

MTNA M e-journal

NOVEMBER 2022

MTNA

Teaching & Learning & Sharing

GP3



From The Editorial Committee

GP3 2022: Together Again!

Rejoice! It feels like that was the collective reaction of piano pedagogues across the nation when MTNA announced that the August 2022 edition of the GP3 conference would be the first in-person event since the onset of the pandemic. Since its inception in 2000, GP3 (Group Piano and Piano



Dr. Diana Dumlavwalla, NCTM

Pedagogy Forum) has been a grassroots initiative that is firmly rooted in the goals of furthering effective practical applications of teaching group piano and piano pedagogy. The GP3 forum formally joined forces with MTNA in 2005 and the partnership has facilitated the growth of this biennial conference.

Originally initiated by leading pedagogues in the field, attendees now encompass piano pedagogues at different stages in their careers as well as collegiate students. The length of the event is more compact than the MTNA National conference that takes place in March. As the setting is more intimate, attendees have more opportunities to converse with each other and make deep connections. The sessions at GP3 are often shorter in length and take place over the course of two days allowing for a fast-paced experience that covers lots of pedagogical territory.

The forum has traditionally published summary reports of the presentations allowing anyone to get a peek into the fascinating topics covered at the conference. In this issue of the MTNA e-Journal, we will be able

to take a look at what went on at this year's event. As is typically the case for GP3, the content covered a wide range of issues. Areas of focus included expanding knowledge of repertoire especially from other countries, examining music instruction and the brain, looking at new innovations and technologies in the piano lab and helping to make piano playing accessible to all. In particular, there was a tantalizing series of presentations centered around Demystifying Pop, Hip-hop and K-Pop. Unsure about what K-Pop is? Then you will have to read that report in this issue! The plenary presentations featured Dr. Ivy Banks addressing diversity and inclusivity in education and Dr. Cody Commander discussing the connection between mental skills and performance anxiety.

Following the 2022 conference, the members of the GP3 Executive Committee decided it was time to pass the torch on to another set of pedagogues who will forge ahead and carry on with the mission of this forum. Erin Bennett and Andrea McAlister will serve as co-chairs for the committee. Other members include Chan Kiat Lim, John Patrick Murphy and Diana Dumlavwalla. Michelle Conda and Barbara Fast have agreed to stay on as advisors to ensure a smooth transition. We offer a hearty expression of gratitude to Courtney Crappell, Tom Pearsall and Lisa Zdechlik for all their years of service as they step down from the committee. Finally, we thank Gary Ingle, Karen Thickstun, Brian Shepard and all the staff at the MTNA head office for their support.

If this issue's reports pique your interest, please consider joining us in 2024 for the next GP3 Forum!

—Dr. Diana Dumlavwalla, NCTM
Florida State University

Editorial Committee

CHAIR

Dr. Linda Essick Cockey, NCTM

Salisbury University
Salisbury, Maryland

CHAIR-DESIGNATE

Dr. Paola Savvidou, NCTM

University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dr. Laura Amoriello, NCTM

Independent Music Teacher
Ithaca, New York

Dr. Carla Davis Cash

Texas Tech University
Lubbock, Texas

Dr. Diana Dumlavwalla, NCTM

Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida

Dr. Gayle Kowalchyk

California State University, Northridge
Northridge, California

Dr. Kenneth Williams, NCTM

Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

Staff

Publisher/ Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Gary L. Ingle

Director of Publishing/Managing Editor

Marcie Gerriets Lindsey

Graphic Designer/Advertising Sales

Brian Pieper

The *MTNA e-Journal* [ISSN 2152-7210] is a peer-reviewed online periodical published by Music Teachers National Association, Inc., four times during the academic year: September, November, February and April. Annual subscription is included with MTNA membership dues. Nonmember subscription \$16/1 year; \$28/2 years; \$40/3 years; single issue \$4.50.

The *MTNA e-Journal* is indexed with ProQuest LLC (www.proquest.com); Repertoire International de Literature Musicale, Inc. (www.rilm.org) and EBSCOhost Research Databases, www.ebscohost.com. Archived copies are available via the MTNA website at www.mtna.org.

Copyright 2022 by Music Teachers National Association, Inc. All rights reserved. Nothing in this publication may be duplicated or reprinted without the advance written permission of the publisher. The statements and opinions expressed on these pages are not necessarily those of the publisher. The publisher assumes no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts, photos or artwork. Unsolicited letters to the editor, articles and other editorial matter will be edited at the discretion of *MTNA e-Journal* staff. MTNA reserves the right not to publish any material deemed inappropriate by the publisher.

Address all editorial correspondence to ejournal@mtna.org

Reports from the 2022 Group Piano and Piano Pedagogy Forum

2 *Tokyo Olympic Mental Skills for Pianists and Teachers, Part I*

Presenter: Dr. Cody Commander;
Reported by: J.P. Murphy, NCTM

4 *Tokyo Olympic Mental Skills for Pianists and Teachers, Part II*

Presenter: Dr. Cody Commander;
Reported by: Katie Ostrosky

7 *Reaching Out, Giving Back: Creating a Just Community*

Presenter: Dr. Oscar Macchioni;
Reported by: Jenna Klein

9 *How has Group Piano Changed in the Last Decade?*

Presenters: Dr. Erin Bennett, NCTM;
Dr. Barbara Fast, NCTM; Dr. Chan Kiat Lim, NCTM; Dr. Thomas Swenson, NCTM; Reported by: Dr. Tyler Ramos

11 *Demystifying Hip-Hop*

Presenter: Dr. Jenny Cruz; Brian Jump; Reported by: Bob Conda

13 *Demystifying K-Pop*

Presenter: Helena Hyesoo Kim;
Reported by: Dr. Giuliano Graniti

15 *Demystifying Pop*

Presenter: Dr. Michelle Conda, NCTM; Reported by: Stephanie Archer

17 *Lightning Talks and Performances*

Reported by Dr. Hannah Roberts, NCTM

20 *The "Keys" of D&I: The Melodies of Unity*

Presenter: Dr. Ivy Banks; Reported by: Dr. Michael Clark, NCTM

22 *Navigating New Territory: Experiences in American Education*

Presenter: Dr. Carina Joly, Zi Liang, Dr. Eleni Persefoni Stavrianou
Reported by: Wenxin Guan

24 *Let's Talk: Get Comfortable Being Uncomfortable: DEI Discussions*

Presenter: Dr. Brianna Matzke, NCTM;
Reported by: Harrison Scheckler, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona

25 *The "Unpiano" Lab*

Presenters: Dr. Giuliano Graniti;
Dr. Andy Villemez; Reported by: Emily Barr

28 *Diverse and Inclusive Folk Music for Teaching Harmonization Skills*

Presenter: Dr. J.P. Murphy, NCTM;
Reported by: Dr. Meily Mendez

31 *Creative Group Piano Activities to Reinforce Repertoire*

Presenter: Dr. Jenna Klein; Reported by Dr. Curtis Pavey

33 *Lightning Talks and Performances*

Reported by Dr. Hayden Coie

Poster Sessions

36 *Exploring the 20th-Century Chinese Piano Music*

Presenter: Dr. Yangmingting Fang

38 *Four-Hand Piano Music from Latin America for Intermediate and Advanced Students*

Presenters: Dr. Po Sim Head, NCTM; Shuning Li

40 *Music: Healing for the Brain*

Presenter: Dr. Marjorie Lucas

42 *New Sounds in Chinese Piano Music: An Exciting Direction in Multi-Culturalism*

Presenters: Yi Chang; Ling Wei

Current Research

40 *Adele Aus Der Ohe: Pioneering Through Recital Programming at Carnegie Hall, 1895*

By Dr. Grace Shepard

41 *Humor and Irony in Beethoven's Variations for Piano, 1791-1802*

By Dr. Peng Du Krol

Tokyo Olympic Mental Skills for Pianists and Teachers

Presented by Dr. Cody Commander

This first of a two-part keynote session presented by Dr. Cody Commander explored the etiology of performance anxiety, the physical and cognitive symptoms of performance anxiety and strategies for decreasing performance anxiety. Commander is a clinical and sport psychologist at the University of Oklahoma, where he is the director of sport psychology for the athletics department. He is the owner of Commander Counseling and Wellness in Norman, Oklahoma, and frequently works with professional athletes and organizations. In 2021, he served as a mental health officer for Team USA at the Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Commander began the session with an invitation for attendees to participate in a live survey using Poll Everywhere and their cellular phones. Participants were asked to describe why they began piano studies, if they still actively perform and to quantify past anxiety they've experienced when performing. Results were simultaneously projected, revealing that 93% of participants identified as active performers and 68% of participants had experienced negative impacts towards the quality of work due to performance anxiety. Results of this audience survey were consistent with Commander's research findings.

