the piece. A big picture or broad scale approach to memorizing forces the pianist to view and hear the structural outline of the work.

Memorizing Structural Points

Memory work should include identifying starting points throughout the music. A pianist who has memorized starting points throughout a piece has an added amount of confidence in being able play to the end of the piece, in spite of possible memory slips or mistakes that may occur. Starting points normally should be located at important structural locations of the piece and should be learned forwards and backwards throughout the piece. The pianist should be able to play two or three measures at starting point "A" then jump ahead and play two or three measures at starting point "B" before jumping to starting point "C", etc. For added memory confidence, the pianist should be able to begin at the last starting point of the piece (for example, play two or three measures at starting point "C"), then play two or three measures at starting point "B", and continue tracing starting points backwards through the piece, until arriving at the beginning.

Memorizing the Harmonic Framework

Extracting harmonic progressions provides another method for hearing and seeing the structural outline. Although the harmonic structure of the work may have been studied during the early stages of preparation, after memorizing the work, a reliance on tactile

memory of certain passages may overshadow the actual harmonic progression. By playing the harmonies in a blocked position, from memory, the pianist can see and hear the chord progressions in their simplest form, thereby reinforcing the basic harmonic structure, and ensuring a memorized harmonic framework.

Simplifying the Passage

The learning process as well as the memorization of some music can be hindered due to dense writing and thick textures in the music. When learning a thickly textured work the pianist may simplify the passage; separating the most important musical lines from the accompaniment material included in the texture. Memory of some musical passages also may be enhanced by simplifying the texture. For example, when memorizing a passage of octave chords, the pianist may give so much attention to the specific notes of each chord that the melody in octaves is obscured. By playing the octave melody, from memory, then gradually adding the remaining accompanying musical textures, the pianist can focus on the most important musical elements of the passage. Although the specific notes of each chord must be learned and memorized correctly, in a performance, the musical line and rhythmic momentum of the music must be maintained. Simplifying the texture during the memory process can remind the pianist of what is musically important during the performance.

Improvising In a Musical Style

While reinforcement of memory will ensure some pianists of a performance uninterrupted by memory slips and mistakes, other pianists may need to learn to cover mistakes by learning to improvise in the style of the piece being performed. A pianist capable of covering his or her mistakes has the ability to keep the music going, continually playing to create a continuity of sound. Whether the pianist must cover a few wrong notes or a few measures, maintaining the style, texture, and harmonic language of the passage is essential to musically play through a mistake. Of course, the pianist must then have clearly memorized the formal and harmonic structure of the work as well as appropriate starting points to get the performance back on track.

For some pianists, the ability to improvise occurs quite naturally, while others feel threatened at the thought of creating music on the spot. These pianists, however, should remember that improvisation is a structured activity based on limitations that comply with the texture, rhythmic nuances, harmonic language, and any other characteristic unique to the style of the piece in question.

Improvisation is a skill that can be developed. When learning any skill, progress may be achieved more quickly by starting with a simple assignment. Instead of trying to improvise in the style of a Beethoven piano sonata or a Bach three-voice fugue, a pianist may have more success by choosing a simpler work from the same style period.

After choosing an elementary or intermediate-level piece such as a Beethoven "German Dance" or "Minuet in G" from the Anna Magdalena Bach Notebook, a first assignment might include the following: play phrase A as written; in phrase B, while playing the written left hand accompaniment, create a new melody in the right hand; the new melody in phrase B should be in a similar style to phrase A. As a next step, the pianist might try improvising a completely new B phrase, playing both a new melody and a new accompaniment. This type of activity should be practiced again and again, until the pianist feels comfortable playing in a particular musical style. Then the pianist should practice his/her improvisational skill on music that is being prepared for performance. Keep in mind that this type of activity is not intended to hinder regular practice, but is useful in developing the ability to play through mistakes or memory lapses that occur during a performance.

Achieving a Musical Performance Through Improvisation

When practicing improvisation in a more difficult work such as a Beethoven sonata, the pianist should limit improvisation practice to short segments of the piece, such as the exposition's first theme area or the closing theme of the exposition. The pianist should then choose a measure or two of the original work that will be replaced with an improvised version. Over a period of time, the pianist should begin to feel comfortable covering up mistakes in a performance setting by relying on his or her improvisational skills. As previously mentioned, some pianists naturally cover memory slips and mistakes. For other pianists, the development of this skill should be included as a part of their performance preparation. To achieve a musical performance, the performer must know how to handle mistakes and how to musically cover those mistakes to create a satisfying performance, for both performer and listener. Developing improvisational skills can improve the performer's ability to maintain a musical continuity in the performance.

Certainly, a pianist should prepare for the perfect performance. Perfect execution of the musical score must be demanded during the preparation phase. An accurate musical performance, either with the music or from memory, must be the goal. However, once a performance has begun, the pianist should turn his or her attention to making music; musically reacting to any mistakes or memory slips that may occur within each individual piece of music. Only then, will the pianist be prepared not only for the perfect performance, but the most musical performance possible.

Ann Milliman Gipson is Associate Professor of Music at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee where she teaches applied piano, class piano, and coordinates the piano pedagogy program. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma where she studied piano with Dr. Jane Magrath and piano pedagogy with Dr. E. L. Lancaster. She is active as a clinician, adjudicator, and accompanist, and currently serves as the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association State President. In addition to her university teaching, she also teaches in the OBU Preparatory Department, where she instructs precollege students and Keyboard Readiness, a class for five and six-year old children.

Piano Pedagogy Forum

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Table of Contents

The Lost Arts of Technique and Sight-Reading

by Victoria McArthur

Scene: A piano college entrance audition at a university in Anywhere, U.S.A.

1. Student approaches the piano and plays a stunning Chopin ballade and dazzling Mozart. The Faculty is rendered speechless.
2. The Faculty requests to hear a Bb major scale. Student has no idea of how to start, stumbles multiple times, finally stopping and excusing himself.
3. The student, by now perspiring profusely, is presented with a short, unfamiliar piece to sight-read. Without looking over the score, the student launches in and plays a halting, unmusical rendition. The Faculty is rendered speechless, this time for altogether different reasons.

Overheard after the audition: "We should never have asked for his scales or sight-reading."

Is this a true story? Yes, it is. Is there a problem? Yes, I believe there is. The problem is that this student's excellent performance on his pieces was indicative of who knows how many hours of practice on only these pieces, presenting a very skewed picture to the audition Faculty. Obviously this particular student could play those two audition pieces very well. Basing the student's admission solely on his performance of the demonstrated literature is risky in that it gives little insight into the tools he brings into the practice room that enable him to learn literature quickly, accurately, and with some degree of independence. Perhaps the most essential of these tools are technique and sight-reading, without which, pianists are severely handicapped throughout their professional lives.

Suzanne Guy, noted teacher, author, and lecturer has said that the two most common problems she encounters in transfer students are the lack of ability to sight-read, as well as deficiencies in technical training. "Taking care of sight-reading and technique will always be a teacher agenda. No one asks for scales or arpeggios, and poor readers hide behind their deficiencies by preferring to learn and perform music far above their reading level. As the years go by, their performance level slowly increases while the reading level is stunted. It is almost criminal for teachers to stand by and ignore this downward spiral." (personal communication, 2001)

In Steve Roberson's article, *Ten Habits of Highly Successful Piano Teachers* (American Music Teacher, Aug./Sept. 1993), he concluded by saying that these outstanding teachers all emphasized technique and sight-reading.

I do not believe that the audition case cited above is isolated. Unfortunately, these deficiencies may be more common than we would like to admit. If many contemporary pianists demonstrate a dearth of technical and sight-reading competency, then what is the problem and why does it exist?

Background

In the 18th and 19th centuries, keyboard players existed in a musical milieu where sight-reading with one's peers (chamber music, duets, etc.) was an everyday happenstance. Likewise, the practice of scales, exercises, and etudes were the "bread-and-butter" of pianists' fundamental training. There are many vivid written accounts of lessons and practice sessions consisting overwhelmingly of dry scales, exercises, and etudes. Reginald Gerig, in *Famous Pianists & Their Technique* (1974, Robert B. Luce) recounts a description of the teaching of Mr. Logier, a teacher in the early 1800s: "Éhe (Logier) had written three volumes of studies, which are all grounded upon perfectly simple themes, and progress by degrees to the most difficult onesÉthey put their fingers on the keys and learn to play scales; but all this, in the respective studies, with all the children at once, and always in the strictest time."

In the Present

In contrast, today's young pianist often fits piano study into a week chock packed with sports, dance, clubs, church, computer, homework, and other worthwhile undertakings. There is simply too little time allocated for piano lessons (national average lesson length is still 30 minutes) and piano practice. Psychologists have gathered mounting evidence that shows that physical skill development at tasks as complex as piano playing requires hours of accurate, on-task practice in order for good habits to ensue. Likewise, sight-reading research has found that sight-reading skill is mostly a result of spending many hours doing it; thus, the pianists who do not have the time nor the opportunities to play in ensembles or accompany often do not spend enough hours to develop the sight-reading tool. ((Lehmann, A.C., & Ericsson, K.A. (1993). Sight-reading ability of expert pianists in the context of piano accompanying. *Psychomusicology*, 12 (2), 142-161.))

Differences in Practicing for Performance Versus Practicing Sight-Reading

The following is a chart showing the differences in practicing for performance compared to sight-reading. The differences are readily apparent and show why we need to instruct students in specific sight-reading techniques.

Practicing for Performance

- Correct your mistakes.
- Look at hands when playing.
- The details are important.
- Correct fingering is essential.
- Incorrect and omitted notes are bad.

Practicing Sight-reading

- Don't correct mistakes; maintain rhythm and meter.

- Don't look at hands, except occasionally.
- The "big picture" is important.
- Get to the notes however you can.
- Incorrect and omitted notes are inevitable.

Permission granted: Oxford University Press

From: *Science and Psychology of Music Performance* (in press, release date of 2002), book chapter entitled Sight-reading: Developing the Skill of Reconstructing a Musical Score by Andreas C. Lehmann and Victoria McArthur

Are there other reasons for this problem? As teachers, we may not ourselves always strongly emphasize the importance of sight-reading and technique in the lesson. Part of this might be because our own piano lessons as students may not have stressed it. In many cases, we do not convey the sight-reading/technique message strongly enough to parents also. After all, in the case of pre-college students, convincing parents not to complain when they hear the same scale over and over is a matter of educating the parent, not necessarily the student.

As teachers, we need to spend time thinking about structuring motivation for achieving excellence at technique and sight-reading. Presently, there are vast and ever-growing numbers of competitions on the local through international levels. Overwhelmingly, these competitions evaluate memorized performances of the literature. At some local and possibly state levels, a portion of the adjudication is based on sight-reading and technical performance also. These events should be showcased and held up as laudable examples of attempts to fill the void. However, not all students are motivated by or are even capable of participating in these types of events.

What else can we do to encourage technical and sight-reading achievement?

1. Stress the importance of sight-reading and technique in EVERY lesson, not just when there is time left over.
2. Organize a lesson structure as well as a practice structure with record keeping as a component.
3. Spend time thinking about techniques to motivate students both individually as well as part of the group (within your studio, class, etc.).
4. Seek out and assign good materials. These materials should be pedagogically sound, well laid-out, attractive, and motivating to students.
5. Assign piano literature that also improves technique and/or sight-reading through the repetition of patterns.

Specifically, how can we as teachers achieve the above points?

Stress the importance

1. If we begin each lesson with sight-reading and/or technique, students will know that

we consider it important. If we wait until there are only a few minutes remaining in the lesson to begin hearing these items, that in itself sends a negative message.

2. For older students, a frank discussion of the merits of good sight-reading and technique is time well spent. We should find ways to interject other pianists' stories and advice about these issues also, whether it be from an advanced student who is a role model, a local piano "legend," or an internationally-acclaimed pianist with whom the student is familiar, etc. Perhaps an article in *Piano Explorer* could be a useful source for finding articles about applicable topics, written in "youth-friendly" language.
3. As mentioned earlier, including parents in this discussion is beneficial. If personal time is not available, perhaps an individual e-mail, or a letter or mass e-mail to multiple parents would serve as well.

Lesson structure

1. Investigate the possibility of a 15 minute lesson overlap (30-45 min. private/15 min. partner) with another student of similar level. During the 15 minutes that both students are sharing the lesson, sight-read duets, play scales in unison, comment on the others' performance, etc. In general, make music together using sight-reading and technique as the vehicle.
2. Some materials on the market have places to record attainment of various criteria such as accuracy, memorization, or tempo goals ((e.g., *Beautiful Etudes* Bks. 1-4 by McArthur (Alfred), *The FJH Classic First Scale Book* by McArthur and McLean, *The FJH Classic Scale Book* by McArthur and McLean, *Treasures in Technique* Bks. 1-3 by Rossi and Warren (FJH), *Let's Sightplay!* Bks. 1-4 by Massoud (FJH), *A Line a Day* by Bastien (Kjos). *FUNdamental Musicianship Skills*, Bks. 1-6 by Montgomery (Alfred), *My First Keyboard Warmups* by Olson (Alfred)).

If the materials you use do not have built in record keeping, consider making a progress chart out of poster board or colored, decorative paper. Record keeping of student progress is not only motivating for the student, it also helps the teacher keep track of the student's progress.

Motivation

1. Motivating younger students at the earlier levels is generally most effective when tied to some sort of game-like or themed approach. Try something fun like a *Sight Reading Pays Off* event where students get pledges of money from family or friends for each minute spent sight-reading (1 to 5 cents per minute) which is then donated to a good cause like the Humane Society or another charitable entity meaningful to students. For teachers into risk-taking, this could even be a public event!
2. Assemble sight-reading as well as technique "kits" for each level of piano study. Keep books, pieces, notes, etc. together in folders labeled by level for quick, efficient lesson reference.
3. Students will persevere through learning their scales if they know they will perform

them as part of a tuneful, musical duet. Useful materials with these goals are: *Get Ready for Major Scale Duets!* by Rossi and McArthur, *Get Ready for Minor Scale Duets!* by Rossi and McArthur, and *Get Ready for Pentascale Duets!* by Rossi and McArthur (all are published by FJH).

4. Summer camps for students in the studio (others may be invited also) with games and activities relating to technique and sight-reading can raise motivation levels tremendously during the lazy summer months. They also provide a source of teacher income.
5. Enrolling students in adjudicated local events, Guild auditions, etc. motivates many students, particularly those who are goal-oriented.
6. Older, more mature students, once they see the pay-off from their sight-reading and technical achievements, generally will be self-motivated to continue this practice as it becomes a habitual part of their practice routine.

Assign literature that is patterned

1. Much of the standard intermediate literature commonly in use today fits the bill. However, in addition to "pattern-ness," teachers also must consider the musicality of the literature as well as student appeal when selecting literature.

Selected Recommended Literature *Baroque-*

1. Many works by Bach. Delay the introduction of the *Two-Part Inventions* until after students have played some of the other contrapuntal works in the *Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach* as well as easy short prelude or fugues and Bach dances (*French Suites*, etc.)
2. Many of the suite movements by Purcell and Handel, and the fantasies by Telemann are effective.
3. Baroque-style settings of well known folk tunes are well-represented in Willard Palmer's *Baroque Folk* (Alfred).
4. Tasteful arrangements of famous Baroque melodies may inspire students to seek out the original. Faber & Faber's *PreTime to BigTime Classics* series (FJH) has many notable examples.