Etiology of Performance Anxiety

Commander explained that performance anxiety is a natural physiological reaction when our body perceives a threat. When performance tasks are repeated over time, internal and external pressures can create stress we feel in our body. For example, the belief of being judged by others is a common pressure performers encounter. In addition to pressure, increased expectations can have a negative impact and create performance anxiety. What was once perceived as an enjoyable task may become less enjoyable when expectations increase. An individual's perception of performance expectations and pressures will manifest and create a physiological response. Commander explained how this is the origin of the fight-flight-freeze response, our body's natural reaction to a perceived threat.

Physiological and Cognitive Symptoms of Performance Anxiety

Audience participants were asked to articulate how they have felt anxiety the most while performing. Common responses included sweaty hands, increased heartbeat, stomach distress, the ability to focus and shortness of breath. Commander continued by identifying six common physiological symptoms associated with performance anxiety. First, the

heart begins to beat faster to pump blood to extremities. A general feeling of nervousness may occur and breathing rhythms change to assist in regulating the heartbeat. An increase in hand and body sweat occurs to help cool the body. Reproductive organs may shut down, and an individual's sense of hearing may be impacted.

In addition to physiological symptoms, performance anxiety can negatively impact the brain and cognitive abilities. Performers can become irritable when consumed with thoughts of fear or failure, and their ability to think logically is challenged by a racing mind. Commander introduced the terminology of Self 1, the conscious and Self 2, the unconscious. When musicians practice and develop a natural fluency at a task, they rely on Self 2 (the unconscious) during performances. A problem occurs when anxiety causes insecurity in a performer's ability and Self 1 (the conscious) begins to take over. As Self 1 takes over, performers become overwhelmed thinking about every detail resulting in the increased likeliness of mistakes.

Strategies for Decreasing Performance Anxiety

While there is no "golden fix" related to performance anxiety, there are actions performers can take to decrease anxiety and increase chances of success. Commander provided the analogy of hosting a dinner party: "If you were going to have a great dinner party, you can't guarantee everyone will have a good time. But you can invite the right people, order good food and choose the right venue to increase the chances of everyone having a good time."

First, performers should reflect on the reason they choose to perform. Musicians should assess if they are performing due to intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Intrinsically motivated performers often have a sense of purpose and a desire of mastery, compared to extrinsically motivated performers who rely on compensation, compliments and rewards. According to Commander, intrinsically motivated musicians

are often more successful in sustaining long-term careers as performers.

Creating specific rehearsal and performance goals also helps reduce the occurrence of performance anxiety. Commander suggested using the S.M.A.R.T goals structure for effectively establishing performance goals: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime-related. The performer should first establish a specific task they wish to accomplish, then decide how to quantifiably measure the specific task. Performers should specify who will accomplish the task and check that it is an attainable goal. Lastly, performers should establish appropriate time limits and deadlines for achieving the task. Commander encouraged performers using the S.M.A.R.T goals structure to incorporate time to assess progress made toward the established goal.

Concluding the first session, Commander introduced deep breathing as the most effective way to physically reduce performance anxiety. When individuals breathe deeply, the oxygen ratio in the bloodstream increases, enters the brain and calms the central nervous system. The image of "smelling flowers and blowing bubbles" was shared as a useful tool for deep inhalation and exhalation. Commander suggested using low diaphragmatic breaths in a four-step process: inhale, pause, exhale, pause. To maximize relaxation, performers should focus attention on pauses between the inhale and exhale, increasing the lengths of pauses as comfortable. Additional strategies to reduce performance anxiety were continued in part two of the keynote session. ◀◀

Dr. J. P. Murphy is assistant professor of piano at the University of Oklahoma, where he teaches piano pedagogy and applied piano. He holds a DMA degree in piano performance and pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma.



Tokyo Olympic Mental Skills for Pianists and Teachers

Part Two

Presented by Dr. Cody Commander

This session was the second part of Dr. Cody Commander's keynote presentation. Part One provided the foundations for the etiology of performance anxiety and how it can manifest. In Part Two, Commander covered practical strategies for coping with the physical and cognitive symptoms of performance anxiety.

There are three main areas for developing coping strategies to deal with performance anxiety: calming the physiological symptoms, changing or reframing the way the brain interprets a stressful situation, and distraction from the feelings of anxiety. Commander provided concrete steps one can take to lessen the effects of performance anxiety.

Calming Techniques

The first line of defense against the physiological symptoms of performance anxiety is to calm the body. Lowering the heart rate and slowing the breath are important steps toward combating performance anxiety. Deep breathing and relaxing one's muscles are the primary ways to calm the physical effects of performance anxiety.

Deep breathing exercises are recommended for lowering the heart rate in response to a fight, flight or freeze response. At the outset, it can take 10 to 15 minutes of breathing exercises to reduce the heart rate, but this can be reduced significantly with regular practice. Muscle relaxation techniques are also useful to relax the body and are inherently related to the deep breathing techniques already mentioned. One technique is to sit in a chair and take a slow, deep breath while squeezing one's hands and arm muscles. Hold this position for five seconds, then exhale and release all the tension from hand and arm muscles. Another exercise involves taking a slow, deep breath while squeezing the shoulders for five seconds, trying to touch the shoulders to the ears. Exhale and release all the tension from the shoulders. These activities, known as progressive muscle relaxation or PMR can be done with many different muscle groups.

Skill Acquisition vs. Skill Execution

"Skill acquisition" refers to the portion of practice intended to learn new skills, while "skill execution" refers to performing skills

already learned. In an ideal world, one would not use skills in the acquisition stage during a performance. This holds true for calming and relaxation techniques. If using them for the first time in a stressful performance situation, they will not be as effective because they are still unfamiliar skills.

For calming strategies to work, they must be incorporated into one's practice routine, just as new musical skills are incorporated into practice. The skill of physical relaxation is similar to technical musical skills, and they both need to be embedded into daily practice. For example, it is beneficial to work on calming techniques during practice sessions right before attempting a challenging passage. This way, the brain is well-rehearsed at calming itself, and it can execute these relaxation techniques more reliably in practice and performance.

Change or Reprocessing Techniques

Changing one's perspective or reprocessing a stressful situation is the next line of defense against the cognitive and emotional effects of performance anxiety. Commander performed a sleight-of-hand magic trick from two perspectives to demonstrate how a single event can be interpreted in multiple ways, or "reframed" to convey a different meaning. He provided several reframing techniques to use during practice and performance to view negative experiences in a positive light.

The first reframing technique, titled "But at least. . .," challenges the performer to discover positive results from a negative performing or practicing experience. An example might be, "I had terrible practice today, but at least I now know what to work on." Another technique to help reframe negative experiences is "Three Reasons Why." Using the same scenario, "I had terrible practice," one should think of three reasons for having terrible practice and how it can be avoided in the future.

These techniques highlight the difference between productive and unproductive mistakes. Where a typical attitude toward making a mistake is to hope that no mistakes happen, productive mistakes encourage the perspective of, "I wonder what mistakes I'll get to learn from today." One should practice fluency of these techniques by coming up with many reframes for negative situations quickly and making sure to reframe positively instead of negatively. Just as pianists practice fluency in their piano technique, there should be fluency in creating a healthy, positive outlook.

Self-Talk and Confidence

The way we talk to ourselves has important implications for how we feel about performing and practicing and is related to confidence in our skills. Commander guided the attendees in a thought exercise to illustrate this point, using the image of a child falling off a bicycle. Examples from the audience on how to respond to the child were generally nurturing, such as comforting the child, asking if the child was OK and congratulating them on making it this far. Commander made the point that no one thought it would be appropriate to denigrate the child's attempts, demonstrating the disconnect between how we speak to others in negative situations versus how we speak to ourselves. He stressed the importance of treating ourselves the way we would treat the child falling off the bicycle.

Positive self-talk can help build confidence and manifests in two varieties: encouragement and recovery. Encouragement comes in the form of positive things to say before a performance or practice session, while recovery refers to what one might say after a mistake has been made. How do we "get back up there?" In addition to generally being kind to ourselves, Commander suggests having specific things ready to say for when a performance does not go according to plan.

*“For calming strategies to work, **they must be incorporated into one’s practice routine, just as new musical skills are incorporated into practice.**”*

A common pitfall in one’s perception of abilities can be explained by the confidence wave. When performing well, confidence is high, but when performing poorly, confidence is low. Instead of this variable wave, one’s confidence should be based on their abilities and time spent practicing. Commander encourages using a “reset button” after a making a mistake, so the confidence wave doesn’t affect day-to-day performances.

Distraction

The final group of techniques involves distracting oneself from the stressful situation so Self 1 (the conscious) does not take control from Self 2 (the unconscious). Distraction can be achieved in three targeted ways: use of imagery, mindfulness and grounding techniques. Imagining oneself in a successful performance, successfully executing a

musical passage and being resilient after mistakes occur are all examples of positive, success-based imagery. Imagery through visualization or relaxation is another way to distract from anxiety. Mindfulness is a mental state where one is focused in the present moment, with a beginner’s mind free from judgment. The practice of meditation can help achieve a state of mindfulness, using all the senses to help stay in the present. Commander suggested using apps, such as Headspace, for guided meditations.

Grounding techniques used during performance are designed to keep Self 1 occupied so Self 2 may execute the task at hand. “4, 3, 2, 1” is both a grounding and mindfulness technique where the performer identifies four things they see in the room, three things they hear, two things they feel, and one thing they smell or taste. Another technique to distract Self 1 is to use “categories.” For instance, while performing, one should name everything they can think of in a specific category, such as different types of vegetables or different colors. It is important to make the categories novel so they do not become habitual since the goal is to engage the conscious self.

What Techniques to Choose?

With a toolbox full of different techniques to combat the physiological, emotional and cognitive aspects of performance anxiety, it can be difficult to know which tools one should choose. Commander suggests a multi-pronged approach that uses techniques from each category: breathing and muscle relaxation techniques to calm the physiological symptoms, reframing techniques to manage the emotional component and distraction techniques to quell the cognitive effects. Regular practice of these techniques can enable performers to easily access these coping mechanisms, improving performance and mental health for amateurs and professionals alike. ◀◀

Katie Ostrosky, NCTM, is pursuing a PhD in music education in piano pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma. She is on the faculty of Randall University where she teaches piano and music theory.



Reaching out, Giving Back

Creating a Just Community

Presented by Dr. Oscar Macchioni

In his presentation, Dr. Macchioni discussed his extensive experience coordinating and performing in concerts for underserved communities in the El Paso, Texas, area.

His presentation included both examples of his outreach efforts and shared important aspects for teachers that are interested in creating similar events to consider. His presentation was particularly impactful due to the growing interest in expanding accessibility to music, particularly to economically disadvantaged communities.

Macchioni began the presentation with his own story of discovering the piano and classical music as a young boy through an outreach concert in his hometown of Tafi Viejo, Argentina. His first experience hearing choirs, orchestra and an upright piano perform classical music had a profound impact on him and was the moment he realized, "This is what I want to do with the rest of my life." The lasting impact of this outreach concert program guided the course of his life as a pianist and teacher and later cultivated his interest in organizing similar concert experiences for others.

Macchioni next discussed some of his early outreach concert performances and experiences. To find venues, he called every retirement home in his area to ask the

logistical questions of coordinating an outreach concert (for example, piano availability, space and time availability). He shared funny anecdotes of playing in this environment, such as having to pause the program to let a wheelchair pass through or having residents tap him on the shoulder mid-performance to ask him a question. While humorous, these anecdotes highlighted an important theme in Macchioni's presentation: The music is for the audience and not necessarily for the performer. The act of music making is truly treated as a service in this setting.

After several years of providing community outreach concerts, Macchioni was able to secure a grant through the El Paso Federation of the Arts. This grant provides funding for his outreach concerts and ensures Macchioni can continue to provide this worthy service to communities in need. After each concert, audience members complete a brief form outlining their experience. These forms are used to demonstrate the positive impact of and attendance at concerts. For those interested in providing outreach concerts to underserved communities, similar grants are often available in other cities and regions.

Macchioni stressed the importance of picking the right venues to reach audiences that otherwise may not have access to piano

performances. While nursing home performances provide entertainment to generally appreciative audiences, the individuals in these homes have the resources to attend concerts and purchase high-quality recordings. So instead, Macchioni shifted his attention to performances at schools, libraries, juvenile detention centers and unaccompanied minor detention centers. Through this effort, he brought the concert to them, in other words, provided a service that is generally a rare commodity in low socio-economic and detained communities who may not have the resources to travel to attend concerts. These audiences may speak during the concert (as members of any audience might). However, these audiences are generally attentive, interested and enthusiastic about the opportunity to hear a piano concert. Concert-goers may approach Macchioni and ask about his instrument or recall a memory sparked by his performance. Residents and staff at a juvenile detention center were so appreciative of his performance, they gifted him a community service coin at the concert.

Macchioni frequently uses libraries as performance venues for outreach concerts. In the summer, families come to the library to escape the heat and be entertained, particularly during the hottest part of the day. Dr. Macchioni strategically schedules his concert during these busier times at the library. There is air conditioning, books, sometimes movies are shown, and there is a playground. And when there is an outreach piano concert happening, those in the library usually wander over in curiosity.

Dr. Jenna Klein is assistant professor of piano at Mississippi State University, where she coordinates the group piano program, teaches applied piano and pedagogy. She holds degrees from the University of Oklahoma, the University of Northern Iowa and SUNY New Paltz.



Along with the venue, Macchioni also emphasized that the quality of the instrument is not important in the pursuit of creating meaningful musical experiences at outreach concerts. He has played on out-of-tune upright pianos, keyboards, tuned upright pianos and sometimes grand pianos. This is not because he thinks lesser of these audiences, but rather because these audiences are there to be entertained and hear music, the quality of the instrument does not impact their enjoyment of the musical experience.

During the concerts, Macchioni uses laymen's terms to explain musical ideas and characteristics. Words like fast, flow, dramatic and light allow for discussions about the music to remain accessible and unintimidating. He discusses composers' lives and invites people to interact. After he performs, he may ask an audience how the piece made them feel.

When programming concerts, familiarity is key! Macchioni purposefully fills concerts with works that audiences are familiar with. This includes Disney music, music from movie soundtracks, classical favorites like Bach's Prelude in C or popular music favorites among some Latinx communities like *Estrellita*, by Manuel Ponce. The goal of these concerts is not to play difficult western standard repertoire, but rather to play music the audience recognizes, enjoys and relates to.

In this presentation, Macchioni shared powerful examples of community outreach concerts and provided a helpful outline of items to consider when organizing similar events. Aspects like the venue, music and time of day are important to consider and can impact the success and attendance at concerts. On the contrary, the quality of the instrument is not as important to consider when planning these types of performances. Throughout his presentation, Macchioni reiterated his most important point: Music should be accessible to all and that through his community outreach concerts, his goal is to share a love of music and build a connection with others. ◀◀

FLASH TALK

How Has Group Piano Changed In The Last Decade?

Presented by Dr. Erin Bennett, NCTM;
Dr. Barbara Fast, NCTM; Dr. Chan Kiat Lim, NCTM;
Dr. Thomas Swenson, NCTM; and
Dr. Michelle Conda, NCTM

Group piano teachers have gotten better at teaching and meeting the needs of our students over the last 10 years. This is thanks to the integration and evolution of technology of the piano lab and through the introduction and implementation of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in our curriculum. The panelists were Dr. Erin Bennett, University of North Florida; Dr. Barbara Fast, University of Oklahoma; Dr. Chan Kiat Lim, University of Louisiana at Lafayette; and Dr. Thomas Swenson, University of North Carolina School of the Arts. After a short history of group piano, the conversation was organized into three sections: Technology and Curriculum; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and an abbreviated Q&A.

Technology and Curriculum

As repeated throughout the conversation surrounding Technology and Curriculum, Fast posited that the evolution of technology spurred the evolution of curriculum and methods of instruction and assessment. Starting with humble beginnings with a Wurlitzer lab to the advanced lab at the University of

Arizona Fred Fox School of Music, updated technology introduced into the classroom became a new tool in our educational arsenals as group piano teachers. This relationship was made apparent during the COVID-19 shutdown in which instructors and students were forced to adapt to a flipped classroom model. Instead of traditional in-person instruction, teachers created YouTube videos—ranging from 30 seconds to four minutes—for students to watch on their own time. Students could watch these videos at their own pace and were also free to rewatch as needed to complete their assignments. While the total contact hours during the week are severely cut because of this method, group piano teachers found themselves working even more outside of the classroom. According to Swenson, students expected feedback within 24 hours of their submission. In addition to creating the videos, group piano teachers also have to grade the assignment submissions, whose numbers differ depending on the capacity of each institution's keyboard lab. While this *is* a double-edged sword, one advantage of creating teaching videos is that they are reusable!