Classical- When seeking patterned literature, the Classical period is a treasure-trove of excellent examples.

1. The sonatinas of Kuhlau, Clementi, Diabelli,Czerny, Beethoven, etc. are well known and excellent for both sight-reading as well as technical development.
2. The variations of Mozart and Beethoven are also superb. Most useful for teaching are those variation sets having shorter movements.
3. Less known, but valuable, are the works of Hassler as well as the preludes of Clementi.
4. The dances of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven are not as well known as the longer works by these composers. Many of the German Dances, Landler, Country Dances, Ecossaises, etc. are lovely, playable, and very patterned.

5. Czerny's *First Instruction in Piano-Playing* contains delightful, patterned settings of well known tunes such as *Rule Britannia* and others.

Romantic- This period is the beginning of an "explosion" in piano literature written specifically for piano teaching purposes.

1. The many opus numbers dedicated to piano etudes written by Cornelius Gurlitt, Jean-Baptiste Duvernoy, Ludvig Schytte, Stephen Heller, Johann Friedrich Burgmuller, Albert Loeschorn, and others contain numerous beautiful and effective pieces for study as well as performance.
2. Grieg's ten books of *Lyric Pieces* provide expressive and descriptive teaching material.
3. Many of the works of Chopin are somewhat patterned, particularly the easier preludes and waltzes as well as selected mazurkas and polonaises.
4. Schumann's *Album for the Young* contains many gems, well known to most teachers.

Modern (Contemporary) The tradition of writing specifically for piano students has continued to the present day.

1. Many of the easier works by Bartok are effective with students. Recommended are selections from *For Children, Ten Easy Pieces, First Term at the Piano, Romanian Folk Dances*, and *Mikrokosmos* (especially Vols. 1-3). Regular exposure to the pentatonic/modal sounds of Bartok works wonders to break down psychological "barriers" to dissonance.
2. The easier works of Gretchaninoff, Rebikov, Kabalevsky, and Khachaturian are excellent choices for teaching rhythmic and melodic patterns.
3. Donald Waxman's multi-volume *Pageants* series (Galaxy) contains superb examples of arrangements as well as original works clothed in playable patterns demonstrating modern sounds.
4. Over the past 30 years, educational piano publishers have promoted the works of many effective composers whose music is ultra-patterned as well as extremely appealing to students. Many, but not all of these composers sometimes write in pop-like harmonic language. Selected examples are: Dennis Alexander, Margaret Goldston, Martha Mier, Catherine Rollin (for Alfred); Melody Bober, Timothy Brown, Nancy Faber, Kevin Olson (for FJH); James and Jane Bastien, Eugenie Rocherolle (for Kjos); Robert Vandall (for Myklas); William Gillock (for Willis); Lynn Freeman Olson (for Carl Fischer and others); Jon George (for Warner Bros. and others).

Other Recommended Materials Not Specifically From Any Single Historical Period

For Sight-Reading

Let's Sightplay!, Bks. 1-4 by Kathleen Massoud (FJH)

Artistry at the Piano, Bks. 1-4 (especially *Repertoire and Ensemble*) by Jon and Mary Gae George (Warner Bros.)

New Pageants Reader Series, Bks. 1-3 (Galaxy)

A Line a Day SightReading by James and Jane Bastien (Kjos)

Alfred's Group Piano for Adults, Bks. 1 and 2 by E.L. Lancaster and Kenon Renfrow with MIDI accompaniments and/or CDs (Alfred)

The Hal Leonard Student Piano Library with MIDI accompaniments and/or CDs (Hal Leonard)

Piano Adventures Lesson and Performance with MIDI accompaniments and/or CDs, primer through level 5 (FJH)

Sightread Successfully, Bks. 1-3 by Louise Guhl (Kjos)

For Technical Training Materials discussed fall under the categories of: etudes, five-finger exercises, exercises outside the five-finger patterns, "traveling" pattern exercises, standard piano patterns, and "away from the piano" exercises.

Etudes (pieces designed as "studies") *Criteria for selection*: musical appeal as well as technical effectiveness and efficiency of use.

Beautiful Etudes, Bks. 1-4 (3 and 4, in press) by Victoria McArthur (Alfred)

Piano Repertoire: Etudes, levels preparatory-10 by Keith Snell (Kjos)

The Best Traditional Piano Etudes, Bks. 1 and 2 by Lynn Freeman Olson (Alfred)

25 Progressive Studies, Op. 100 by Johann Friedrich Burgmuller (many editions)

Op. 108 by Ludvig Schytte (currently out-of-print)

Op. 101, 117, 140, 82, 131 by Cornelius Gurlitt (many editions)

Etudes Brutus by Paul Sheftel (Alfred)

Technique Teasers by Jeanine Yeager (Kjos)

50 Etudes, Bks. 1-4 by Donald Waxman (Galaxy)

Piano Adventures Technique & Artistry by Faber, Faber and McArthur (FJH)

Five-Finger Exercises; Also, Exercises Moving Beyond Five-Finger Patterns

Schmitt *Preparatory Exercises Op. 16* (many editions: McArthur/FJH; Palmer/Alfred, etc.)

Piano Adventures Technique & Artistry by Faber, Faber and McArthur (FJH)

Freedom Technique by Joan Last (Oxford Press)

A Dozen a Day by Burnam (Willis)

Liberation & Deliberation in Piano Technique by Roeder (G. Schirmer)

"Traveling" Pattern Exercises (exercises that move up and down via a pattern)

Schmitt *Preparatory Exercises, Op. 16* (many editions: McArthur/FJH; Palmer/Alfred, etc.) Hanon

The Virtuoso Pianist (many editions)

Piano Adventures Technique & Artistry by Faber, Faber and McArthur (FJH)

Freedom Technique by Joan Last (Oxford Press)

Artistry at the Piano: Musicianship by Jon and Mary Gae George (Warner Bros.)

The Music Tree by Frances Clark, Louise Goss, and Sam Holland (Warner Bros.)

A Dozen a Day by Burnam (Willis)

"Away from the Piano" Exercises (exercises done on a tabletop or the closed key cover)

Piano Adventures Technique & Artistry by Faber, Faber and McArthur (FJH)

Artistry at the Piano, Introduction to Music by George and George (Warner Bros.)

Conclusion: A solid grounding in a relaxed, efficient piano technique, and confident sight-reading skill are two of the most significant and lasting gifts we can give our students. While their recollection of many of the pieces of literature we teach them may grow faint over time, these two skills will provide them with the necessary tools to be independent learners in their future experiences at the piano. Without these tools, the wonders of our vast heritage of piano literature will remain largely unattainable.

Victoria McArthur is Program Director of Piano Pedagogy and Coordinator of Group Piano at Florida State University. She is an expert in cognitive psychology and motor learning, and publishes articles and lectures in the U.S. and abroad on topics such as sight-reading, practice, movement patterns of pianists relating to technique, and effective teaching strategies in the piano studio. Dr. McArthur has written the Music for Study reviews for *Piano Quarterly* and *Piano and Keyboard* magazines for 8 years, and currently serves on the Editorial Board of *Piano and Keyboard*. She is co-author of the *Piano Adventures* theory books and technique and artistry books (with Nancy and Randall Faber), and has over 30 publications with FJH Music Co. She served as Senior Editor for FJH Music Co. from 1990-1998. She currently is Keyboard Editor for Alfred Publishing Co. where she continues writing materials for piano instruction at all levels. McArthur also teaches both private and group lessons in her independent-piano studio, *McArthur & Musical Associates*, serving approximately 80 young and not-so-young students.

Philosophical Challenges From Students: "What's the 'Bottom Line?'"

by Scott Price

Group piano teaching and education has almost become a sub-discipline under the umbrella of Piano Pedagogy. Publications from the Music Educators National Conference, Proceedings from the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, Proceedings from the Music Teachers National Association Pedagogy Saturday, the National Group Piano/Piano Pedagogy Forum, the former National Group Piano Symposium, unpublished dissertation studies and surveys, currently available group piano texts, articles and book chapters, conference presentations, listservs, and columns in this internet publication all demonstrate that group piano instructors have many beliefs, curricular ideas and teaching techniques that support the discipline. We have many beliefs about the education of students and about the education and training of graduate students who will serve as future educators in the area of group keyboard instruction. Among these many philosophies of teaching group piano, is there one that addresses the courses and curriculum from the student's perspective?

Lecture-demonstrations, articles, presentations, and conference discussions focusing on motivation, teaching techniques, technological applications, curriculum/text development, piano proficiency, learning styles and outcome measurement are all crucial to the success of the group piano instructor. However, I also feel that they work only when weighed in balance against a healthy dose of student pragmatism. Graduation and grades can only go so far in motivating students to learn skills. If students bring to the class a feeling of necessity in learning keyboard skills, then the process becomes a bit less painful for both sides in the teacher/student equation.

The question then becomes "What is the bottom line for the student?" Required mastery of some level of keyboard skills usually comes as a shock to most non-keyboard music students entering college. The courses have a reputation for being difficult, and students see them as just another unrelated and useless requirement in the system. The saturation of the marketplace with youth-directed products has made many young people wary of the very systems that will grant them a degree in music. Young people often enter college with a shrewd outlook and are no longer afraid to ask tough questions of their instructors. They want to know the what and why of keyboard instruction. "Why do I need to learn these skills", "What am I going to use this for?" and "Give me a good reason to do this work and learn this skill" are very fair questions to ask when spending a great deal of money for an education. Do we, as instructors, have the answers and do we respect the students enough to give them the answers they need and deserve?

Over the course of nine years of group piano instruction, I have found it useful to begin each semester with a brief explanation of the course to the students complete with answers to the questions posed in the preceding paragraph. I instruct my graduate students to do the same. The result has been a remarkable change in attitude, work habits, and a general increase in level of mastery of the curriculum.

The following list contains some of the explanations that I give to the class at the first meeting. I fully realize that these ideas are "old hat" for readers and may seem like a painful revisiting of obvious concepts. However, entering freshmen are new to the entire system and deserve at least a basic explanation of the tasks before them. They respect the justification of "What" and Why" and are more willing to spend time in the classroom when given the master plan. These "reasons for study" are not given all at once but as new activities are taught to give justification for paying attention and learning the skill. Not all of the reasons are necessary all of the time and I generally pick and choose as the situation warrants.

The National Association of Schools of Music. All college and university faculty are aware of the National Association of Schools of Music and their requirements for standards and accreditation. Although college-level instructors are aware of the needs and issues involved in creating national NASM standards, the keyboard skill requirement (now including improvisation) means little if nothing to students. Most students don't know what NASM is, why it makes requirements, or why they should even care. Students will understand the requirement if they are shown how keyboard skills complement the comprehensive nature of their musical education and prepare them for the demands of the workplace.

Secondary Instrumental Study. Being able to apply learned skills to another foreign instrument is a measure of how well one really understands the basics of the musical craft. Application of skills to another instrument also clarifies and cements basic concepts in the primary area of applied study. Secondary instrumental study can make students more marketable in the employment arena. It can also supplement and provide remedial instruction in music skill weaknesses.

Music Theory. Non-keyboard music majors, with the exception of some percussion instruments, harp, and guitar, experience theoretical concepts in a linear fashion. Notes unfold one-at-a-time, and students experience the full complement of the harmonic structure when working with their accompanist-if one is available. Through keyboard study, students can fully experience and apply the knowledge learned in music theory classes at the keyboard thereby fully understanding the concept and, most importantly, making it work for themselves.

Music Reading. To successfully read music notation at the keyboard, students must learn to conceptualize printed notes as black and white key patterns. Fingering patterns are then applied allowing students to execute their musical knowledge at the keyboard. A brief explanation of this skill and how it can transfer to students' major instruments can strengthen reading skills by transferring the conceptual idea to the mechanics of other instruments.

*Improvisation.*Improvisation can be a very accurate and personal measurement of general music skill understanding. If students can take a set of basic guidelines and create music at the keyboard, they truly understand the theoretical concepts and can make them work in the "real world".

*Composition/Creative Activity.*Through harmonization, creation of accompaniment patterns, and ensemble creative activities, students gain practical skills that have direct impact on their ability to function in their chosen career field. These skills are not just silly keyboard activities they have to do in class to satisfy a piano proficiency examination. These skills have direct application in the classroom and can be used to accompany and facilitate a choral rehearsal, elementary music class, or music appreciation class, or in creating simple arrangements for elementary of middle school band ensembles. The keyboard is the medium that facilitates these skills.

The group piano class is a teaching laboratory. The keyboard is the medium for practical applications of comprehensive music skills. It is a laboratory where students may take the concepts they learn in other coursework and apply them in a practical way with immediate and measurable results. Instructors know this and work tirelessly to bring students along on the journey. Perhaps a little explanation at the beginning will make them more willing participants.

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Rethinking the College Piano Proficiency

by Mary J. Tollefson

When a discussion of college group piano occurs with colleagues, I have often found that we all seem to be fighting an uphill battle regarding student motivation and success rate. More specifically, music education majors who are required to take a piano proficiency often approach the course (or courses) as a proverbial "hoop," with the attitude to do whatever is the minimum **only** to get on with the rest of the requirements for their degrees. In the beginning, all students tend to be hopeful and eager to learn piano, but by the end their main desire is to pass the proficiency. Since many of us who teach these courses are pianists, we often wish students could be more interested in improving and acquiring skills at the keyboard (less concerned about doing the minimum to pass the piano proficiency), that their musicianship would be readily perceptive in their piano playing as it is in their primary instrument studies. How can we rethink the approach to group piano to make students more interested in attaining the most desirable goals rather than the minimum standards? Based on casual observations of students and some current research, two topics seem worth considering: the practicality of keyboard skills being taught and the use of more formal evaluation procedures. First, many students seem to lack interest in practicing beyond the minimum requirement because the practicality of the skills seems so far removed from the college keyboard classroom situation. This became apparent to me when I realized that only one of the major ensemble directors at our college ever used piano skills in rehearsals as the director. Students do not observe piano skills being used regularly in the college ensembles, the one role model most similar to their future career in music education. How are music education majors supposed to understand the benefits of having piano skills when they go out to the secondary or elementary schools? Second, the keyboard skills class would benefit from a variety of ways of testing piano skills. Assessments might include self-evaluation, checklists and more reliable evaluation forms. If evaluation drives instruction, can the evaluation procedure be more clearly defined (for both student and teacher) and, furthermore, allow for the student to make "real life" choices that may come up in a future classroom situation (beyond the keyboard skills course!).

In an effort to be more practical in my keyboard skills class, 893 state music educators completed a survey regarding their college piano proficiency and how these skills were used in their classrooms. As one would expect, 90% of music educator respondents said they used the piano in the classroom; furthermore, 96% of respondents *who completed a piano proficiency* used the piano in the classroom. Obviously, the piano proficiency requirement does have a positive impact on current music educators. One of the questions asked in the survey was **how** music educators used their skills in the classroom. Many choices were given (see the following). Some respondents reported using all skills in the classroom (anywhere from 29% to 90%).

4. Play accompaniments to melodies...
5. Harmonize melodies with no given harmonization
6. Play instrumental and vocal accompaniments

7. Transpose a single part to concert key
8. Play two or more parts from multiple staves
9. Play two parts, transposing one or more parts
10. Play piano repertoire
11. Improvise music at the piano
12. Play jazz piano (styles)...
13. Demonstrate teaching piano, technique and interpretation

My question begins with the following: if these skills are all being used in the classroom, why do students not perceive them as important during their undergraduate college courses? I believe the answer lies within the completion of an assignment in the group piano class. For example, most group piano texts address harmonizing and playing folk tunes at the keyboard in a variety of piano accompaniment styles. Will the classroom music teacher accompany a folk song in the classroom? While this is more likely to occur in the general music classroom, 90% of the music teachers responded that they had done so in their current job situation. How similar is the accompaniment of folk songs in the classroom situation to the performances done in the undergraduate music education course? How close can we get to a realistic situation in the college group piano classroom? One approach is to have students learn to sing and play simultaneously. Additionally, can the student stand, sing and play (How many general music teachers do you know that **sit** behind the piano)? While there are multiple pianists performing in the group piano classroom, does the student have a solo performing opportunity to accompany a class of singers (i.e. fellow keyboard students)? Goals might be more approachable if piano performance in the college group piano course is more similar to the classroom use, rather than simply being able to play an accompaniment to a folk song for a quiz or exam.

A second example is score reading. Seventy-seven percent of respondents in this survey said they play two or more parts from multiple staves in the classroom. Obviously, this is a keyboard skill that needs to be taught in the classroom. What I have found, however, when questioning my college group piano students is that many cannot picture a situation where they would do this (obviously choral students have a good idea). So my students and I began to discuss what kind of situation we would be using score reading. While I am sure there are many others, here are the primary uses that the students decided were a possibility in their future career: learning a score (personal use) and rehearsing (modeling parts, playing parts not present in the rehearsal and keeping the ensemble going by giving entrances). Should practicing score reading in college courses reflect any or all of these functions? One way I have found to make score reading more practical in class is to allow students the opportunity to rehearse a score in front of the rest of the class. The student must choose specific parts to rehearse, must to be able to model at least two parts simultaneously at the keyboard, model the articulation of one part at the keyboard and play all entrances when the section of the score is finally played by all "instrumental" or voice parts (sometimes this works where the other students get to practice their transposition of an instrumental part as well). Students who have even minimal piano skill suddenly take great interest in the course, show some confidence in their ability and begin to see an advantage to rehearsing from the keyboard rather than on their own

instrument. This is not going to work for every rehearsal situation in their future, but I do find the students more accepting of how their keyboard skills may be beneficial in their futures.

The second approach I would like to discuss is more variety in assessing piano skills. Whether it is applied music or the college group piano course for music education majors, there is always uneasiness about how to grade students. I believe this problem can be relieved to some extent by examining how we deliver feedback in the classroom and how we set up evaluation procedures for testing. Feedback in the classroom must reflect the expectations for assessment. When you introduce an assignment, does the student understand the goal beyond learning notes and rhythms? For example, if the piece "Scherzo" by Kabalevsky is assigned, are articulation and dynamics introduced as well? While some students may be comfortable with playing blocked chords in tempo during the first time this piece is introduced, there are always a few students in the class who can play the piece as written. Ask these students to play the piece:

Teacher: "The second beat of each measure is to be played staccato. Can you demonstrate how the second beat should sound?"

Student plays the second beat staccato, but the lengths of each eighth note are different.

Teacher: "Great job on separating the staccato notes. However, both notes should be equal length. Try it again, this time making the eighth notes exactly the same length."

Student plays the second beat staccato, and now the lengths of the eighth notes are the same.

Teacher: "Yes. Now the eighth notes are separated and the same length." Addressing another student, "Can you demonstrate as well as the last student did?

By including some feedback such as this, the students now understand that more is expected beyond the notes and rhythms. Furthermore, less advanced students have had another opportunity to hear the piece played by someone besides the teacher. Finally, if you include opportunities for solo performance by other students in the class, addressing more issues, the students suddenly become aware that they may be called on next and should be prepared. As the repertoire and other music increases in difficulty, limit the number of measures you introduce in class, but make sure that students demonstrate a polished performance of a few measures, giving students a clear idea of what the ultimate goal is for the whole piece.

Because the student is more aware of the goal for an assignment in keyboard class, both teacher and student need to clearly understand how the student's performance will be assessed. Since the teacher has discussed musical aspects as well as notes and rhythms, all of these ideas will contribute to the grade. One way to be completely clear is to use a checklist that can be assessed "Yes" or "No" (the musical aspect is or is not present).

Some examples of the most obvious statements on the list would be the following:

- Play at the correct tempo
- Play correct notes
- Play correct rhythms
- Continue at the same tempo throughout (depending on the piece)
- Demonstrates dynamics (as indicated)
- Demonstrates articulation (as indicated)
- Plays with clear pedaling, etc.

To discuss the use of checklists more thoroughly, see Michael Benson's article in Volume 4, No. 1 of Piano Pedagogy Forum.

Another way to keep the student involved in meaningful tasks during group piano class is to provide opportunities for self-evaluation. While practice is more structured in the instructional process, I have observed students practice by playing through the piece several times, hoping that the performance will eventually improve. In an effort to teach students to be more effective, a self-evaluation form is a possibility. My self-evaluation form has three parts: articulating positives, identifying a weakness, and how to improve that weakness for the next performance. To make sure students are aware of their strengths, I ask them to identify three specific, positive ideas regarding their performance. Positive comments can be as simple as "I never stopped throughout the performance." Second, the student identifies a weakness, which will also be the goal for next performance. The goal must include five steps in a procedure to improve the weakness. Many students will choose "be more accurate" as their weakness. By requesting five steps in the procedure to improve accuracy, students are challenged to get beyond simply playing through the piece and hoping for the best. While the teacher cannot be around for daily practice, this self-evaluation has provided the opportunity for students to articulate ways to practice, such as practicing at a slow tempo with a method for gradually increasing speed and practicing in small sections until they can play each section numerous times accurately and without mistakes.

Finally, combining assessment and practicality, students are given the opportunity to choose how they would like to use their keyboard skills in a project. Four choices are offered: accompanying an instrumentalist or vocalist, rehearsing a section of a choral score, rehearsing a section of a chamber piece and composing accompaniments for beginning instrumental or vocal method exercises. Students arrange for the needed soloists or small ensemble (often they use other students in the class) and determine how they will present the project to the class. All students must be prepared to announce their project to the class (the piece, the composer, the soloist or ensemble members if it is not class members). Along with playing at the piano, the student has other responsibilities. For instance, if the student decides to accompany a clarinet soloist, he must tell me where the soloist will stand in relationship to the piano, tune the clarinetist prior to the performance, and acknowledge when the soloist is ready (must be observable by a nod, etc.). The student needs to find a project in which he or she is most confident; for instance, a less advanced student might not want to rehearse a fugal section from

Handel's *Messiah*. Because I know not every student will be able to play every accompaniment out in the real world, students are allowed to work on simplifying introductions and interludes for the best performance possible. Because junior high and high school solo and ensemble contests are extremely popular in Wisconsin, this assignment has proved to very productive for the students and me.

While the ideas provided here may not work for each person's teaching style, they are offered as alternatives to current traditions in college group piano instruction for the music education major. In an effort to improve student interest and success, the curriculum must learn to reflect how piano skills will be used beyond the classroom. Furthermore, if students see a relationship between how material is presented and how it is assessed, the importance of keyboard skills for a future musician and music educator should become more relevant and sustain students' interest.

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Narrative Modes of Thinking Applied to Piano Pedagogy

by Ivan Frazier (reprinted by permission of the World Piano Pedagogy Conference)

Jerome S. Bruner (1986), the eminent psychologist and educator, relates the experience of observing a teacher, Miss Orcutt, who told her class, "it is a very puzzling thing not that water freezes at 32 degrees Fahrenheit, but that it should change from a liquid into a solid." In describing the lesson Bruner noted that the students were invited into a realm where molecules, Brownian movement, solids, liquids were not merely bald facts and figures but a means for imagining and pondering possibilities. Triggering the invitation was the simple, but vivid narrative relating water's transformation from a liquid to a solid. Bruner called Miss Orcutt, "a rarity among teachers, a human event rather than a transmission device (p.127)." Immediately after my first encounter with Miss Orcutt's science lesson I began to reflect upon essential basic musical learnings for pianists that are just as barrenly factual, just as potentially dull as 32 degrees Fahrenheit. I came up with things like the five-finger position, scales, major and minor, and cadence progressions like tonic to subdominant to dominant seventh to tonic again. Then I remembered musical events that exemplified these basic elements in imaginative and arresting ways, such as the opening of Beethoven's "Emperor" Piano Concerto where it seems as though we are hearing that I - IV - V7 - I progression for the first time in our lives or, the first pages of Richard Strauss's "Also Sprach Zarathustra" which reveals the conflict between major and minor as new and elemental once more.

Narrative thinking embraces the particular, the concrete, the here and now, where the horizon of possibility expands, and the familiar seems new again (Bruner, 1990, 1996). Truth, in the rational, scientific sense is the province of paradigmatic thinking where higher and higher abstraction transcends the particular (Bruner, 1986, pp.11-14).

Last spring at the University of Georgia I had occasion to describe the C-sharp Major Prelude from the first volume of J. S. Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier in narrative terms. I said it was lively and frolicsome due its three-eight meter and the invertible counterpoint in which the left hand chases the right through a well-contrived maze of related major and minor keys. Alternatively I might have described the piece this way. In three-eight meter the subject begins with the right hand in the tonic key followed by its imitation by the left hand in the dominant, as the right hand takes the countersubject over from the left hand. Then the right hand repeats the subject in D-sharp minor, the subdominant of the relative minor. Continuing the process the left hand imitates the subject etc., etc., etc.

Now, in no way do I wish to minimize the value of this type of analysis and the paradigmatic thinking it requires. But, I don't think it provokes much excitement when introducing or trying to revive interest in a piece of repertoire. Narrative thinking and language like that used in my first description can awaken curiosity and fascination, which can generate the energy needed to find out what it means that the left hand chases the right, and to explore that maze of related keys to see where it leads with all its turns and cadences along the way. Students may then find the motivation to do the hard work needed for objective analysis and diligent practice.

Narrative thinking induces a use of language that creates gaps in meaning or action that recruit the reader or listener to fill. In my description of the Bach Prelude there is a gap between imitative counterpoint and the prospect that the left hand should chase the right hand as if one person were chasing another. Furthermore setting the chase in a maze is some distance away from the key changes the composer made. According to Jerome Bruner (1986, pp. 22-23) there is an interplay between vertical and horizontal axes. The vertical is a selection or substitution among individual words or expressions, such as, using the Bach example, "counterpoint, inversion, imitation etc.," or substitutes like "chase, follow, mimic, parrot, ape" as metaphors (Figure 1).

Figure 1

V
E
R
T
I
C
A
L

APES

PARROTS

MIMICS

FOLLOWS

HORIZONTAL **L. HAND CHASES THE R. HAND** *AXIS*

IMITATES

INVERTS WITH

MAKES COUNTERPOINT WITH

A

X

I

S

The horizontal axis is the sequential arrangement of expressions into a syntax that produces some sense of meaning. From the context the reader or listener fills the gap by finding implicit meanings, and multiple perspectives. Because there is not time to get into more technical analysis of narrative, let it suffice to say that the reader or listener receives narrative by re-composing it for him or herself in the context of the here and now.

In piano instruction students often encounter folk or other melodies and the challenge to harmonize them. To illustrate the vertical (Figure 2) and horizontal (Figure 3) axes available at one cadence point in the song, "O When the Saints Go Marchin' In" we will use the portion that says "...Oh, How I Want to be in That Number..."

Figure 2.

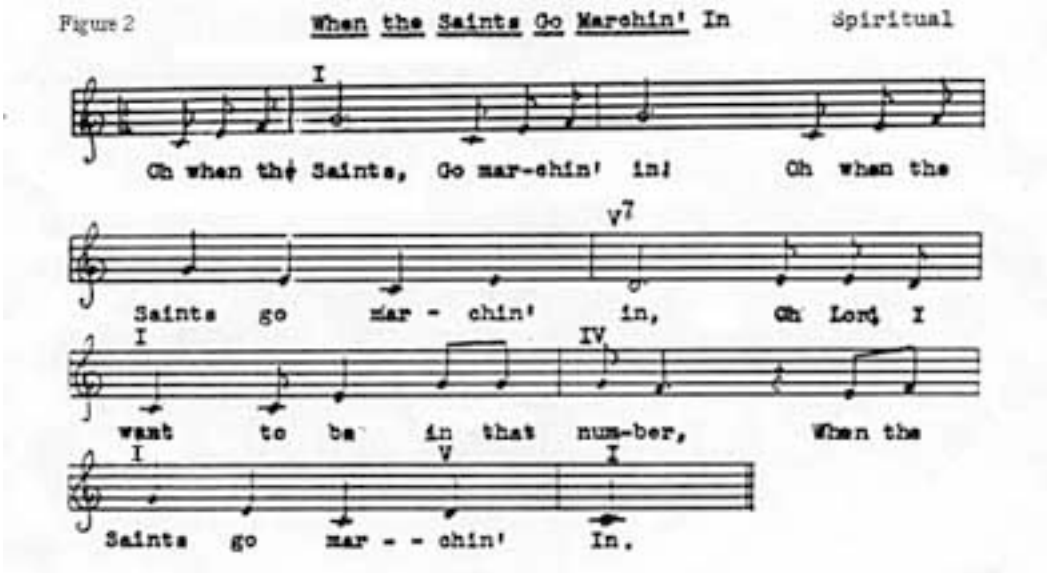

Figure 3.