FLASH TALK: How Has Group Piano Changed In The Last Decade?

Since returning to in-person instruction, recordings have not left the classroom. Some professors offer two methods of formal assessment for their students: perform the assignment in person or record the assignment for submission (albeit graded at a higher standard). Other professors offer a mix, with some assignments graded in person and others via video. Students may feel anxiety about performing on the piano, not their main instrument, for an instructor they may not know well. Allowing students the chance to submit their work via a recording offers two benefits: The student feels less performance anxiety, and the student will practice the piece more to get their best work. At the University of Arizona's keyboard lab, students are equipped with state-of-the-art keyboards that allow them to record an audio performance to a USB drive, similar to the way they would record themselves on video. While the benefits of asynchronous submission are invaluable, Bennett advised attendees to carefully balance in-person instruction and assessment and recorded instruction and assessment. The latter incurs an enormous amount of time on the teacher outside of the classroom.

Within the last 10 years, our students and their needs have changed, so too have the ways in which we connect with them by incorporating principles of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion into our curriculum and working with students to imagine piano in their lives as professional musicians, be it accompanying their own students or even leading a choir. With this, students can see more of themselves reflected in the materials they study.

Our panelists discussed the ways in which they integrate DEI into their curriculum. Fast's graduate assistants lead a folk song project: Students find folk songs from around the world to play as harmonization exercises, sometimes ending with the students playing a two-handed accompaniment as they sing the words to the song. Speaking to the changing demographics of our students, Lim discussed his practices in creating a safe space conducive to learning. In the virtual classroom, international students were free to use either their given names if comfortable, or their Americanized names along with their pronouns. Lim introduces himself to his class in the same manner, modeling the ways in which he, in Bennett's words, "honors the student's identity." Lim includes a non-discriminatory statement in his own syllabi and provides information about resources available to students, both on campus and off campus. Other panelists shared similar experiences. Under Fast's umbrella idea of "expanding the curriculum," Swenson shared that his experience as a church accompanist of an African-American church was illuminating; he should have been paying them for all he learned: What is on the page is not necessarily what is played, and there is more material than just the 12-bar boogie that we can teach our students if only we are receptive to it as well. Among other interesting projects mentioned were "sing-and-play" pop projects, writing a theme and variations and accompanying projects.

It is exciting to see new developments in curriculum and technology regarding group piano instruction. Throughout the forum, participants learned about sports psychology techniques top athletes use to consistently perform at a high level, American popular music, K-Pop, building a cheaper (un)piano lab, and about the international student experience among other topics. Who knows what the next 10 years will have in store for group piano instruction. ◀◀

Dr. Tyler Ramos holds a DMA, music theory minor, and Arts Leadership Certificate from the Eastman School of Music. His interests include 18th- and 19th-century improvisation and the music of the late Queen Lydia Lili'uokalani.



Demystifying Hip-Hop

Presented By Dr. Jenny Cruz and Brian Jump

In the Rotation Session “Demystifying Hip-Hop,” pianist Dr. Jenny Cruz and guitarist Brian Jump did just that: They both outlined and demonstrated—from the initial steps to a final performance as a four-part piano ensemble—how to introduce hip-hop tunes to class piano students in a pedagogically sound and meaningful way. This report will not necessarily outline the presentation in chronological order but will outline the process they described.

The first order of business is to identify a hip-hop piece that resonates with the students, one that will captivate their interest and motivate them to play it. This is accomplished by simply surveying the class. After identifying a piece, several things need to happen:

- ▶ Transcribe the piece
- ▶ Arrange the piece for piano ensemble
- ▶ Identify what concepts can be taught and/or reviewed

In addition to old school dictation, Cruz and Jump mentioned the website Chordify as an effective resource for aiding the transcription process. Another digital tool, digital audio workstation (DAW) “The Amazing Slow Downer” was also recommended. This can be

helpful both when transcribing and teaching the piece.

The selection used in this demonstration was “Industry Baby” by Lil Nas X. Identified musical and pianistic concepts that were taught and/or reinforced (and highlighted during the preparatory work) included:

- ▶ E-flat natural and harmonic minor scales
- ▶ Scale fingering groups
- ▶ E-flat minor chords/cadences (i-iv-i-V-i)

Cruz and Jump mentioned that while the piece could be transposed to and played in any key, it was presented in E-flat minor because they had originally planned for the class to play along with the actual recording.

The next step is to introduce the piano ensemble to the class. This piece was arranged in four parts: bass line, counter melody (single notes and dyads) and vocal line. Each part was taught to and played by the entire class, after which the class was divided into sections, each section assigned a particular part. The final performance of the piece was in “jazz chart” style—once as written, a second time where volunteer student improvisers took center stage, and then a repeat of the piece. Both Cruz and Jump performed along with the class.

*“The first order of business is to **identify a hip-hop piece that resonates with the students**, one that will captivate their interest and motivate them to play it.”*

At the end of the performance portion of the presentation, Cruz and Jump answered a few questions and discussed the process further. Among things they pointed out included the flexibility of their arrangement. For example, the bass line was in octaves, which could be played as written or reduced to single notes by the student if necessary. This also applied to the counter melody, which was written in both single notes and dyads.

Bob Conda is a freelance collaborative pianist in the greater Cincinnati area, a member of the collaborative piano staff at Northern Kentucky University and a third year DA student at Ball State University.



Another question was related to the pacing. While this particular presentation occurred in a piano lab full of advanced pianists and on a strict 15-minute time limit, teachers addressing an actual undergraduate piano class could spread the process over a number of class meetings as needed.

The process of transcription and arranging was also addressed. At first glance, this task could appear to be overwhelming. At the very least, the transcription process potentially requires a substantial amount of teacher-preparation time. However, with experience and using the digital tools mentioned, this process will become more efficient. Furthermore, as a residual benefit, a teacher could gradually build a catalogue of reusable pieces.

One more point mentioned was a student survey administered after a beta-testing of this piece. While Cruz and Jump did concede that circumstances only permitted a small sample, response regarding pedagogical merits, enjoyment/engagement and the like of this activity were favorable.

Overall, one could say that teaching piano skills via hip-hop tunes is simply old wine in new bottles, but that is exactly the point. Teachers can never have enough tools when attempting to reach students where they are, and the process that Cruz and Jump described and demonstrated can be an effective (and fun!) addition to the toolbox. ◀◀

Demystifying K-Pop

Presented by Helena Hyesoo Kim

Helena Kim began this presentation by explaining the origin of K-Pop and talked about some of its most representative bands, such as BTS, GOT7, ATEEZ, SEVENTEEN, TWICE, ITZY and Black Pink. While all are considered K-Pop, each group has their own sound that can be recognized and distinguished by an expert listener. However, they all share some characteristics: the performing style (brilliant, colorful and energetic), the connection to dancing (the constant presence of flashy choreography), the ability to produce catchy melodies and the numerous fans around the world.

Kim believes the band BTS best represents K-Pop. Its components include a boy singer and a supporting dance group. BTS has been on the Billboard Chart for 303 consecutive weeks! BTS is only one of the most recent and best contributors to the increasing popularity of South Korean culture. It is part of a huge communitarian effort that started in the 1990s. South Korean people describe all this with one, beautiful word full of poesy: *Hanllyu*.

As Helena explained, BTS borrows from other important musical experiences, which include dance music, teen pop, hip-hop, rock and R&B. One can also find hints of ballad, EDM, hard rock and rap. Ultimately, K-Pop is easy to listen to because of its effective delivery.

This musical melting pot generates a certain level of sophistication in the formal and musical aspects of K-Pop songs. As Kim showed during her presentation, the structure of a K-Pop song differs from a regular pop song. The "ordinary" of any common pop song is almost always the same and consists of: intro-verse-chorus-verse-chorus-bridge-chorus-ending. K-Pop features some additional sections that make a song unique, such as post-choruses, unexpected transitions, sudden tempo changes, dancing moments, rapping sessions as opposed to melodic parts and experimental *intermezzi*. The order of the sections changes from song to song, but with a common goal: emphasis on choreography and performance impact.

This level of complexity can be overwhelming at first. However, as Kim described in the most exciting part of her presentation,

“BTS borrows from other important musical experiences, which include dance music, teen pop, hip-hop, rock and R&B.”

the musical skills required for K-pop can be isolated and developed individually. As an entry-level example, Kim selected the song “Butter,” by BTS. It offers a comfortable start for teachers and students who do not have confidence with this style, because the lyrics are in English, the harmonic progressions are common and the structure of the song does not present too many irregularities. “Butter” consists of verse, pre-chorus, chorus and post-chorus. After finding a reliable lead sheet (Kim mentioned www.ultimateguitar.com and www.kpopchors.com as the most important research database for K-Pop) Kim

Dr. Giuliano Graniti is an Italian pianist and teacher. He is assistant professor of music at Middle Georgia State University in Macon, Georgia.



modeled a possible work-sheet for a group piano class, with the following activity plan:

1. Learn the bass notes throughout the song.
2. Build triads/two-note chords upon the bass.
3. Incorporate rhythm, paying attention to its changes throughout the piece.
4. Practice along with the recording.
5. Increase the complexity of the harmony and/or rhythms.

With the second example, “Life Goes On” (by BTS as well), Kim pointed out how K-Pop can help students improve their confidence with chord inversions even within a pretty simple song structure. “Life Goes On” also helps students learn how to better coordinate the two hands together and master a variety of accompaniment styles, including blocked chords and broken arpeggio patterns.

With “How You Like That?” by Black Pink, things get slightly more complicated with the presence of a rap section and the repetition of rhythmically challenging riffs. For Kim, this represents a good opportunity to pair-up students or group them in sections and have ensemble playing activities.

As demonstrated by Kim’s presentation, using K-Pop songs in the piano class means allowing teachers and students to conduct many of the core activities in the class, with the added benefits of increased fun and improved musical and cultural knowledge. Her presentation was engaging, passionate, and professional and as a result of this presentation, I plan to include K-Pop in the class piano program at my institution. ◀◀

Demystifying Pop

Presented by Dr. Michelle Conda, NCTM

In the session “Demystifying Pop,” Dr. Michelle Conda gave attendees a delightful interactive workshop explaining how to teach pop harmonic styles to group piano students. This workshop was born out of a curriculum Conda designed for non-music major piano class at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. In this course, students learn the basics of playing the piano by using chord charts, developing listening skills and playing along with either teacher duets or YouTube videos. Conda presented attendees with a list of seven basic styles that enable even the earliest of piano students to play nearly most pop songs.

The first of these styles was the “single-note” pattern. This pattern simply involved students playing the bass notes of each chord in a designated rhythm. The piece that demonstrated this pattern was “I Love Rock and Roll” performed by Joan Jett; Conda usually has students playing this one by the end of their first class.

Next was playing blocked chords, the simplest pattern after the single-note pattern.

Many pop pieces use this style, which also reinforces how to build triads.

The “boogie woogie” involves playing a perfect fifth twice followed by the flat third and then the raised third (i.e. E-flat then E natural in the key of C major). Conda mentioned that this pattern makes a fantastic transition for introducing students to the minor triad. Additionally, this pattern can also be useful in introducing eighth-note rhythms. This pattern forces the students to be cognizant of their counting and is also very fun when paired with the twelve-bar blues!

The “boom-chick” pattern was the next to be introduced. This style alternates between the hands, often with a bass note in the left hand followed by a triad in the right. Another extremely common style found in pop music, this pattern was exemplified by Lenka’s “The Show” and could be paired with a variety of other popular tunes.

The ever-popular broken chord pattern was then discussed and is useful in playing Leonard Cohen’s “Hallelujah” among other pieces. Conda discussed the pros and cons of using different versions of this piece with

*“This session brought to life **how simple teaching pop styles can be for the traditional classical piano teacher.**”*

various tempi or differing keys. In addition to learning the style, “Hallelujah” is useful for working on both pedaling and transposing.

How can you discuss pop music without mentioning the Beatles?! In fact, a whole pattern was dedicated solely to this iconic group. This style involved first simultaneously playing the third and fifth of the chord, then playing the root and alternating continuously in this pattern. Simple descriptors can be used to add notes or patterns not yet learned as well. When she teaches students the tune to “Let it Be,” Conda uses the instructions of “F and walk to C” for students to master the

walking bass pattern in this familiar tune since they have yet to learn the notation for a passage such as this.

The final pattern discussed was the “double thumb,” which utilizes a repeated bass note before playing the rest of the chord. This pattern was introduced using Dolly Parton’s rendition of “I Will Always Love You,” but could be used with many other pieces.

Obviously, these styles are not always isolated in pop songs but rather combined to create various accompaniments. Therefore, giving students a foundation in these styles will enable them to play many pieces. Students do not even need to know how to read music to play along to the tracks of these pieces. A simple chord chart with a few directions, along with a backing track (the actual piece in most cases) is enough to set them on a journey toward success.

This session brought to life how simple teaching pop styles can be for the traditional classical piano teacher. Incorporating piano styles into the piano class can provide a fun activity for any student to broaden and diversify their skills. Teaching piano in this manner also provides students with the gratification of playing their favorite music almost instantly. I, for one, am looking forward to incorporating these strategies into my own non-music major piano classes, and I know many other attendees are as well. ◀◀

Stephanie Archer holds degrees in piano performance and pedagogy and is currently a PhD candidate at Florida State University, where she is pursuing a doctorate in music education with an emphasis in piano pedagogy.



Lightning Talks and Performances

This session included several performances interspersed within the lightning talks. This was a first for the conference and the format seemed to work well, with an effective sense of flow between presenters and performers.

Dark Pool and Jig Jog

Performed by Dr. Cole Burger

Dr. Cole Burger opened this Lightning-talk session by sharing a compelling performance of *Dark Pool* and *Jig Jog* by Florence Price. The two advanced-level pieces presented in this performance portray Price's pianistic style effectively: *Dark Pool* embodies Price's Romantic, richly expressive compositional style, while the animated *Jig Jog* hints at influences of ragtime. Burger's performance maximized both the lyrical and brilliant qualities of the instrument, effectively showcasing both the expressive melodies and sparkling flourishes within these pieces.

The Piano Power Hour: How to Channel Your Teaching Gifts into Entrepreneurial Opportunity

Presented by Dr. Laura Amoriello

In this lightning talk, Dr. Laura Amoriello challenged teachers to explore their professional potential by searching for creative

entrepreneurial opportunities in which to employ their teaching skills. Amoriello described an example of how she did this in her own professional career, sharing how she channeled the power of the internet to expand the reach of her teaching and create a pedagogical niche that best suited her career interests. Her brainchild developed into the "Piano Club for Music Educators," an online support community for music teachers. In this digital community, teachers from any location can participate in skill-building online classes, or "Piano Power Hours." Each class is divided into three segments: sightreading, group repertoire projects and individual coaching. The repertoire may be selected from a variety of genres depending on the interests of the participants and is not limited solely to classical repertoire. By participating in these classes, music teachers can improve their piano skills, build confidence, overcome self-doubt and enjoy community interaction. Pursuing this unique business venture allowed Amoriello to develop a personalized career, reaching a student population she desired to serve by using a technologically-savvy teaching format. Amoriello closed the session by urging teachers to think outside the box and to courageously attempt new ideas in order to find—or create—their own unique teaching niche.

Group Piano and Employee Wellness: A Community-Based Piano Class for University Employees

Presented by Dr. Leonidas Lagrimas, NCTM

Dr. Leonidas Lagrimas encouraged teachers to consider how they can utilize group piano classes as a form of advocacy and outreach for adult students. To provide an example of this in action, Lagrimas described his experiences launching a group piano program for university employees at his school through the support of the National Piano Foundation's Recreational Music Making (RMM) Grant. These group piano classes were created in partnership with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at his university. Employee Assistance Programs can be found at most American universities and are campus-wide programs that exist to promote the physical, emotional, social and mental wellness of university faculty and staff. Given the many similarities between the wellness goals of EAPs and the educational premises of RMM classes, Lagrimas offered group piano classes in conjunction with his university's EAP and based the curriculum for his piano classes on several core principles of RMM teaching. His curricular goal was to create individualized and shared learning experiences, with a process-over-product teaching approach that emphasized the experience of the learning process over the extent of progress made. He also employed non-traditional teaching approaches, such as rote teaching, playing by ear and modifying repertoire to make it appropriate for his students' skill levels. Participant demographics in these classes included university professors and administrators as well as one custodian worker. Classes were offered in eight-week installments and were provided at no charge to the participants. By describing his experiences organizing a group piano program for university employees, Lagrimas challenged group piano teachers to embrace the premise that advocacy and outreach should be important goals in all levels and settings of group piano classes.