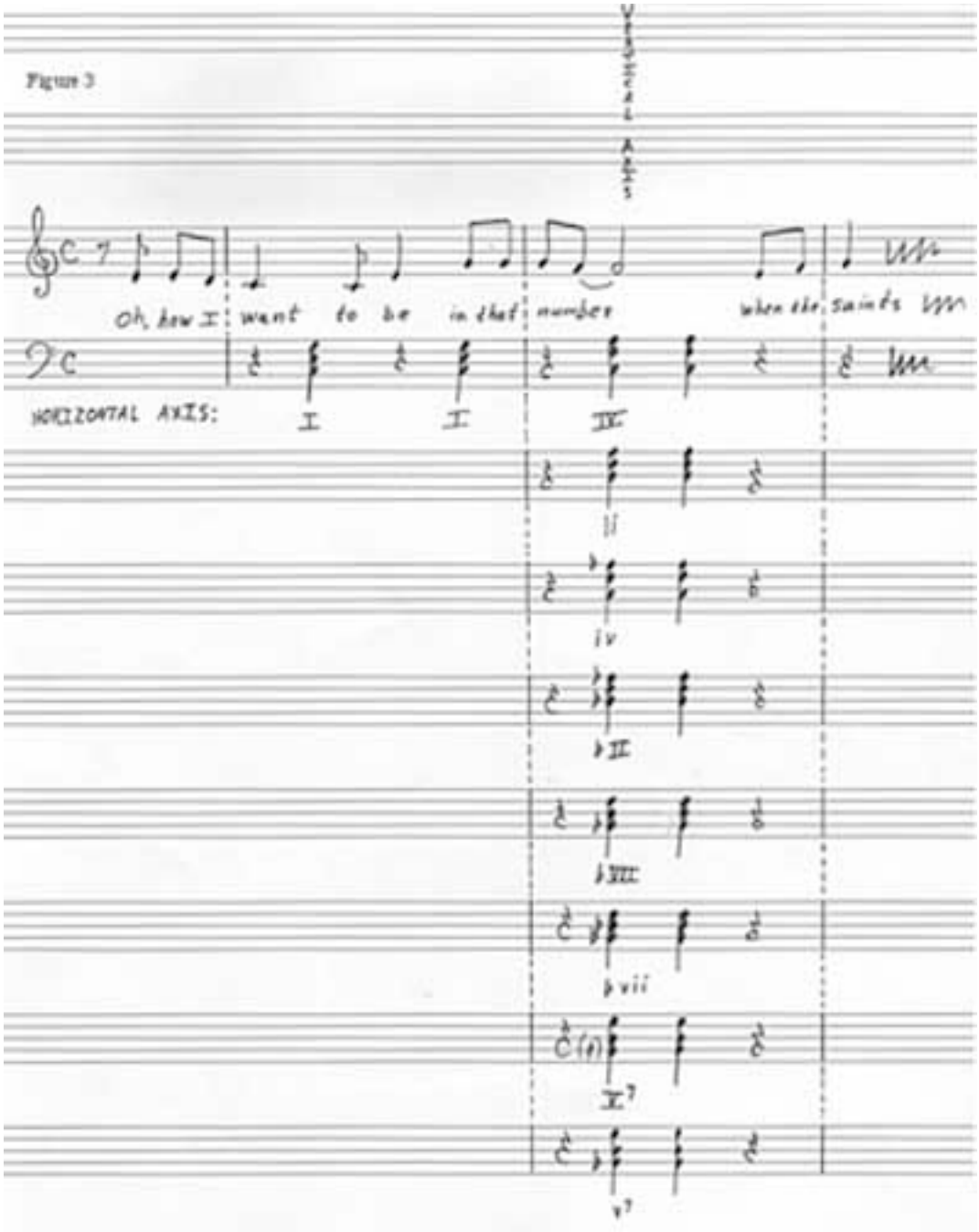
Figure 3
VERTICAL AXIS:
Oh, how I want to be in that number when the saints
HORIZONTAL AXIS:
I
I
III
ii
iv
♭II
♭VII
♭vii
I7
v7

On the vertical axis we see that the closest related harmony is the IV chord. Moving further away we find that numerous substitutions are available. How shall we deal with such an array of possibility? In his discussion of Miss Orcutt's science lesson Jerome Bruner (1986) posits that a teacher's option is either "to open up a topic to speculation and negotiation," or "to close it down by declarations of flat factuality, (p.127)." How did the first musician ever to use the Neapolitan Sixth chord arrive at his discovery? How then should we lead our students to understand various harmonies and the choices among them? May they experiment? May they make a few mistakes? May they evaluate those mistakes on their own for a while before the heavy hand of the teacher pronounces the stern benediction with red pencil? In consideration of the developmental level and advancement of a student the teacher may or may not open up much of that vertical axis. Indeed, the pupil's own invention and experimentation will reveal which parts of it are appropriate for trial and discussion. Certainly labels or terminology can wait until there is some fluency and awareness of pattern indicating the possibility of transferring that understanding to a new situation. The key to involvement with narrative thinking is to delay paradigmatic cataloging and allow some opportunity for unfettered exploration and creativity (Gardner, 1982).

Improvisation may take many forms, but the same process is followed in dealing with options in musical vocabulary, whether improvising melody and rhythm to a verse of poetry, improvising melody to pre-established chord sequences, or improvising after the style, texture or other features of a particular composition.

Over the Fall Semester as this paper has been taking final shape I have found myself increasingly alert to statements from, and incidents with students that show evidence of narrative thinking, and have started a diary to collect them. In one lesson a student and I were discussing problems of pedaling when she suddenly said, "It sounds like a change from 'stereo' to 'mono' when the pedal is lifted here and here." Such a statement helps me to understand more candidly how she is thinking about the music and how she perceives her playing. In another lesson a student launched into a dry recitation of wrong pitches and other missed details upon my asking him to comment on his performance of the first two pages of Debussy's "Hommage a Rameau". Because I knew his missed pitches as well as he did, I interrupted and asked if he would please give me something more "global." After thinking silently for a moment he gave a wonderfully intuitive account of how the density of the piece increases from the opening unisons to a climax and returns again to the thin unisons, and how his performance partially succeeded in communicating that, and how he might do better. He can correct the few wrong notes by himself. One of my pedagogy students reported this about the difference between *ritardando* and *ritenuto*. One of the children he teaches said that *ritenuto* is when you "hit traffic." One of my colleagues, Dr. Martha Thomas, related how one of her students modified Rebecca Shockley's (1997) ideas on mapping. Instead of taking the more customary visual orientation, she assigned characters, as in a drama, to all the themes in the final rondo of a Mozart Sonata, and made a simple visual representation of each character. Her "map" was this decidedly operatic narrative used as a tool for secure memorization of the movement. For the Spring Semester undergraduate piano pedagogy course I am making plans to use Marilyn Zimmerman's (1984) excellent address, "Psychological Principles

Applied to Piano Pedagogy," as the basis for an in-class skit in which class members will take on the roles of the connectionist, behaviorist, pragmatist, cognitivist, gestaltist, and developmentalist. Scripted by the students, the action will center on a charming and eager piano student, who will be aggressively recruited to submit herself to the type of musical and pianistic education each character will promote.

In this brief paper we have seen examples of how narrative and narrative thinking might be used to clarify expressive and structural content in music, to define musical terminology, to assist in the solving of musical and technical problems, to provide a sense of "magic" when harmonizing or improvising, to enhance motivation, and to contribute to secure memorizing. Moreover, narrative thinking facilitates and enriches communication between students and with the teacher. The happy result should include heightened individuality in performance if the attitude and application of narrative thinking extends habitually into individual practicing. Besides all this, pedagogy classes can benefit not only from study and discussion about narrative thinking, but also from experiencing it when dealing with pedagogical subject matter and in laboratory and intern teaching. These, of course, are only a few examples, and are intended to encourage imagination and invention. In summary we can find a fitting conclusion in recalling Jerome Bruner's (1996) "Three P's" of teaching, namely the Present, the Past, and the Possible, (pp. 86-99).

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The Art of Recital Programming

by Tony Caramia

The art of creatively choosing recital repertoire for the modern pianist seems at times a monumentally impossible task, a project and process taking on Herculean proportions. After all, if we really contemplate all the marvelous pieces written for the keyboard in the last three centuries, and then consider which small part of this literal "ton" of music might make for an interesting recital program, our mind goes numb (if not our fingers...). Too often we proceed only with the familiar; we take the safe route and avoid the mystery of the un-traveled, the undiscovered. We hear program after program that features a list of pieces that is seldom chronologically-challenged, as though it is written in some impresarioÕs code of conduct that "*Since Bach lived before Beethoven and Bartok, we are obliged to perform them in the precise order of their birth*" What this can lead to is an audience that is neither stimulated by creative programming nor challenged to listen with new ears, an audience immune to fresh ideas and exciting concepts. (I vividly and fondly remember an all-Russian recital I once heard performed impeccably by Vladimir Ashenazy. As I left the concert hall, I overheard someone remark... "I would have liked some Beethoven".)

In spite of the specter that narrow musical mind presents, what I would like to see is more modern pianists select repertoire and decide on programming that is as challenging to themselves as it is attractive to the audience. I strongly believe modern audiences would be intrigued to hear a program that is chronologically illogical: for example, starting with Bartok and ending with Bach, starting with Bolcom and ending with Haydn. Certainly this poses an interesting question - how does one want to end a performance? Must it always be with an explosive display of pyrotechnics, or can we exit with pensive, thoughtful and reflective sounds, that linger charmingly on the ear. Is the only reason for playing *to get applause*, and thus do we purposefully choose a piece that will guarantee a thunderous ovation? I realize there certainly is precedence in the Arts for the denouement: the final act of a play or the last reel of a movie should draw the various elements to a satisfying conclusion. After all, the killer in a murder mystery isn't revealed until the end. And I myself have often chosen repertoire that seems to build in artistic as well as sonic intensity; it certainly seems to make sense. However, it can limit us and perhaps restrict the art of programming into pre-packaging, into a McDonald's-like mind-set: the audience always gets what it expects. We as performers need to rise above that and seek alternate avenues for us and the audience to explore.

Sometimes a performer can get lucky: in 1998, the music world celebrated the 100th birthday of one of America's most beloved composers, George Gershwin. There was hardly a concert in any city that didn't feature his music, especially his piano compositions. Audience expected it; audiences loved it. In 1999, the Ragtime world was also in a celebrating mood, as that year marked the 100th anniversary of the publication of the "Maple Leaf Rag". Personally I thought it might be interesting to research other rags also written that year and so I discovered several delightful rags, sufficiently different from the Maple Leaf to provide a fresh appreciation for its magnificent sounds.

The year 1899 was prominently and repeatedly displayed in this particular program because I also found that other musicians (Frances Poulenc, Hoagy Carmichael, Duke Ellington, and Noel Coward) were born in 1899 and that provided a most varied and appealing program (I hope). I performed Poulenc's *Improvisations* along with Ellington's *Lots O' Fingers*, *Stardust* and *I'll See You Again* provided a gentle if brief glimpse into the creative mind of Carmichael and Coward, respectively. In 2000, we honored 2 composers born 100 years earlier - Aaron Copland and Kurt Weill; their unique styles and musical perspectives supplied another satisfying musical evening. Copland's *Four Piano Blues* yielded nicely to *Mack the Knife*. There is always some birthday or event that can spark a unique perspective; in addition, one can find somewhat arbitrary but nevertheless rewarding sources for unique programming. There are "Theme Recitals", where one can string together apparently disparate composers or styles, but that are united simply by a nationality or title or musical form. One needn't feel compelled to do the entire recital on these themes - although there is certainly an abundant amount of material from which to choose. Some of these "themes" could form a section or portion of the evening's offering.

Here are some examples of Theme recitals

1. Women Composers of Ragtime

Imogene Giles *Red Peppers*

Grace Bolen *The Smoky Topaz*

Julia Lee Niebergall *Horseshoe Rag*

Irene Giblin *Chicken Chowder Rag*

Adaline Shepherd *Pickles and Peppers*

May Aufderheide *The Thriller; Dusty Rag*

These (and others) are available in **Rags by Women Composers**, Carol Lindeman, ed. (Theodore Presser), and **Ragtime Rarities, and Ragtime Rediscoveries**, Trebor Tichenor, ed. (Dover).

2. Ragtime by European Composers

Igor Stravinsky *Piano-Rag-Music* (1919)

Paul Hindemith *Ragtime*, in *Suite 1922*

Darius Milhaud *Trois Rag Caprices* (1922)

Billy Mayerl *The Jazz Master* (many choices)

Lothar Perl *Syncopated Impressions* (Schott)

Alexandre Tansman *Sonatine Transatlantique* (1930)

Ernst Fisher *Zebra-Stripes; Dreaming Melody; Inkspots* (many others)

Claude Debussy *General Lavine; Minstrels; Le petit negre; Golliwog's Cakewalk*

3. Rags by Contemporary Composers

The amount of superb compositions in the Ragtime idiom written in the last 25 years is astounding and well worth the effort to learn. Audiences are amazed by how Ragtime has "grown"; it is no longer just "The Entertainer". A few of the most interesting contemporary (and piano-friendly) modern rag composers:

William Albright *The Dream Rags* (Hal Leonard)

William Bolcom *Complete Rags for Piano* (E. B. Marks)

David Thomas Roberts *Numerous titles* (Ragtime Express)

Bryan Dykstra *Original Rags* (available from the composer)

William Albright/William Bolcom *Three Novelty Rags* (Jobert)

Robin Frost *Numerous titles in 3 collections* (Ragtime Express)

Glenn Jenks *Triskelion; A Garden of Ragtime* (Ragtime Express)

Frank French *8 Original Contemporary Ragtime Solos* (Ragtime Express)

The Ragtime Express, 5095 Picket Drive, Colorado Springs, Co 80918-3617 www.ragtimer.com TheRagtimer@juno.com

4. An Evening of Etudes

Although a daunting task and possibly repetitive, the diversity of compositional styles - such as Bartok, Bolcom, Busoni, Chopin, Liszt, Messaien, Moskowsky, Stravinsky, and Waxman - could yield a smorgasbord of listening delights.

5. A Program of Preludes

Bach, Chopin, Debussy, Gershwin, Ginastera, Ott, Rachmaninoff, and Shostakovitch, etc., are just a few of the hundreds of composers who have written Preludes. I have found audiences intrigued by hearing some of Bach's Preludes *alone*, without their Fugues.

6. "Blues" written by Classical composers

While not requiring any improvisation, these pieces reveal a solid and stylistic understanding of Blues.

Aaron Copland *Four Piano Blues*

Constant Lambert *Elegiac Blues* (1937)

Richard Rodney Bennett *Excursion*s (1993)

George Rochberg *Blues* (from *Carnival Music*, 1971)

Louis Gruenberg *Blues* (from *Jazzberries*, Op. 25, 1928)

Samuel Barber *In slow blues tempo* (from *Excursions*, 1944)

Alexandre Tansman *Trois Preludes en forme de blues* (1937)

Morton Gould *Boogie Woogie Etude* (1943), *Blues* (from *Interplay* 1944), *Pavanne* (from *Symphonette No. 2*, 1944)

Frederic Rzewski *Winnsboro Cotton Mill Blues* (from *Four North American Ballads*)

7. Dancing Keyboard (pieces with dance in the title)

(Cakewalks, Mazurkas, Two-Steps, Waltzes, Fox-Trots, Polonaises, etc.)

8. A Ragtime Feast

Cheese and Crackers by Homer Denney

Chicken Chowder by Imogene Giles

Crab Apples by Percy Wenrich

Dill Pickles by George Botsford

Eatin' Chocolates by T. Fred Henry

Eatin' Time Rag by Bess Rudisell

Frog Legs Rag by James Scott

Good Gravy Rag by Harry Belding

Honey Rag by Egbert Van Alstyne

Hot Chocolate Rag by Franklin & Lange

Pickles and Peppers by Adaline Shepherd

Pineapple Rag by Scott Joplin

Pork 'n' Beans by Lucky Roberts

Possum 'n' Taters by Charles Hunter

Spaghetti Rag by Lyons and Yosco

Sweet Pickles by Theron Bennett

The Lobster Glide by Malvin M Franklin

Whipped Cream by Percy Wenrich

Wild Cherries by Ted Synder

There is a cornucopia of wonderful pianistic delights in these and other non-traditional approaches to modern recital programming. I look forward to hearing about and attending future piano programs that reshape expectations as pianists tickle the ivories *and* the ears, delight the mind, affect the soul, and most of all, entice audiences to eagerly await the next performance of creative repertoire selection.

Tony Caramia is a pianist of many talents who performs ragtime, jazz and classical music, sometimes all in the same concert. He has been playing piano since he was seven, but encountered ragtime in a serious way only when he began teaching at the University of Illinois in 1975, where one of the first numbers he learned was 'Dizzy Fingers'. He is currently a Professor of Piano at the renowned Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where he is director of Piano Pedagogy Studies and Coordinator of the Class Piano Program. Tony is a much-sought-after performer and master class instructor at music conferences, workshops and festivals worldwide. He has performed with such jazz stars as Clark Terry, Urbie Green, Terry Gibbs and Marian McPartland. Once he was asked, "Since you play classical and jazz so well why do you bother with ragtime?" His response was "Bother? Bother? I find ragtime charming, vibrant and full of joy! It's not Beethoven, but why should it be? After all, not all classical music is Beethoven." Caramia

performs Novelty Ragtime, Classic Ragtime, Contemporary Ragtime and syncopated pieces composed in the 1920s and 1930s. He is one of very few performers who plays the rags and syncopated pieces of the English Composer Billy Mayerl. He has for many years been a featured performer at the prestigious Sedalia, Missouri Scott Joplin International Ragtime Festival as well as ragtime festivals in California and on the East Coast. In 1999 he was also the Artist in Residence at the Scott Joplin Festival which included a ragtime master class. His four CDs span a wide spectrum of ragtime and syncopated music. He has also played and done master classes for the National and International Piano Workshops held in 1999 in Glasgow, Scotland; in 2000, in Graz, Austria; and in 2001, Australia. Recently he was artist in residence in the Quad Cities of Iowa and Illinois and played 32 concerts for a total of over 6000 people.

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Table of Contents

The following accounts are submitted from contributors who are currently teaching students with disabilities. Student ages range from very young beginners to adult students, and conditions range from autism and developmental delay to blindness and other physical disabilities.

David is thirteen years old and diagnosed as developmentally delayed. He can complete simple tasks but does not understand abstract chains of thought and behaviour in his everyday world. He loves to sing and can match pitch and remember many folk tunes, hymns, and pieces that he has heard. Everyday coordinated muscular tasks are difficult for him although he can execute simple rhythm patterns with great accuracy at the piano. David's older brother takes lessons and David knows and can accompany his brother's pieces with the interval of a fifth following the correct rhythm patterns at the keyboard. He can also follow rhythm patterns in an improvisation and accompany me at the piano. At the Crhistmas recital, David accompanied my performance of "Jingle Blls" with perfect rhythm and the right keys in front of an audience in his first public performance. David loves to play keys and sing at the piano and can identify and execute simple rhythm patterns involving quarter notes, half notes, and dotted-half notes. Although he cannot yet perform his own musical improvisations, his rhythmic ability is progressing and he enjoys performaing with other people. He is lucky to have a very loving and supportive family and an older brother who enjoys working with him outside of the lesson. David's brother generally takes his lesson first and then David has a fifteen minute lesson where we identify rhythm patterns and play them at the keyboard, work on motor skills, perform accompaniments to his brother's pieces, and do some improvisation and other games such as "follow the leader". I can usually expect a big hug after the lesson. I consider this my reward for having been allowed to communicate with David in his language.

Scott Price, Assistant Professor of Piano and Piano Pedagogy, University of South Carolina.

I taught piano to a blind student around 60 or 65 years old who had never taken piano lessons before. The student also started taking saxophone lessons at the same time with another teacher. He was well educated in many subjects (doctor in psychology)and he had music knowledge from listening to music.

My teaching approach to him was different from other students because of his disability but the same regarding the age of the student. His goal was to learn something about how to play the piano and how to have fun with it. Considering his goal, my main goal for the semester was for him to be able to play by ear certain melodies and harmonize them.

The first question that flashed in my mind was about which method to use. In fact, I did not need a method just for the goal I chose but I did ask him to purchase a method focused on famous melodies with harmonies appropriate to his beginning level. His wife who also was taking piano lessons from me was willing to help him at home.

Several steps took place to achieve my goal. First of all, I played for him melodies in the right hand register and later I added chords to them. He got familiar with the sound of the piano and he knew what I was going to aim for. Secondly, I asked him to sit down on the bench and to familiarize himself with the distance between the keyboard and himself and the length of the keyboard. Thirdly, I taught him the topography of the keyboard based on the groups of two and three keys and the middle C. I did not mention the term "black keys". After that, I taught him to play melodies in the five finger pattern in C and later to use the left hand to play tonic and V6/5 chords. The main issue was to recognize which notes of the melody are part of tonic chord and dominant chord.

It took a while to go through the steps but he learned how to play certain melodies with the harmony. One difficulty was his confusion of the sound of pitch C and B flat since he learned the note C in the saxophone that sounded B flat. Other than that were difficulties of the rigidity of his arms, hands, and fingers common in students of that age.

This teaching has influenced my philosophy because I had to teach how to play just by ear without reading music notation. The most important thing was not to play exactly what was written in the staff but pick up by ear a melody and harmonize it with any kind of rhythm or dynamic. The most important thing for this type of student is that he was able to enjoy making music.

Cesar Marimon, Doctoral Candidate, University of South Carolina

I am privileged to teach a young boy, age 6, who is mildly autistic. He started taking a few piano lessons last June and has been taking weekly for four months. Lessons are one hour in length: one half hour at the piano and one half hour at the computer using music software.

My student was very shy in the first interview clinging to his parent, however we found a connection when his eyes lit up as I enticed him to try a music program on the computer. We communicated as he played a game, and then he followed me to the piano, and I taught him a piece by rote.

We are communicating well in the lessons now and having fun. He is usually very focused once his mother leaves the studio. He thrives on structure by starting our lessons at the piano and ending at the computer. We begin with reviewing a piece he has memorized, then he plays pieces in his lesson book, etc. Some flexibility is factored in since I encourage creative expression whenever it happens.

He is very intelligent, and handles advanced theory concepts with ease. He can play all the scales around the circle of fifths in tetrachords using both hands. He has a good ear, and his sense of rhythm and pulse is good. His hands are a little awkward, and his speech, though very articulate, is a little stilted. He has a long attention span, however, so we just run out of time to do everything.

Sometimes social skills can be challenging for autistic children. Since he and another 6 year old boy sometimes share computer time, I've noticed that he very politely encourages the other boy and enjoys being "the tutor". He also played a piece in front of 35 other children at our fall costume party, to his mother's surprise.

He has advanced quickly through his pieces. I'm really enjoying him in the lessons and am getting to know his personality. His smile and laughter motivate me. In the Prep C Alfred books, two pieces begin the same: "The Bus Song" and the "Little Green Frog". As he was playing one, he was hearing the other and mixing up the tunes. I told him the little green frog had hopped on the bus. He got the joke, and we both started laughing uncontrollably.

Last week, he started playing half steps up the keyboard. I asked him if he knew the name of the scale that was all half steps. I then talked about the 12 tones. (He listens well, usually has a comment, and he doesn't let me get away with anything.) He immediately announced to me that there are 8 keys in C scale and there are 5 black keys, so there must be 13 tones. His math intellect was at work.

I try to treat him as normally as possible. His mind is usually ahead of his physical co-ordination, however. Sometimes he gets frustrated trying to play a piece absolutely perfectly ... wanting to start over again and again until he doesn't miss a note. To alleviate the tension, I sometimes divert his attention to something else or skip to another piece.

Sometimes I can tell he testing me by making mistakes on purpose to see if I'm listening. His glance and crooked smile tell the tale. Last week, handling a new concept, I was overjoyed to hear him say, "I know I can do it". Those are the words a teacher loves to hear.

Joey Ruddle, Independent Music Teacher, Columbia, SC

Brittany is twelve years old. She was born four months premature and is blind and severely autisitic. She requires round-the-clock care and is only now learning to complete small tasks for herself and to use simple words to communicate her desires.

At age five, she taught herself how to play the piano. Her ability has grown at a frightening rate and it is estimated that she has a repertoire of some 4000-5000 popular songs, classical melodies and show tunes. She can instantly repeat any music she hears in a simplified version at the piano. We believe that her echolalia (a condition in which autistic children repeat immediately what is said to them) manifested itslef through her natural musical talent.

Brittany has been studying formally for two years. She initially played with only the third finger of each hand as she had never seen how the insturment was acutally played. Over the past two years, her technical ability has improved to where she plays correctly with all of her fingers. Her musical memory is so great that she can learn simple pieces by

Gurlitt, Turk, and other composers in a single lesson. She also loves Beethoven and has learned the exposition to the Sonata Opus 2, No. 1 and can reproduce it almost exactly as written.

Brittany's lessons must follow a rigid routine for her to be able to function without stress or emotional upset. her mother begins the day be telling her exactly what she will do including coming to her piano lesson. When she arrives, I tell her exactly the order of the tasks she will be asked to do. She remembers them exactly and will often tell me what is next in the lesson.

Like any child, Brittany hates finger exercises unless they are challenging. She often tries to comete with me for clarity and speed. She enjoys a challenge and responds exceptionally well to difficult tasks. She particularly loves the music of Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, and Scriabin and will jump up and down and rock back and forth with the music. She has little interest in the piano music of Mozart, Brahms, or Bach.

Teaching Brittany requires enormous patience, and Herculean organization to maintain routines and sub-routines within the teaching process. A typical session within the lesson consists of me asking her if she wants to do the task, playing the example, asking if I may show her how to play the example, and then working hands seperately and then together to build up small units of the piece. The best results come when the repertoire is well-composed and has routines built into the melodic patterns, form, and harmony.

Through specialized teaching and learning processes, Brittany has learned that she can make her own music and now improvises full length pieces complete with melodic motives, form, and correct harmonic progressions. She remembers these pieces and can replay them with very little variation in content.

Through a fund raising project by local volunteers and the support of a local piano dealer, brittany has been able to purchase a Yamaha Disklavier. The capabilities of this instrument have allowed her to save her improvisaiton to a computer disc, and to expand her technical and performance ability. She is very fortunate to have the complete love and support of her family and community.

She is truly a savant at the piano and her devlopment has been remarkable. She takes great joy in music, performing, and listening to other people perform - often with embarassingly uncompromising standards. She plays the instrument all day long taking breaks only for meals and other daily activities. Her parents have often heard the piano music tapering off in the evening only to find that Brittany has fallen asleep at the instrument.

Scott Price, Assistant Professor of Piano and Piano Pedagogy, University of South Carolina.

Currently I am teaching 1 Down's Syndrome child. Past experiences in this area have included 2 other students with Down's Syndrome and one who received massive brain injuries as a child. Bryann has studied with me for about 6 months now and had just a little previous study that was very sporadic. She is a home-schooled 7th grader who has exceptional verbal skills! She brought the Alfred's Prep Course Level A books to her first lesson, so this is where we started (along with some flash cards). In those 6 months, she has completed Level A and has a good start on Level B. She participated in the Christmas and Classics Festival with 2 memorized pieces (very short, but she did it) and received a blue ribbon - much to the delight of her parents who were both there to be her cheerleaders! She also played at the studio Christmas recital. Ê Bryann has done very well, but her handicap has been most apparent when working with numbers (rhythmic values particularly) and with spacial concepts (finding the basic "hand position" and seeing directional changes in the music). Her note naming skills are that of the average beginner. She has an exceptional ear for music and sings along - in tune! We are using a theory book, but her enthusiasm for this resource is shown by the fact that she frequently leaves it at home. I think it mystifies her, and things she feels unsure of get left undone. She memorizes her pieces almost instantly. Bryann questions the starting position of every piece. She can easily tell me the name of a key from the picture on the flash card, but when she looks down at all those keys on the piano, she becomes confused and keeps asking "is this right?" I can see further challenges ahead when the music moves out of a basic five finger pattern. However, Bryann is bolstered by her sense of accomplishment, and she loves to perform, so I anticipate that she will triumph over most of these challenges if we take things slowly. As I mentioned before, Bryann is exceptional.

My first experience working with a student with a severe learning disability was during my graduate school years. Jimmy, a 21 year old gentleman who had suffered severe brain injury as a child, enthusiastically entered my home with keyboard in hand to take lessons. He had been plunking around on his own for some time and could play a basic melody or two and was really excited about knowing more. His brain injury left him with the mental skills of a child of about 7 or 8, palsy that made his hands shake, and violent epileptic seizures. He, too, had an exceptional ear for music. He studied with me for about 3 years (until I moved out of state) and learned quite a lot. During our lessons, Jimmy was a challenge to stay focused on the activity at hand. His excitement about being at the lesson was sometimes overwhelming, and his interest in me and my family often took him away from his focus on the music (constant questions about me or endearing compliments). When he accomplished any goal, he shook with delight. Jimmy learned to read music in the C and G five-finger positions. He learned to add chords to simple melodies that he picked out by ear. Although Jimmy had palsy in his hands, when he played the piano, the shaking stopped! Our biggest frustration occurred after periods of epileptic seizures. It seemed that after he had a rough bout of seizures, his brain was wiped clean of what he had learned in the previous month. So a lot of reteaching occurred, and I could not assume that Jimmy remembered anything. He played for several student recitals and he loved to play at his church.

Working with Bryann and others with learning challenges has strongly influenced my teaching methods. One of my pedagogy teachers in college always said "arrange for

success." When teaching students with extra challenges, one has constantly to be creative in finding ways to make success happen. Sometimes this has led me to do things like color coding every note in a piece and putting matching stickers on the keyboard. I think that each of us has strengths and weaknesses when it comes to any learning situation, and finding and building on the strengths is the challenge of the teacher.

Each of these special students has been SO loving and a joy to work with. Because each step forward is such a big accomplishment, the excitement in the students and in the eyes of their families is worth every bit of frustration when finding a strength to build on is elusive. It is worth the effort, and at times I have thought that I should be paying them for the lesson instead of their paying me. After all, what I learn from teaching them I can use everyday! I have also had several geriatric students and my husband & I have both taught ADHD children as well. These students require a variety of special teaching skills (and EXTREME patience sometimes) to address physical and mental obstacles.

Sharon Witherell, Independent Music Teacher, Columbia, SC

Margaret is ten years old and is both blind and autistic. She has a small amount of sight in her left eye. Our lessons consist of a regimented routine that is the same for evey lesson. The internal content of each activity may change, but the actual order and routine must remain the same for autisic students to function well in the lesson. Margaret knows many folk tunes and loves to figure out how to play them on the piano. Because of her blindness, we choose folk tunes that are easily executed on either the black or the white keys in an attempt to acculturate her to the different planes of the keyboard. We have recently begun transposing her tunes into patterns that combine both the black and white keys and Margaret is learning to do this with a small amount of resistance. Acitivities usually start with her left hand as she favors it due to the small amount of sight in her left eye. She is able to play "Jolly Old St. Nicholas", "Mary Had a Little Lamb" beginning on six different keys, and is learning to play "Row, Row, Row Your Boat". Her rhythmic ability and aural discrimination ability are very strong and she works avidly to correct her wrong notes. Margaret is learning five-finger patterns and we are beginning to work with steps and skips to build her improvisation skills. She is a remarkable child and I am privileged to be challenged as a teacher.

Scott Price, Assistant Professor of Piano and Piano Pedagogy, University of South Carolina.

Music Therapy: Piano Techniques from Infants to Senior Citizens

by Roy Kennedy

Pianist Arthur Rubinstein struggled to define what he called, "a metaphysical power that emanates from us, something floating, that has no place to disappear to," (Scovel, 1990, p. 106). Rubinstein was speaking of a tangible energy reaching out into the audience as a result of his piano performances. Music therapists also value the tangible qualities of piano music, but from a more objective perspective, the behaviors elicited by piano music used in music therapy. More specifically, the calming and energizing properties of timbre, rhythm, and varied harmonic possibilities, proliferated by the broad tonal range and percussive/sustaining capabilities of the piano, are elements that elicit therapeutic responses in clients ranging from premature infants to senior citizens.