Aquarium

Performed by Benita Rose

Benita Rose presented a delightful set of five pedagogical pieces from the collection *Aquarium* by composer Lajos Papp. The colorful titles of these works sparked the listener's imagination and provided helpful imagery for the music, which the performer executed with exceptional sensitivity and nuance. Although composed in a 20th-century idiom, the works remain aurally accessible for all pianists, including those less acquainted with 20th-century styles. Rose opened the set with the atmospheric "Tropical Dark Water," followed by the spirited "Water Fleas." "Salt-water Crab" displayed the performer's flowing and sensitive touch, "Sea Horse" brimmed with interesting rhythm patterns and catchy melodies, and the concluding "Butterflyperch" imitated the impressionist style of Debussy, featuring watery imitations and gorgeous tone colors.

Switch It Up—Simple Ideas to Stop Your Students from Staring Into the Middle Distance (Or at Their Phones)

Presented by Rose Gifford

Glazed-over eyes and blank stares from students can be a disconcerting sight for group piano teachers. In this practical session, Rose Gifford offered easy-to-implement strategies for maintaining student engagement in the group piano classroom. She began by encouraging teachers to consider three points about their classroom policies and classroom management:

1. Teachers should decide if students will be permitted to look at their phones in class.
2. Teachers must be willing to adjust their lesson plans as needed during the class period to maintain student engagement at all points.
3. Teachers need to be attentive to all students in the classroom, including those in the back or far corners of the room, to be sure their teaching strategies are engaging all students in the classroom.

In the second half of her talk, Gifford provided teachers with practical ideas for maintaining a high level of student engagement in their group piano classrooms. These ideas included the following points:

1. Have students all play out loud rather than on headsets to keep students accountable.
2. Count out loud while playing to prevent unwanted talking.
3. Implement more partner or ensemble work for tedious topics to provide peer motivation.
4. Change the instrument voice settings on keyboards to add an element of creativity.
5. Stop and stretch to ease physical tension, particularly at the most stressful points of the semester.

Lights, Camera, Action! Using Supplementary Instructional Videos in the Piano Studio

Presented by Stephanie Archer

Instructional videos can be an effective means of providing reinforcement for piano students on the days between lessons, when the teacher is not present at home to remind the student of what and how to practice. Stephanie Archer began by providing several reasons teachers should consider implementing supplementary instructional videos as part of their teaching curriculum.

1. Review: Supplementary videos allow students to review lesson topics at home during the week, avoiding the need to review as much at subsequent lessons and leaving more valuable lesson time for new concepts.
2. Reuse: Once the video has been created, it is reusable and can be easily shared with as many students as needed.

3. Convenience: Supplementary videos can be a convenient way of connecting with parents who may not be able to attend a lesson. Videos can quickly and effectively demonstrate what the student should be practicing at home during the week.

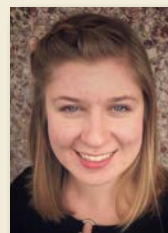
Next, Archer listed four types of supplementary videos that could be beneficial for students. These included technique demonstrations, rote piece reminders, instructional videos for new concepts or repertoire, and performance recordings. She also discussed simple technological strategies for producing these videos and shared what devices and software she used to create these videos (cell phone cameras, YouTube, Zoom, Classroom Maestro and Open Broadcaster Software). By advocating for the use of supplementary instructional videos in the piano studio, Archer provided teachers with practical strategies for increasing their teaching effectiveness.

Portraits in Jazz

Performed by Dr. Sarah Rushing

Dr. Sarah Rushing introduced the audience to two captivating selections from the collection *Portraits in Jazz* by composer Valerie Capers. The easy tempo and syncopated groove in the first work, "Bossa Brasilia," provided a delightful contrast to the subsequent bebop-style "Blue-Bird," with its improvisatory writing and colorful harmonic progressions. Throughout the performance, Rushing's adept feel for syncopated rhythms and jazz harmonies captured the essence of these works skillfully. ◀◀

Dr. Hannah Roberts, serves as instructor of piano at the University of Alabama, where she teaches applied piano and piano pedagogy. Her current research focuses on uncovering the works of forgotten American female composers.



The “Keys” of D&I

The Melodies of Unity

Presented by Dr. Ivy Banks

Dr. Ivy Banks, vice president for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, presented on the role of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and belonging (DEIAB) in piano pedagogy. Beginning with an acknowledgement that the land where the University of Arizona sits was for centuries the home of Native Americans, Banks encouraged us to welcome uncomfortable conversations, as they provide the best opportunity for us to learn and grow. The information she presented “is just a seed,” she noted. Attendees will need to water and nurture these seeds. To sustain them will take time and effort beyond this conference.

Framing her presentation with both our national history and her personal story, Banks presented the audience with two collages of American protest movements of the 1960s–1970s and the 2010s–2020s and asked for us to share what we observed. Attendees recognized that many of the advocacy messages were the same in both images: “The fight continues,” as one participant put it. Banks asked us to consider what role we should play as educators in ensuring we have a more inclusive world in the future: “If we had more

inclusive practices, opportunities and spaces in our pedagogy, then perhaps our outcomes in 50 years won’t be the same as they are today,” she suggested.

Banks also shared a personal story of her beginning piano lessons as a child. Inspired by the enthusiastic pianist at her Baptist church, Banks sought piano lessons to emulate his style, but didn’t understand why lessons with her teacher felt entirely disconnected from her musical experience at church. Later, she realized that “the identity of who I was wasn’t incorporated into the classroom environment,” so she did not see herself represented there. The instructor did not take the time to connect with her and her experiences inside and outside the classroom. Banks emphasized that “students don’t leave their identities at the classroom door.” She encouraged a “care-based, trauma-informed” practice in our pedagogy, where we center our work around those we teach.

Next Banks sought to elucidate the relationship between the terms diversity, equity and inclusion. Defining diversity as “the complexity of personal experiences, values and worldviews that arise from differences and intersections of culture and circumstance,”

Banks encouraged us to recognize that we already have much diversity in higher education, though we can continue to target more diversity in specific areas (e.g., more racial diversity). She distinguished between equality and equity: equality assumes that everyone benefits from the same support, but equity ensures everyone gets the support they need and access to the same opportunities, acknowledging that not everyone begins in the same place. The combination of diversity and equity pushes us toward inclusion, which Banks defined as “the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to fully participate or show up as their authentic selves. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.”

In inclusive pedagogy, Banks argued, the student’s identity should be centered: “Identity is important to see—we cannot be blind to its influence, beauty and power.” She encouraged us to shift the focus from the instructor to the student, opening the lines of communication and avoiding a policing mentality. Banks listed six actions piano teachers should model in a student-centered classroom: “I advocate, I support, I understand, I learn, I encourage, I educate.” She encouraged the audience to consider whether our courses are “cruelty free” (citing Matthew Cheney’s Cruelty Free Syllabus), social-justice oriented (directing us to Sherria Taylor’s Social Justice Syllabus) and “anti-ism” (ableism, racism, sexism and so forth). She urged us to ask ourselves, “Have I included enough voices so that every student can see themselves here?”

*“Banks encouraged us to recognize that **we already have much diversity in higher education**, though we can continue to target more diversity in specific areas...”*

Banks concluded by inviting the audience to shout out favorite artists in various musical styles: country, jazz, K-Pop, rap and Classical. She presented one definition of “Classical” music: “Music that is considered to be serious and of lasting value.” Reflecting on the audience’s answers for each musical style, she mused, “Would it surprise you to say that we all listed Classical music” in each case? She encouraged us to consider our unconscious bias and to expand what we think of as “music of lasting value” beyond European Classical music. ◀◀

Dr. Michael Clark, NCTM, is lecturer in piano at Baylor University and the founder of *Piano Tricks*, an online database of fingerings and redistributions for more than 800 passages from the piano repertoire.



Navigating New Territory

Experiences in American Education

Presented by Dr. Carina Joly, Zi Liang and Dr. Eleni-Persefoni Stavrianou

In a Flash Talk session titled “Navigating New Territory: Experiences in American Education” three panelists, Dr. Carina Joly from Brazil, Zi Liang from China, and Dr. Eleni-Persefoni Stavrianou from Greece, shared their study experiences in the United States. They emphasized the similarities and differences in educational systems between their home countries and the United States and highlighted the challenges they overcame in navigating their studies in the American educational system. These included language barriers, cultural differences and a lack of familiarity with western academic and social environments.

Unlike the general education system in the United States, Zi Liang, currently completing her doctorate degree in piano performance at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, said there was a nine-year compulsory education requirement in China, consisting of a six-year elementary and three-year middle-school education. Liang discussed how, academically, it is very competitive in China. Students spend most of their time studying subjects such as science, math, English and literature, and they spend very little time on sports or other extracurricular activities. After the nine-year compulsory

education, most Chinese students continue their studies in regular high schools.

To pursue more professional music training, Liang went to the Affiliated High School of China Conservatory of Music. According to Liang’s experience, music students who want to specialize in music or music-related careers at a relatively early age can benefit from studying in an affiliated high school of a music conservatory or a university in China, where students take music courses to develop comprehensive musicianship before entering college. The idea of studying in the United States came from Liang’s piano teacher at the China Music Conservatory. The first challenge she encountered before she went to the United States was to achieve English proficiency by passing the TOEFL test. Following this, an even bigger challenge for her was acclimating to the American classroom environment and university facilities. She found it difficult to remain motivated at times under the duress of figuring everything out on her own without the help of family or friends. She was surprised by how, in the United States, classmates could jump into conversations during a class or ask questions without raising their hands. In her culture, students don’t want to stand out. Liang suggested that teachers should not

only be aware of the language barriers international students may have but also the cultures they come from and the mindsets they have from their cultures.

However, some challenges related to cultural differences may also happen in situations outside the university or academic practice. Brazilian pianist Carina Joly, currently teaching at the Federal University of São João Del Rei in Brazil, shared her experiences regarding cultural differences in terms of people's daily life. For example, unlike in the United States, in Brazil when people greet you and ask how you are doing, it is common to give an honest and even detailed response.

Moreover, cultural differences regarding interpersonal relationships also affect the teacher-student relationship. In Brazil, this relationship is more like a friendship. Joly felt distant from her teachers in the United States at first. She was accustomed to having lunch or coffee with her teachers in Brazil, or even going out to a bar with them to talk about their lives. These differences in boundaries can lead to a feeling of loneliness, and Joly knows people who left the U.S. after several months due to this.

Eleni-Persefoni Stavrianou, a former group piano teaching assistant at the University of Arizona, also shared some of her perspectives as a student from Greece studying in the U.S. According to her, kids usually learn music in music conservatories as after-school activities. Music education is a 12-year program, recognized and approved by the Ministry of Education in Greece, that consists of music history, music theory and coursework related to a student's major instrument. Students are allowed to choose a concentration during the last two years of high school in either science or humanities. Following high school, students must pass a national test to enter college.

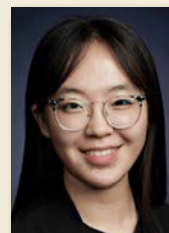
The first challenge Stavrianou faced was the financial burden of studying abroad since, unlike in the United States, education in Greece is free. While the first two panelists both stated

their first concern was language barriers, Stavrianou said that students in Greece start learning English from a young age, so she did not consider English proficiency to be an issue for her as a student. Stavrianou noted, however, that teaching in a different language can be challenging, especially when you need to explain something to the students. Using appropriate words to teach was one of the difficulties Stavrianou needed to overcome when she started her group piano teaching in the United States.

Stavrianou also noted several other differences, including the lack of a midterm or teacher evaluations in classes in Greece. Only one exam is taken per semester there and teacher evaluations only occur when a teacher is up for promotion to a tenured position. And as in Brazil, the interactions and relationships between professors and students are different. In Greece, for example, it is common for students and professors to have coffee together, and professors tend to be more involved with other aspects of their students' lives. Cultural differences, again, play an essential role in international students' social and academic experiences.

The three panelists wrapped up the session by providing suggestions for piano teachers who are currently or will be teaching international students. This was a very informative panel that helped promote increased awareness of the struggles and challenges faced by international students who pursue academic studies in the west. ◀◀

Wenxin Guan is pursuing a doctorate in piano performance at the University of Arizona, where she serves as a group-piano teaching assistant.



Get Comfortable Being Uncomfortable

DEI Discussions

Presented by Dr. Brianna Matzke

With Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness (DEI), a popular focus of higher education, many music teachers are discussing how they can best implement the practice of DEI in their own classrooms. Dr. Brianna Matzke, assistant professor at Wilmington College, Wilmington, Ohio, addressed the topic with her GP3 presentation titled, “Get Comfortable Being Uncomfortable: DEI Discussions.”

Utilizing a small group discussion and reflections format, Dr. Matzke addressed creating safe spaces. To create a welcoming atmosphere, Matzke suggests the following: 1) Introductions—introduce yourself and how you prefer to be addressed. 2) Include preferred pronouns. 3) Give a check on how you are feeling for the day. 4) Most

importantly, let people know this is a safe and welcoming space.

To help groups recognize diversity, she recommends that small groups have time to get to know their members. Asking questions and sharing answers is a useful tool to get to know each other.

Prior to her third point, Matzke acknowledged, “The spaces that we work, in our education, have not historically been diverse, or equitable. In order to change this, we must get uncomfortable.” To alleviate that discomfort, addressing concerns of feeling uncomfortable in a group setting is helpful. For example, the discussion included concerns of being “canceled” for beliefs or views, or nervousness of addressing prompts in a group setting as well as safe spaces for transgender students and making sure their voices are heard.

The GP3 participants spent time in small groups, with Matzke giving questions that need to be answered. These answers were then shared with the complete group. Yes, this technique has been used before, but the way of getting to the heart of how one is feeling and sharing deep issues that have affected us has been neglected by those trying to stay “safe” in a group situation. ◀

Harrison Sheckler holds degrees in piano performance from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the Brooklyn College Conservatory. He is currently pursuing a DMA in piano at the University of Arizona.



The “Unpiano Lab”

Presented by Dr. Giuliano Graniti and Dr. Andy Villemez

The rotation session, “The Unpiano Lab” was presented by Dr. Giuliano Graniti and Dr. Andy Villemez. This 20-minute presentation provided an overview of an experimental keyboard lab system that can be used as an innovative alternative to a traditional keyboard lab system.

Foundations

Villemez explained that the concept for this endeavor originated during the COVID-19 pandemic, while assessing the strengths and challenges of the current keyboard lab system at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. They began to consider how the infrastructure of the piano lab could be advanced to more effectively serve the technological needs of the 21st-century teacher.

One difficulty of a traditional laboratory system is the failure of the central controlling unit. Because student models are attached to the central unit, they will stop working as well. Repair times can be slow, ranging from weeks to three months. It is also very expensive to replace. A new laboratory system that relies on the internet would likely be repaired quickly because of the heavy reliance on the

internet by universities. The modular systems are also cheaper to purchase by the ever-stretched budget of a music school.

What If...

The session continued with Villemez sharing the questions that helped shape and guide the creation of the Unpiano Lab system:

- ▶▶ What if we could reduce our physical connections and hardware in our lab?
- ▶▶ What if we could utilize reliable and free open-source software?
- ▶▶ What if hardware in the lab could be more modular?
 - ▶ When something breaks, only one part needs to be replaced rather than the entire system, greatly reducing costs.
 - ▶ As hardware and software improve, the modules could be replaced individually, and updated usually for free
- ▶▶ What if we could maximize the use of online-based software in the group piano lab?

The result of this brainstorming was the Unpiano Lab, a keyboard lab system

The “Unpiano Lab”

designed by Graniti that uses open-source software, making it accessible online to the public and free for anyone to modify or share.

Villemez explained that the Unpiano Lab is a somewhat complicated system, and the points outlined in this presentation were intended to provide a basic understanding of how the system works as well as the advantages it has over traditional keyboard lab systems.

Basic Comparisons

A set of comparisons between traditional and Unpiano Lab was then outlined by Villemez—his points are summarized in the chart below:

Traditional Piano Lab	Unpiano Lab
▶▶ Sound options are limited to those programmed on the keyboards themselves	▶▶ Sound options are limited only to the virtual instrument software that has been chosen to be used
▶▶ Central controlling unit is a physical piece of hardware	▶▶ Central controlling unit is a piece of low-latency audio-transmitting software (SonoBus)
▶▶ All components are the same brand	▶▶ Designed to be cross-brand compatible
▶▶ At CCM, the music department pays for piano lab repairs	▶▶ At CCM, the Information Technology team covers some of the repair costs

It was also noted that the assembly of the Unpiano Lab comes with a learning curve similar to that required to use a new computer. Detailed instructions are available regarding set-up, and although it may take some time to review, no specialized installation is necessary.

Essential Hardware

The next portion of the session included an explanation of the materials needed to set up an Unpiano Lab. Graniti provided a demonstration of materials, physically holding up each component as it was described.