For instance, studies have shown that neonates prefer low frequencies, most likely due to similar sounds heard in the intrauterine environment. Prematurely born infants with low birthweight are exposed to ambient noise on neonatal intensive care units, including pumping sounds, alarms, telephones, and printers, as part of the acoustic environment. Any noise pollution that produces agitated behaviors in the infant such as crying and increased limb movement can have deleterious effects on the infant's ability to sleep and to nurse properly, which consequently affects the newborn's ability to gain weight. When outfitted with speakers in their isolettes, which propagate low volume levels of Brahm's Lullaby and the Moonlight Sonata, these infants experience a calming effect which improves their feeding and sleep habits and their ability to gain weight. Infants receiving this type of music therapy treatment reach a healthy discharge weight and leave the hospital on the average of one week sooner than their counterparts (Cassidy & Ditty, 1998).

Another particularly effective use of the piano in music therapy is a method that was created by Paul Nordoff, an American composer, and Clive Robbins, a British special educator. This method emphasizes the use of unique instruments such as reed horns, birdcalls, trainwhistles, quarter-sized violins, miniature harps, and percussion instruments in small ensembles. The concept is that children are attracted to playing instrumental pieces and listening to unique instrumental timbres facilitated by tasteful piano arrangements. The central goal of Nordoff and Robbins' technique is to create a musical/emotional environment in which exceptional children come alive as their creativity, intellectual capacities and self-esteem are unleashed (Nordoff & Robbins, 1971).

Paul Nordoff was a master at creating simple piano compositions that use lush inversions incorporating sevenths, seconds, suspensions, and attractive musical phrases with lyrics that attract exceptional children to singing, playing instruments, participating in musical games and acting in childrens' plays. The following suggestions for the music therapist or special music educator using the Nordoff and Robbins' technique requires that the pianist simultaneously serve as accompanist, teacher and therapist.

1) The pianist should thoroughly memorize the score and learn every musical part that accompanies the score in order to go beyond the role of accompanist for the children and share with them the joy of making music. 2) In order to accomplish this, the pianist has to play with clarity, which creates order and involves the children in the music in a meaningful way. 3) Using the piano in this manner teaches children how to listen to the music and integrate their parts with the piano accompaniment.

Nordoff recommends avoiding playing with personal feeling. The pianist's enthusiasm should surface from experiencing the elements of the music that really live in your fingers as you play. Allow the rise and fall of melodies, played with a feeling for the space between each tone and the awareness of harmonic change, the interest in the relationship between the number of beats in each measure, and the rhythms of the melodic phrases over several measures to make the music enjoyable for the pianist (Nordoff & Robbins, 1971, p. 122).

This results in playing motivated by a synthesis of the musical elements and the pianist's pleasure in playing the music rather than playing the way the music makes you feel. Musical investment, conveyed with this type of enthusiasm, is contagious, to exceptional children and instills a similar affect in their response. This changes your playing from interpreting the mood of the music to producing music that is conducive to therapy i.e., music that is related to the children's abilities and enhances a close rapport with them. This type of interpersonal interaction usually happens when the pianist has become familiar enough with the music that only an intermittent glance at the score is necessary while imparting the music.

Nordoff and Robbins techniques for children with autism are similar but with some interesting variations. Quite often children with autism possess debilitating self-stimulation behaviors, living in their own isolated worlds, with limited or nonexistent verbal skills. Simply put, the therapist is faced with the substantial challenge of establishing initial communication with these children. Music therapists trained in the Nordoff and Robbins method frequently use block chords and arpeggiated phrases on the piano to imitate the child's vocal utterances and rhythms on percussion instruments during initial sound exploration sessions. This type of interaction allows the therapist to meet the child musically in order to establish communication with musical sounds acting as the vehicle.

After several sessions of sound exploration using percussion and vocal sounds, many of these children become curious about the piano and begin playing single notes or clusters of notes on the upper range of the piano in response to the therapist's accompaniment in the lower register. As the child's sound vocabulary develops, the therapist begins to shape the child's musical behaviors with short, improvised, call and response motives. Through this exchange of musical motifs a musical dialogue develops which in many cases vacillates between instrumental and speech sounds. Vocal sounds are encouraged and supported via the piano accompaniment and the therapist shapes vocal utterances into intelligible words and propositional language as the child gains more confidence in his or her sound making capability (Nordoff & Robbins, 1971).

The use of piano music in singing activities with Alzheimer's disease patients has something in common with Nordoff and Robbins' use of the piano; the music has to be interesting. Wandering behavior is a chronic problem for Alzheimer's patients as many get lost even in their own communities. The results of monotonous singing styles that emanate from simple accompaniments may actually contribute to senior citizens wandering away from music therapy groups in hospitals. Simple block chording as accompaniment may be too relaxing and redundant since many Alzheimer's patients long term memories are still in tact and they remember jazz and swing music of their formative years which syncopates the lyrics. Even clients with latestage dementia, as a result of Alzheimer's disease, can respond more in other areas of musical participation such as reading lyrics, attention after the songs, initiating compliments and applause when percussive elements such as shuffle rhythms and stride-accompaniment patterns are used in group singing activities (Groene, 2001).

As the baby boomer generation comes of age, music therapists are finding themselves treating a new set of dementia patients that prefer live music with complex rhythmic features. Song preference is a key ingredient in reaching these clients since music from their formative years is used to facilitate their long-term memories. Lyric discussion of a favorite song may stimulate associated memories during the time the song was popular. Examples of associated memories may include the type of car one owned as a young adult or memories of the individual's spouse. Many couples also associate a certain song with significant stages of courtship. The piano's highly rhythmic and percussive capabilities may stimulate activities such as a dementia patient dancing with their spouse, recalling significant life events, and enjoying an enhanced quality of life.

Baby boomers now entering their golden years may prefer music with complex rhythmic elements from many styles of music including rock n' roll, country, Motown, funk and even heavy metal. Music therapists have to consider that, "a teenager, who at 17 listened to Elvis or Little Richard in 1957 is now 60 years old," (Groene, 2001, p. 49). The versatility of the piano in accommodating many styles of music is perhaps its most tangible quality in providing healing measures for persons of all ages in music therapy.

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Adapting Piano Teaching for Special Learners

by Stephen F. Zdzinski

(Portions of this article are based on an article written by this author, published in the January 2001 edition of the Music Educators Journal)

What do Andrea Boccelli, Evelyn Glennie, and Hitoshi Oe all have in common? Each of these people is a successful professional musician (a vocalist, a percussionist, and a composer who is a pianist), and all are special learners (visually impaired, hearing impaired, and mentally challenged). These people were able to realize their musical talents because music teachers adapted their instruction to meet their special needs as learners.

Teaching special learners in general music generally has been accepted in music education, but the idea of teaching piano to special learners is less common. The cognitive, physical, and social abilities and disabilities of a "special learner" provide significant challenges to a private or group piano teaching situation. The teacher will need to be aware of the instructional adaptations that will need to be made in order for these students to succeed in piano study. However, through minor modifications and adaptations of traditional piano teaching techniques and by borrowing techniques used primarily in special education, piano teachers can teach many special learners and include them in their piano studios.

Physical Adaptations

An important step in the teaching of music to special learners is to select an appropriate instrument. For mentally challenged students, for example, piano is an excellent instrument choice if instruction is carefully sequenced and controlled. For physically challenged students, the choice of piano may still be appropriate, if modifications such as holding adaptations can be made. If there is a question, students should be examined for physical suitability in consultation with an occupational or physical therapist before beginning piano study.

Adapting the Social Environment

A piano teacher who plans to work with a special learner needs to take several steps in order to ensure that the special learner will be accepted into his or her studio. The student may need instruction on proper lesson behavior, and routines and rules will need to be firmly established. Specific guidance concerning listening to the teacher, following directions, understanding teacher and student roles, and how to request assistance when needed should be provided to the student.

If the student is in a piano class, the first step is to prepare the class for your new "special" student, and assign a "piano buddy" to help the student with new rules and

instructional work. In preparing the class, care should be taken to explain to your students how the special learner may be like and unlike other members of the class, as well as any accommodations that might be needed for this child in the class.

Another way to adapt the social environment for the special learner is through the use of positive image build techniques. For example, the careful selection of appropriate, incremental, and obtainable goals is important. Any progress towards those goals is reinforced, and negative pictures are blocked out, so that the special learner continues to visualize positive outcomes. It is important as well to avoid comparisons with traditional students, as their progress may be quicker and thus discourage the special learner.

Parental Involvement

One way to successfully adapt the social environment for special learners is through the informed use of parental involvement strategies. In special education settings, parental involvement is a very important part of the instructional mix. The following strategies have been found by the research in music to be related to more positive student attitudes and greater achievement in music:

14. Asking parents to sing with their children
15. Asking parents to take their children to concerts
16. Asking parents to talk to their children about their progress in music
17. Asking parents and children to listen to music together at home
18. Asking parents to assist with their child's practicing
19. Asking parents to provide musical materials for their child
20. Asking parents to provide transportation to their child's musical activities
21. Asking parents to tape performances of their child

It should be noted that parents who have little aptitude in music could achieve the above strategies. Parents as part of piano lessons could be given a list of these items to assist the instructional process.

Adapting Music

Another area in which piano teachers may need to make adjustments in their teaching is in the use of music. Many special learners may have difficulty with written notation. An aural approach to teaching notation may be very effective in teaching special learners to read musical notation. In this approach, aural experiences start with singing, using known songs, and then providing notation for the songs that they already know, a "picture of the song". In addition, pitch and rhythm patterns are extracted from the songs that the students are learning, and drilled using flashcards to help reinforce music reading. Another approach that may be useful with special learners is the use of color-coded notation. In color-coded notation, various note values or pitches are printed in different colors. Students using the colored notation appear to prefer it, and the use of color-coded notation may help special learners in their comprehension of musical notation, as special learners tend to learn better with information given in multiple modes.

The selection of appropriate music for special learners is also an important consideration concerning music. Known tunes and catchy tunes such as Jingle Bells, Ode to Joy, When the Saints go marching in, Bingo, or Row, Row, Row Your Boat work best with developmentally disabled students. Simplified parts may be appropriate for more difficult music, and will need to be adapted to the present ability level of the student. In a piano ensemble setting, students may responsible for only one or two pitches, and play only when those pitches are sounded in the ensemble, much in the matter of writing used in handbell choirs.

Adapting Teaching Techniques

A number of different teaching approaches may be helpful in teaching piano to the special learner. One adaptive teaching strategy is the use of task analysis. In task analysis, teachers break down complex technical and musical tasks into their prerequisite tasks, creating more manageable and more easily obtained goals. Piano performance techniques such as hand position, music reading, hands alone/together, and fingerings can be broken down into subskills that can be thoroughly taught and reinforced, and then combined after mastery. When teaching the special students various facets of piano technique, task analysis can provide the teacher the means to analyze when things go wrong, and therefore more quickly remediate problems as they occur. By breaking instruction into smaller steps, the special learner will experience more success.

Another teaching technique that might be useful, borrowed from special education, is called "Precision Teaching". Teachers using this approach continuously measure and chart student progress, and analyzing the error patterns in order to modify instruction so that the learner who is developmentally disabled makes steady progress. In precision teaching, each objective is initially set, and the special student is closely monitored using by daily testing of each goal in order to determine the student's success rate. Progress is charted on the attainment of all goals, and is recorded so that the teacher can decide if goals need to be further subdivided through additional task analysis. If the student is not meeting her or his success goal, the objective is modified so that the student makes progress. In this way, students can make slow but continual progress that can be documented and appropriate reinforcement is provided.

When working with special learners in piano lessons, evaluation techniques for these students may need to be modified. Teachers should try to include technical goals, musical content goals, and social goals when assessing student progress. Students may have unique difficulties with auditory and visual perception, or may have shorter attention spans. Anxiety may also be a problem, especially if objectives are too difficult.

Assessment should be used to help build positive images. Instruction will need to be adapted and segmented to show continuous progress. While progress may be slower, attainment of each objective should be documented and charted to show progress so that students and parents will not become discouraged.

Conclusion

Students who are special learners can be successful as long as teachers are ready and willing to help them to do so. What we need to do as teachers is to we ask them to do the right things, at the right time, and in the right way. We may have to adjust our instruction to meet the needs of these students, and may have to seek the assistance of parents, other students in the program, or perhaps using music teachers or music therapists in training to help. Other piano students in piano classes need to be prepared for the inclusion of a "special" student. Additional self-esteem enhancement and parental involvement strategies may prove useful. Complex tasks may need to broken down into simpler sub-tasks and music may need to be simplified for the student. While these suggestions may take addition effort, the rewards are great, because we can help these students to include music as part of their life.

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Learning Styles and Piano Teaching

by Susanna Garcia

As teachers, we often find ourselves amazed by a student's strengths. Just as often, though, we may be baffled by their shortcomings. Our favorite strategies work wonders with some but fail miserably with others, and may leave us at a loss regarding a course of action. We may even conclude that a particular student can't learn certain skills. On many occasions, I have heard teachers make remarks such as: "My student makes up songs all the time but can't read a note of music," or, "My student can sight read anything but can't memorize at all." On some level, these conclusions admit to a failure of both teaching and learning. Acceptance of the notion that a student can succeed at some facets of music making but not at others may inadvertently deny that student total music literacy. More problematic may be the fact that only certain types of students are successful in our studios. These are the ones who happen to respond to the manner in which we present information or behave in the lesson as we would have. With other types of learners, we may feel frustrated by our lack of success.

These difficult experiences are not unique to piano teachers but shared by all who teach. Through learning styles research, teachers are finding ways to turn these failures into successes. Many educators believe that a better understanding of how students obtain, process and internalize information will result in more effective and efficient teaching. This management of information by a student is referred to as the student's learning style. There are many theories of learning style, mostly familiar to educators, but largely unknown to music teachers. Such theories have considered analytical vs. global learning styles, personality types, multiple intelligences, and learning modalities. This article focuses on modality theory and provides help for teachers who wish to identify a student's learning style and adapt their teaching to better match the student's needs.[1]

What are learning styles or modalities?

A modality is any of the sensory channels through which an individual receives and retains information. These sensory channels are visual, auditory, and tactile/kinesthetic. Everyone has a dominant modality, but in time learns to integrate the other modalities. Adults routinely transfer information from one modality to another. In children, however, the dominant modality is the most efficient channel to receive and retain information. Students often show a secondary modality which is excellent in reinforcing information.

VISUAL: A visual student actually thinks in images and must convert information into pictures. Information is best presented through visual means, by reading and writing or looking at pictures. These students tend to be successful in school because testing is done in a visual format. They will conform to classroom standards such as sitting quietly, writing neatly and organizing material well. They are neat, meticulous and like order. As a pianist, this student is often the one who can sight - read well, but if you asked her to sing the melody that she just played, she just might not be able to. This student might

play very accurately, but might have difficulty playing expressively or may have trouble memorizing her music.

AUDITORY: An auditory person learns best by hearing or listening, then repeating what they have heard. They are often talkative and may hum and subvocalize. They are easily distracted by sounds. They may have difficulty writing. In their dress, they may not match, although they may think that they do. As a piano student, the auditory student may be the one who can play just about anything by ear, but is stymied by reading even the simplest music. He would prefer to guess at what comes next rather than read it. This student may change notes or rhythms in a piece, preferring his improved version to the composer's.

TACTILE/KINESTHETIC: Tactile/kinesthetic students learn through their body or sense of touch. They learn best by doing, thus whole body movement is the preferred method. These students benefit by a game format using materials that they may manipulate. They often enjoy dance or athletics. The kinesthetic student may appear disorganized or restless, often lacking a sense of the consequences of their actions. These students may have difficulty in traditional classroom settings and are sometimes assumed to have learning disabilities. You might recognize the constant fidgeter or the one who can't keep from playing while you are speaking. These students delight in playing the same piece over and over again, never seeming to tire of it.

Teaching through modality strengths capitalizes on individual differences and results in an increased rate of learning. The teacher must be able to determine each student's dominant modality and learn strategies for presenting information through this modality. Consideration of the student's dominant modality demands flexibility in the teacher's habits of presentation. Teachers, however, tend to teach through their own dominant learning mode. In language reading, auditory teachers tend to prefer phonics. Montessori methods are favored by kinesthetics. Visuals prefer approaches that depend on recognition of words and their configuration such as in whole language learning.[2] As piano teachers, it is reasonable to expect that we would also teach through our most comfortable learning style, approaching the introduction of new material in the same way with every student. A visual teacher might insist that a student read through a new piece before hearing it. An auditory teacher might teach more by ear, with far less emphasis placed on deciphering notation. A kinesthetic teacher might be inclined to demonstrate a great deal and teach by rote. We probably can see ourselves in these descriptions and we can see our students in them as well. When our teaching style and the student's learning style do not match, frustration sets in with both teacher and student and effective learning is thwarted.

What does the research say about learning styles?

Learning style research is extensive, especially in language reading. Generally, studies are done by administering a test such as the Learning Style Inventory (LSI) which identifies the student's preferred and secondary modality. The LSI has been used to examine and compare the styles of underachievers, students in alternative education,

students with disabilities, the gifted, good and poor readers, good and poor students in math, students with high and low self-concept, and students with strong hemispheric inclinations. It has been consistently found that **whenever students were taught through their identified styles, statistically significant increases occurred in achievement**. In addition, students evidenced improved attitudes and reduced numbers of discipline problems. Further gains were made when the material was reinforced through the student's secondary learning style.[3]

Additionally, research by Marie Carbo and Kenneth and Rita Dunn, indicates that beginning readers are usually tactile/kinesthetic. In their studies, it was indicated that at age 6 or 7, children are, in this order, kinesthetic/tactile, visual, then auditory.[4] The visual mode grows stronger as children get older as they adjust to language reading. But when a child is not able to integrate the visual modality, they are frequently unsuccessful in school. It is Carbo and the Dunn's contention that such students are often treated as learning disabled, when it is really a matter of a mismatch in learning styles.[5]

Research specifically related to music learning is limited, but one study of third graders confirmed that students learned simple rhythms in less time and with fewer errors through their preferred modality.[6] (Persellin, 1988) In another study, first graders scored significantly lower in recall of rhythmic patterns when the patters were presented visually only. (Persellin, 1992) The first graders seemed to quickly lose interest or become frustrated using only visual iconic stimulation. As expected, the number of students showing preference for the visual mode increased each year until the fifth grade. As the students matured, visual icons were helpful in allowing the subjects to recall patterns.[7] In this study, it was noted that first graders benefited from singing games, moving, and listening to music and suggested that teachers may want to consider spending more of their time teaching young children rhythm patterns through auditory and kinesthetic means prior to teaching notation. Notation may be introduced to children when they have had many auditory and kinesthetic experiences in music. Introducing notation after an aural vocabulary has been acquired may give the written note or icon more meaning. Such approaches may be seen in the methods of Carl Orff and Emile Jaques-Dalcroze.

How does a teacher evaluate learning styles?

Resources for learning style testing are many and range from sophisticated testing to simple observation.

The Learning Styles Inventory determines not only the student's modality preferences, but also his or her preference regarding the amount of available light, the necessity of food and drink consumption, the temperature of the room, the formality of the setting, or the benefit of quiet vs. music during studying.[8] It asks multiple choice questions such as:

I can follow directions most easily if the teacher

a. says them aloud

b. writes them on the board

c. shows us how.

It also asks questions in a true-false format such as "My room or desk is usually disorganized." A disadvantage of this test is its biased format. The student must either read the question (visual) or be read the question (aural).

Another test, the Barbe-Swassing Test of Learning Modalities is administered without the necessity of reading.[9] The test format requires manipulation of objects.

For something simpler and less expensive, the internet has many sites providing a wealth of information about learning styles, as well as short questionnaires that are immediately scored on-line. These web sites allow one to determine the dominant and the secondary learning styles of the student quite easily. If you search the term "learning styles" on any search engine, you will come up with a wealth of sites but I have included a few direct links to such on-line tests:

http://www.hcc.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/vark.htm

http://www.howtolearn.com/personal.html

http://snow.utoronto.ca/Learn2/mod3/miinventory.html

http://snow.utoronto.ca/Learn2/resources/styletests.html

You might also use personal observations to determine learning styles, being careful to avoid bias. Observable characteristics of an auditory preference may include the student's ability to follow short verbal directions, to repeat simple sentences of eight to twelve words, or to sound out words and still retain the storyline. Contrast this with the ability to follow written or drawn directions, place pictures in proper story sequence, or discriminate between letters or words that look alike such as "fill/full; spot/stop. This would indicate a visual preference. Tactile/kinesthetic characteristics might include good handwriting, interest in drawing and crafts, and good physical coordination.

Learning style preferences can be seen in the musical behavior of our students (Table 1). Subsequent to several years of testing and observation, I have constructed a list of observable characteristics of piano students. In these descriptions, the natural inclinations of students with a single highly dominant modality preference can be seen. This list is intended to help the teacher identify the student's preferences. Armed with this knowledge, the teacher can use the student's natural strengths in planning teaching strategies which will address both weak and strong areas. This is the fundamental tenet of learning styles theory. Rather than assuming, for example, that a highly aural student will never become an excellent reader, a teacher sensitive to learning styles will engage the aural mode in the teaching of reading.

Table 1. Learning Styles and Characteristics of Piano Students

VISUAL	AUDITORY	KINESTHETIC/TACTILE
Good reader. Plays with note accuracy.	Heavy reliance on playing by ear. Might guess at notes rather than figure them out. Frequently changes notes in the piece because they "sound better".	Plays by feel. Is willing to repeat a pattern over to "get it in the fingers". May have a difficult time relating to notation presented in a conventional way
Dislikes playing by ear.	Often makes up songs or likes to improvise. Enjoys "picking out" songs.	Loves to keep playing the songs that have already been learned.
Sometimes demonstrates a lack of sensitivity to the sound quality or to phrasing. Might not be able to sing the melody that was just played. Might hold the pedal down inappropriately. May play mechanically.	Generally expressive player, careful about how it is sounding.	Will play with great enthusiasm. How it feels to play may be more important than how it is actually sounding. May "bang" things out.
Has trouble memorizing.	Memorizes well, can fake if necessary.	Memorizes easily, but tactually.
Lacks attention to fingering. May have difficulty learning a piece because of lack of consistent fingering.	May be more willing to work out different fingerings if the new fingerings affect the quality of the sound.	once it is in the fingers, is virtually impossible to change.
Can focus on details. Prefers to start from the beginning and work to the end, gradually mastering each section.	Likes to get a general sense of the whole piece, often with inaccuracies, before refining.	Likes to get a general sense of the whole piece, often with inaccuracies, before refining.
May have awkward technique due to over-reliance on the printed score. Generally unaware of how the body "feels".	Generally willing to work on technique.	Is generally comfortable at the keyboard. Is willing to work on technique if you are not trying to "unlearn" something. generally very aware of how the body "feels".
Learns best by following written instructions and reading music. Enjoys workbooks, written theory and "drill and practice" software.	Learns best through demonstration and imitation. Tape recording music and instructions may be most effective. Aural application of information is the best for them.	Learns best through demonstration and repetition. Games and movement activities are often necessary for understanding. This student often responds well to a chord approach, where they can "see and feel" the structures on the keyboard.

Teaching To A Student's Learning Style

Modifying the presentation of a concept to suit the student's learning style is really quite simple. It doesn't require much other than sensitivity to the student's needs and the ability to be flexible. It is important to remember that the way we present information, while seeming to be the best, most logical way, may not be the best for an individual student. Awareness of modality preferences will enlarge our own repertoire of teaching strategies and may result in comprehensive musicianship for all our students. Here are three examples of teaching through the learning styles.

In teaching steps and skips, effective teaching results in a student's learning to read, hear, sing and play those intervals, a comprehensive approach requiring mastery of visual, aural, and kinesthetic tasks. When a student is visual, the most effective first step is presentation of the visual icon (the lines and spaces) in conjunction with the physical configuration on the keyboard. This should be followed by reinforcement through the student's secondary modality, then finally, the remaining one. An aural student may be first approached by listening to the intervals and matching them in singing games. If the student's secondary modality is kinesthetic, playing the intervals at the keyboard while continuing to sing could be the next step. Later, the student can be introduced to the notation of the intervals. A kinesthetic student would benefit from activities such as walking on an enlarged floor keyboard and/or a floor staff. At the keyboard, playing the intervals using all the different fingering combinations allows the student to learn the "feel" of them. Notation and aural discrimination should follow these activities in the order of the student's secondary and weakest modality.

Understanding, executing and reading rhythms can be approached in much the same way. A visual student will retain information best when it is accompanied by a visual representation. If you are teaching the counting of the rhythmic pattern "two-eighths," the student will be most successful if she can see the icon while learning to execute the rhythm. For the aural student, listening to a piece that uses the rhythm while counting aloud will increase understanding and retention. For this learner, the visual representation of the rhythm should follow, not precede this type of activity. Clapping games or movement exercises incorporating the rhythmic pattern are a necessity for the kinesthetic student. Dalcroze exercises are excellent for large motor interpretation of rhythmic patterns. In these exercises, student perform the rhythm with their whole body, walking the rhythmic pattern while clapping the beat. This is always done with musical accompaniment and the student is often called upon to make choices based on aural and visual stimulation, making it an excellent method for all three types of learners.[10]

It is important to reiterate that we should not accept our students' weaknesses as unalterable. Teaching through modality strengths actually enables us to effectively address these. As a further example, I will describe this approach in three "classic" situations.

When working with a visual student who plays mechanically, you may begin with a scan of the score for information given visually such as intervals, notes, rhythms. Reading through the score is often what a visual student likes to do as an initial activity. We can use this visual strength to help him play more expressively. For example, during the visual scan, have the student locate the melody. This can then be isolated, played at the piano, then sung or worked on for phrasing, noting at this time any visual cues which focus on expression. These interpretive markings or dynamics could lead to a discussion of the mood of the piece using highly visual imagery. The student may be asked to draw a picture that represents the mood of the piece. Visual students also enjoy diagramming the musical shape of phrases. I have seen these activities transform the performance of visual students who may need help connecting with the emotional qualities of the music.

When teaching an aural student who may have difficulty with reading, model the sound by playing for them, asking them to listen for familiar figures such as scales, triadic patterns or frequently recurring rhythms. The student may then be asked to play, by ear, the identified figures. This can be followed by locating the figures in the score, a meaningful action connecting the notation to their familiar world of sound. Other scores can be examined for the same figures, emphasizing the notational aspects or a now familiar sound. A song using such figures can be improvised or composed, then notated. For aural students, sound must always precede notation. Exercises which ask students to discriminate between differing sounds, then matching those sounds with the written icon are effective techniques to improve reading skills.

There are many ways to work with kinesthetic students who might have trouble focusing during the initial reading through of a new piece. Rote presentation of the various elements of a piece is highly effective. (In this discussion, rote does not refer to simple mimicry, but to informed imitation.) Physical repetition of these small units is vital. Later, when the student sees the score, the motor aspects will have been already rehearsed. Activities at the piano should be alternated with whole body movement activities. Walking and clapping the notated rhythms prior to seeing them is important and allows the student to later associate the printed music with a kinesthetic activity. These activities get the student off the bench and will cut down on fidgeting. For kinesthetic students who may "bang," moving or acting out the musical sense of the piece will encourage musicality with more sensitivity to phrasing, dynamics, and tempo.

10Emile Jaques-Dalcroze was a Swiss musician and composer who developed a method of music education called Eurhythmics. A Dalcroze education comprises the basic elements of music: rhythm, dynamics, tone and form. The system is based on the kinesthetic sense. For practical applications of Dalcroze exercises, see Findlay and Abramson.

Ten Tips For Teaching Through Learning Styles

In general these simple suggestions offer a starting point for any teacher interested in modifying their approach to embrace a wider range of teaching styles.[11]

1. Evaluate the materials you currently use for their learning style bias.

2. Order, design and create needed materials.

3. Exclude poorly written and/or dull music. Use high interest repertoire, especially expressive music which conveys clear moods, tells stories, or describes familiar experiences.

4. Instruct more through modeling rather than verbal directions.

5. Provide recordings of repertoire being learned.

6. Simplify directions and provide concrete examples.

7. When appropriate, de-emphasize reading skills that require a highly analytic style.

8. When appropriate, eliminate/abbreviate skill work and replace with movement activities.

9. Consider exploring computer software to provide additional high interest activities for all learners.

10. Incorporate rote teaching techniques into every lesson.

Teaching with sensitivity to learning styles is effective and gratifying, and the benefits are many. The three modalities serve as reminders of the many aspects of good musicianship. For the teacher, learning styles theory creates a framework for consideration of each student's learning patterns resulting in improved analytic and diagnostic skills. It creates opportunities for more students to achieve a higher degree of musical success through its varied approaches. Finally, it rejuvenates as we constantly search for the best, most effective means to reach our students.

Notes

1. Learning styles or modalities in this article are those set forth by educational theorists W.B. Barbe and Raymond Swassing and further developed by Marie Carbo and Kenneth and Rita Dunn.

2. Barbe, Swassing, p. 14.

3. Carbo, Dunn, Dunn, pp. 254-257.

4. Ibid., p. 55.

5. Ibid., p. 49.

6. Persellin and Pierce (Persellin, 1988) This study examined the relationship between preference for learning modality and the learning and short-term retention of musical rhythm patterns. Fifty-five third graders completed the Swassing Barbe Modality Index. These students were also presented two-measure rhythm patterns through their visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities. Analysis indicated that children who preferred on the modality index one modality over others tended to prefer that same modality when learning simple musical rhythms.

7. Persellin (Persellin, 1992) The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of three rhythm presentation modalities on the recall of rhythm patterns. Seventy first graders, 70 third graders, and 70 fifth graders were tested either visually, auditorily, kinesthetically, or with combinations of these modalities. Each child was asked to memorize and clap six rhythm patterns of increasing difficulty, which were presented either iconically (visually), by playing a resonator bell (auditorily), by patting the child's hand (kinesthetically), or through combinations of these treatments. Grade level was significant ($p < .0001$). Test scores from students who were presented rhythm patterns using a multimodality presentation indicate that students were not confused by the multisensory input. The first grade visual test results were significantly lower ($p < .05$) than results with older children. These findings suggest that the incorporation of learning modalities into music teaching methods could result in more efficient learning of rhythm patterns. Although the visual method for first graders was not as effective as other presentations, older children were successful with all combinations of teaching presentations.

8. This test, listed in the bibliography, can be purchased for about $50.00.

9. It is priced at $160.00.

10. Emile Jaques-Dalcroze was a Swiss musician and composer who developed a method of music education called Eurhythmics. A Dalcroze education comprises the basic elements of music: rhythm, dynamics, tone and form. The system is based on the kinesthetic sense. For practical applications of Dalcroze exercises, see Findlay and Abramson.

11. Adapted from Carbo, Dunn and Dunn, pp. 110-116.

Resources

Web Sites of Interest:

http://www.learningstyles.net/ The website for the International Learning Styles Network at The Center for the Study of Learning and Teaching Styles at St. John's University.

http://www.howtolearn.com/personal.html Contains a personal learning styles inventory.

http://www.ldpride.net/learningstyles.MI.htm The site for the Island Adult Development Association - a registered non-profit association for adults with learning disabilities and attention deficit disorder. It contains information on learning styles and multiple intelligences. Links to a test based on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

http://www.hcc.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm Faculty Development page for Honolulu Community College. From learning styles to stress management to dealing with problem students, this web site is a fantastic resource for all kinds of teaching tips.

http://snow.utoronto.ca/Learn2/introll.html A nice general information website designed for learners with disabilities.

http://www.dalcrozeusa.org/ The website for the Dalcroze Society of America. An excellent resource for anyone interested in additional reading or attending a workshop.

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Tests

Learning Styles Inventory for grades 3-12 (Must send off for scoring) Learning Styles Inventory - primary version. (Can be scored by the user)

Contact Learning Styles Network 8000 Utopia Parkway Jamaica, N.Y. 11439 (718) 990-6161 ($45 + $10 shipping)

Modality Kit by Barbe and Swassing. (Zaner-Bloser) $160. (800-421-3018)

Susanna Garcia is the Coordinator of Keyboard at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette where she teaches piano, piano pedagogy and lectures in the interdisciplinary humanities program. Dr. Garcia has presented workshops and papers on a variety of topics for the College Music Society, Music Teachers National Association, National Association for Humanities Education, Louisiana Music Teachers Association, Texas Music Teachers Association, Texas Music Educators Association, and a host of other state music teacher groups. Her work has appeared in such publications as *19th Century Music* and *Interdisciplinary Humanities*. In 1998, Garcia, along with pianist William Chapman Nyaho, released the first complete recording of Aaron Copland's two-piano works. This recording appears on Centaur Records. Dr. Garcia holds the Masters and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the University of Texas at Austin and the Bachelor of Music from Texas A&M at Corpus Christi, Texas. She is Associate Professor of Music at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, where she has taught since 1990. Dr. Garcia holds the Ruth Stodghill Girard Endowed Professorship in Music and this year, was named a University of Louisiana Distinguished Professor.

If I Could Hear What I Was Missing

by Cherisse Miller

I am a pianist, independent piano teacher, and I am the church organist and pianist in a large Baptist church. I am also hearing impaired. My hearing loss is 60-70 percent in each ear, therefore I wear hearing aids in both ears. My world is very quiet without hearing aids, which is the only luxury of not being able to hear. I can turn off the noise when I need too. The hearing population can't do that.

I have poor discrimination ability, caused by damage to the auditory nerve. Hair cell damage in the cochlea affects sound quality and causes distortion of words and music. It is hard for me to understand speech unless I am looking directly at the speaker. When listening to vocal music, live or recorded, it is difficult to understand all of the words clearly. Listening to the radio is difficult. Closed captioning on television allows me to understand more clearly without turning up the volume.

My hearing loss in the low frequency range is mild to moderate, which isn't too bad, then begins sloping off to moderate-severe loss in the mid range, with the majority of my loss being profound in the high frequencies. Since my hearing loss is pretty much nil in the high pitched sounds and I do not hear pitch in the top twenty or so keys on the piano. I hear "thud, thud, thud."

When I play Rachmaninoff's *G Sharp Minor Prelude*, the ending sounds more like tiny wind chimes tinkling in the breeze. Another piece I learned in high school and a student is learning now is MacDowell's, *Shadow Dance*. Most of the right hand is played in the upper register and sounds similar to tingly little bells. The only way I know to describe it is, my brain hears the pitches even though physically my ears cannot.

Since being asked to contribute to this issue of Piano Pedagogy Forum, I have asked myself these questions, "In what ways am I different from everyone else, how is the learning process different, how do I adapt, what and how much do I really hear when IÕm making music? How have I, a professional musician with a severe-profound hearing loss, succeeded in a profession where listening and hearing are 100 percent of the job?"

I remember an ad campaign for a hearing aid back in the 1980's, "You Should Hear What You Are Missing." The ad pictured celebrities that were fitted for hearing aids on posters and TV. Their slogan was to tell the country, ' it's OK to wear hearing aids, to come on out of the closet,' so to speak. At the time, I thought, this is so true. If you are not aware of the sounds out there in this noisy world we live in and have never heard the bird's sing, and only hear parts of a conversation, then how do you know what you are missing? What a great statement for the millions of people out there with some degree of hearing loss. Most people do not even realize or want to admit that they have trouble hearing. There are many levels of hearing loss, just as there are levels of piano and forte.

Up until the 80's, there was a lot of negative stigma, and is still some today, towards the deaf and hearing impaired that maybe we were not too smart, since we could not hear. The old deaf and dumb myth. It simply is not true that if you can't hear, then there must be a lack of mentality too. Hearing loss does not affect your IQ.

I can remember during my senior year in high school, my parents asking me, "If we purchase a hearing aid, will you wear it?" I remember thinking, like duh! "do you wear your glasses? You mean I could hear like every body else if I put this little device in my ear?" (Myth: hearing aids are not like glasses or contacts which can restore vision to 20/20. Hearing aids do not restore hearing to 100 percent). Hearing aids can and do enhance hearing and I would be lost without them, but they do not take the place of normal hearing. If they did, everybody would have them!

This is my story ... My Life In A Musical Home

I was very blessed to have grown up in a musical home environment where both parents were musicians. My parents are graduates of the Julliard School of Music; my mother, the pianist, and my father, the baritone. Music was everything and everything was music. Even my name came from a French love song my father sang early in his career. I was probably destined at birth to be a musician.

Despite my hearing loss, I never questioned that I too would choose music as my career or should I say my life. I learned speech, vocabulary, sounds, and was playing the piano before I began losing by hearing. So my love for music was already in my heart long before I knew or understood that I couldn't hear.

I am reminded of the story of the bumblebee. Aerodynamically the bumblebee's wings are too small for him to fly, but he doesn't know that, so he flies anyway. No one ever told me I couldn't play the piano because I had a hearing loss. I just did it!

Learning About My Hearing Loss

I was in my 30's before I learned the true facts about my hearing loss. I grew up thinking I was a little hard of hearing, inheriting this from my grandfather whom could not hear well. The great awakening came during the 1980's. After a visit to the ENT office that tested my hearing as a child in the 1960's, my doctor discovered that I was born with normal hearing, but school testing in 1962 showed my hearing declining.

After some investigation on my part, I discovered that the drug, Chloromycetin, a form of streptomycin, was administered to me in the hospital when I had pneumonia in the third grade. This very toxic drug caused nerve damage in my cochlea, (inner ear) and auditory nerve, which is permanent and cannot be corrected medically or surgically. Nerve deafness occurs when the cochlea and auditory nerves can't properly transmit signals to the brain. Today this loss is called sensorinueral hearing loss. This type of hearing loss not only involves reduction in sound level, or the ability to hear faint sounds, but also affects speech understanding and the ability to hear clearly. I am one of 17 million

Americans that are affected with this type of irreversible hearing loss.

I kept my hearing loss a secret for most of my life. Very few people actually knew I wore a hearing aid. I wore my hair over my right ear to hide my little "secret." (I didn't wear hearing aids in each ear until about twelve years ago). I was thirty-five years old before I felt comfortable talking about my hearing loss to friends.

Today, knowing what I know now about hearing loss, I'm amazed I survived nine years of public education with deteriorating hearing and no support or help from the school system. Although my hearing declined gradually during my school years, I'm sure I had special needs that were not met, because programs were not available during the 1960's. The medical society and education system didn't recognize that students with hearing loss even had special needs or could learn in a classroom with support or assistance. Little was known about hearing loss, and hearing aids were not very good back then. My audiologist actually told me that pediatricians often referred children, who had the same type of hearing loss that I have today, to psychiatrists who then would place the children in mental hospitals. The only thing I could in school to hear better was take responsibility for telling my teachers I needed to sit at the front of the classroom. To me this was demeaning and embarrassing.

I coped by learning on my own, (without realizing it), to read lips, watching closely for gesturing, facial expressions, body movement, body language and any other clues to help me understand what was being said. I still use these strategies today. Just like you, we all use our eyes to get clues about what people are saying, their mood, etc. I can "hear", I just can't "understand", everything being said. This is true even with wearing hearing aids.

Hearing Aid Technology

By definition, hearing aids are devices that amplify sound wave in order to help a deaf or hard of hearing person hear sounds more clearly. All hearing aids include a microphone (to pick up sound), amplifier (to boost sound strength), a receiver or speaker (to deliver sound to the ear), and are powered by a battery. Depending on the style, it's possible to add features to filter or block out background noise, minimize feedback, lower sound in noisy settings, or boost power when needed.

I wear behind-the-ear, programmable hearing aids. At the touch of a tiny button I have three different settings programmed for my hearing loss. I can change from hearing in normal settings to a music setting, that is sometimes helpful, to my favorite, "party mode." This setting reduces the background noise in noisy atmospheres like restaurants, stores, large gatherings, etc. and focuses on the person speaking.

I enjoy one-on-one settings and relationships as opposed to being in groups. Group situations are noisy. This could be one of the reasons I enjoy playing the piano so much. I can communicate all by myself. I never considered a career teaching school. A classroom situation would be very stressful to me, because I have trouble hearing across a room.

The farther away you are from the speaker, the harder it is to hear the speaker. The intensity, or loudness, of a sound fades rapidly as it travels over distance. The background noise of others talking, paper shuffling, computers, other activities going on nearby, etc. and especially in a classroom situation would be unbearable. These sounds, combined with the lower volume of speech reaching your ear due to the distance factors, make hearing in noisy backgrounds very challenging. I'm much more comfortable with the quieter atmosphere of private teaching.

Growing up, I was very fortunate to have had a Steinway grand at home and at my piano teacher's studio. I acquired my mother's 6' Mathushek grand when I married. This is the piano I now teach on. Several years ago I purchased a very bright 6'10" Young Chang. The piano I play at church is an 8' Baldwin on wood flooring. I prefer grand pianos that are resonant, bright and with full sound quality as opposed to small uprights. Practicing in college was a real shock when most practice rooms only offered old upright pianos. It took several months for me to get use to this change. Understandably, the more a piano has to offer the easier and less frustrating for me to play and hear. You may say the same thing, but to me it makes a big difference. Interestingly enough, an out of tune piano is distracting and confuses me until I get used to it.

I often say about myself, "I hear with my eyes, and play the piano with my ears." I am a visual person, because I can trust and depend on what I can see the majority of the time. I often don't trust what I hear, even when I'm correct, whether playing or conversing. In communicating verbally, sometimes it takes time for me to process the information and to make sense from what was said. It's the same thing when playing the piano. Sometimes my response is slow. I recently performed Rachmaninoff's *Suite No. 2, Opus 17 for Two Pianos* with my teacher, Dr. Alan Weinberg. There are lots of notes happening at the same time. When practicing with both pianos, if the music was quite busy, I have problems with distortion and sound overload, which can cause me to lose my place on the keyboard because I can't differentiate what I'm hearing and/or playing. Rachmaninoff's use of chromatics and many accidentals at the end of the *Romance* (Suite), makes it very difficult for me to actually hear if I'm playing the correct notes. Probably the most difficult piece I have ever worked on is Schumann's, *Fantasie in C Major, Opus 17*. This may be my greatest challenge, to figure out the last two pages of the second movement. The big leaps in both hands, quick tempo, high range has to be difficult even for hearing pianists.

I practice lines that are too high pitched to hear, in a lower register until I hear it in my head. Once my brain learns what it sounds like, and my fingers know where to move I trust myself to play it, even though I may not be 100 percent sure. There is always that little bit of doubt when I play in the high end of the piano.

Playing in church

Being a church musician and accompanist brings on a whole new set of situations. I don't hear the high frequency stops on the organ and I'm sure there are other high timbre of sounds I'm not even aware of. My church has two Sunday morning services. I play the

organ for the traditional service and the piano for the contemporary service. Any time amplification is used with electronic instruments, (bass guitar, digital drums, keyboards, vocals on microphones) my ears can become over amplified, so I adjust the volume on my hearing aids to avoid this from happening. Sometimes turning them off is necessary. We use individual monitors and other band members wear earphones, to hear themselves. This helps us cut down on the noise so that I don't become overamplified. I just need to be sure I can hear myself, the minister of music and keep a steady beat. As an accompanist, I've trained myself to anticipate my director's moves and know his tempos. I'm fortunate to work with a great individual who is sensitive and attentive to my hearing needs. He knows to look towards me when giving instructions in rehearsals and I try my best to be attentive. He is patient when he has to repeat a page number or part on my behalf. I know in my heart that using my talents in church is exactly what God has called me to do.

In conclusion, I am who I am because of my love of music, my passion for playing the piano and my joy of sharing it with others. We all have obstacles to overcome no matter what we do. I do wonder sometimes what it would be like to really hear what I was missing - but for right now I'm thankful for what I do hear.

From my teacher, mentor and friend, Dr. Alan Weinberg

Cherisse has been studying with me for about two years. At first, I did not know that she was hearing impaired. She plays the piano so well, and is so musical and technically gifted that I would not have thought that she had a hearing problem. It was only through talking with her that I became aware of her difficulty, by occasionally having to repeat a word or a sentence and finding myself speaking slower and a bit louder.

I gradually learned the nature of her hearing loss which I believe, is twofold: first (and perhaps more apparent), is her difficulty in distinguishing pitches in the upper and lower registers of the piano. Second, perhaps more the result of the hearing aids themselves, is her perception of simultaneous sounds as "two-dimensional." By this, I imagine that Cherisse's perception of the variety and depth of dynamics (distinguishing loud and soft tones in a complex musical texture) may not be as quick and reliable as normal "three-dimensional" hearing where tones readily recede into the background or come to the fore (analogous to a painting that uses perspective to give the illusion of three dimensions).

Nevertheless, she does amazingly well - being able to balance a melody with an accompaniment as well as produce a singing legato tone. In any case, Cherisse has to process what she hears a little longer and sometimes will experience doubt as to what her hearing aids are transmitting to her ears. Needless to say, this can add much anxiety in a performance situation. To help guard against this, Cherisse works hard to thoroughly learn her music by touch and sight as well as sound. In the end, this may not be all that much different from anyone else. We all have our weaknesses that require strengthening as well as inner demons that might cause us to doubt what we are doing. To succeed requires courage and tenacity; but, for the hearing impaired musician, it may take even a little extra than for the rest of us.

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Cherisse Miller has a BA degree in piano performance from the University of South Carolina where she was a student of John W. Williams. She presently studies with Dr. Alan Weinberg at Columbia College. She has taught piano in Columbia, SC for 24 years and presently maintains a piano studio of 37 students incorporating the use of computer technology along with the private lesson. She is MTNA certified and an active member of the National Guild of Piano Teachers, and National Federation of Music Clubs. She is district chairman for the Junior Festival in the Columbia area. She also serves as organist and pianist at North Trenholm Baptist Church in Columbia, SC.