- ▶▶ The main component is a credit-card-sized, single-board computer known as a Raspberry Pi. It must be connected to wired internet and is also compatible with any other electronic instrument. Cost: \$55.
- ▶▶ For the digital signal to become sound, a USB audio interface is needed to attach to the Raspberry Pi. On the other side of the interface, there are inputs for both headphones and microphone. Cost: \$8.
- ▶▶ Graniti advised purchasing the headphones and microphone separately. This modular approach allows for more flexible replacement options at a more affordable price. If both were purchased as one unit and only one stops working, both would still need to be replaced. Costs: Headphones \$12, Microphone \$10.
- ▶▶ A device with a moderately sized screen is needed to serve as a controller, such as an Amazon Fire 7. VNC software allows the user to remotely control the Raspberry Pi, allowing both teacher and students to mute and unmute, pair and group several keyboards. Students also can use their own personal devices to control the Raspberry Pi. Cost of Amazon Fire 7: \$50–\$60.

Essential Software

Graniti proceeded to provide an overview of the software necessary to run an Unpiano Lab. The primary component is the operating system Piano_OpenLab, which was customized by Graniti himself. He coded the system and incorporated group piano teaching apps and other settings into the program. This operating system is available on Graniti’s GitHub page, which can be accessed and downloaded for free at the following link: github.com/ggraniti/Piano_OpenLab_pi-gen.

Two apps are essential for the functionality of the Unpiano Lab. SonoBus is a piece of low-latency audio-transmitting software that sends audio through the internet very quickly. It also has the ability to pair together students and ensembles. The app Qsynth contains 128 general MIDI sounds and options to add more samples or even record your own. MIDI sounds of various piano and keyboard manufacturers are included, making it possible to play a Bechstein on Monday, Steinway on Tuesday, Korg on Wednesday and so on.

Pedagogical Applications

There are endless possibilities when using an Unpiano Lab system, Graniti explained. It is compatible with any web-based application like Shared Piano or Classroom Maestro as well as any web-based notation software, such as Noteflight. This provides the capability for group piano teachers to utilize these programs while being fully integrated into the Unpiano Lab.

During in-class quizzes and exams, SonoBus can be used to record student performances and save them onto the Raspberry Pi. This allows teachers the ability to listen to the recordings and provide more detailed feedback.

Graniti shared several recorded examples from his own teaching using the Unpiano Lab in action: assessing student performances, displaying mixer screens, routing a YouTube

recording of Elton John’s “Yellow Brick Road” for student play-alongs and performing ensemble pieces.

Villemez added that the Unpiano Lab continues to have more potential and opportunities for advancement. He suggested that it can be expanded into remote teaching and implemented for online certificates and degrees.

Cost Comparison

Based on a quote that CCM received for a new mid-range Yamaha lab system, the total cost for the system and 26 digital pianos is about \$110,000. Conversely, an Unpiano Lab with 26 new Yamaha P-45 digital pianos costs \$30,000–\$35,000.

Final Thoughts

The session concluded with Villemez sharing that the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music is trying to provide students with more interaction with technology that is not a direct learning objective of the course. Part of his responsibilities at CCM is teaching group piano to commercial music majors, so technology and sound design are incredibly important for these students. If he can teach them keyboard skills while tangentially addressing sound design and other skills related to their field, the students’ learning becomes more meaningful, relevant and fulfilling. ◀◀

Emily Barr is a third-year DMA student in piano performance and pedagogy at the University of Oklahoma. Her work has been featured by MTNA and the Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy.



Diverse and Inclusive Folk Music for Teaching Harmonization Skills

Presented by Dr. J.P. Murphy, NCTM

Dr. J.P. Murphy, assistant professor of music in piano and piano pedagogy at the University of Oklahoma, presented, *Diverse and Inclusive Folk Music for Teaching Harmonization Skills*, one of the rotation sessions scheduled for the second day of the GP3 Forum.

Murphy quickly introduced himself, explaining his background in elementary general music education and the years he had taught in public schools. In particular, he noted that elementary general music is immersed in folk music. During a particular first grade class he realized, while crawling on the floor quacking like a duck, that perhaps he wasn't interested in doing this for 30+ years. Subsequently, he went back to school, and while teaching group piano, discovered that the same folk songs, from the public schools, were being used as harmonization exercises.

Why do we use folk songs when teaching music? Folk songs are prevalent in both elementary general music education and in group piano textbooks. He listed a number of musical reasons, including accessible melodies, limited harmonic vocabulary that can be systematically scaffolded, predictable balanced phrases, repetition, strophic form and also their hidden secret: they're frequently

public domain so no need for royalties. An additional highly important feature is that in elementary education, there's more use of folk songs from across the globe, emphasizing a multicultural awareness, acceptance and importance of others and a general appreciation of world music.

The four points Murphy asked attendees to consider for harmonization exercises in group piano curriculum were:

1. Equity of representation. Murphy was struck that so many folk songs came from European or "American" traditions, represent a Eurocentric dominance and exclude a lot of indigenous cultures. A wide variety is used in elementary general music education, but they are frequently missing from higher education.
2. "American" traditional songs are generally from the early 19th century, which pose issues if there are problematic text and origins. This may also exclude music from the folk music revival of the late 19th century.
3. Lack of contextualization. Harmonization exercises typically do not include lyrics or any historical background, unlike in elementary general music education

which begins first with the lyrics and the experience, before presenting the music. To demonstrate the context, he recommended giving a quick history, looking at the lyrics and a translation and showing a YouTube video. Murphy used the analogy of an iceberg: In this cultural Iceberg image, instructors of group piano curriculum can move beyond the surface exercise by showing the history and context to give a fuller meaning to the music.

4. Unconscious bias. Choices may be made by the instructor or coordinator to use materials because they are familiar but may not represent students in the class or their experiences.

Murphy explained that he worked to find folk song “swaps” or substitutions to give underrepresented musical examples with specific criteria in mind: What are the learning objectives? What does each exercise reinforce or review? What are the leveling considerations to scaffold these substitutions into the curriculum? What kind of harmonic vocabulary, ranges, and forms can best support the student?

He demonstrated several public domain examples he had determined were possible to incorporate into a first semester of group piano, and he shared a handout of several folk songs from around the world that demonstrated a variety of harmonic motion, rhythmic patterns and melodic range.

The first song he demonstrated was *Agua de Limón*, an elimination game from Colombia, with a short melodic range (1–3), I-V chord progression (tonic dominant) and very repetitive. This could serve as a possible early substitution option for level 1 group piano. Next was *Bwana Awabariki*, primarily known as a Swahili blessing song, though there are several different translations. The rhythm of the right-hand melody is a bit more complex

“During a particular first grade class he realized, while crawling on the floor quacking like a duck, that perhaps he wasn’t interested in doing this for 30+ years.”

than the previous, using sixteenth notes, but it could be easily taught by rote. The melodic range is within a fifth, outlines the tonic triad in the first and third measures, includes the IV chord and a more interesting harmonic rhythm.

While working in the public schools, Murphy used *Dodi Li*, an Israeli tune in minor, which he used in second or third grade. The verses are a bit complicated, but the refrain uses only i and iv chords, an ideal reinforcement of the differences in the quality of these chords when in major keys versus minor keys. While the melody fits a five-finger pattern, it works best with right-hand finger 2 on the tonic. Murphy’s next suggestion was from Japan, *Sakura*, which is used frequently in elementary school classrooms but less frequently in group piano material. The minor melody is challenging, but can be harmonized with the primary triads of i, iv and V. It also provides an excellent opportunity to show a video clip of the Koto instrument and cherry blossom trees, which may be unfamiliar to some students.

The next part of his session Murphy devoted to curriculum ideas that moved beyond the exercises themselves and involved the students, beginning with a survey to see what

songs they know, folk songs they're aware of and then share them with classmates. Another option, for a fourth semester class, would be a folk song project, which they implemented into the University of Oklahoma keyboard class series with much success. Their folk song project incorporates a project proposal, transcription, harmonization, written leadsheet and performance/presentation that gives a holistic demonstration of the folk song as harmonization but with context, meaning and performance.

Murphy concluded his presentation with a variety of resources to help instructors and students:

- ▶▶ bethsnotesplus.com: Used in elementary education, this website is a wonderful resource that categorizes music by region and community.
- ▶▶ makingmusicfun.net: Useful materials for a non-music major group piano course, it includes music theory and piano examples.
- ▶▶ beccasmusicroom.com: Registration is required for use of the materials, but otherwise offers free resources and worksheets.
- ▶▶ [Smithsonian Folkway](https://www.smithsonian.gov): The Smithsonian Museum contains an extensive database of authentic folk recordings, under copyright. However, there are also lesson plans for general music education that could be used in group piano.
- ▶▶ [Songs with a Questionable Past](#): A GoogleDocument compiled by Lauren McDougle from the Kodály community, in which songs are cited and categorized into reasons for avoidance and updated regularly.
- ▶▶ [2020 list of pieces to be reconsidered or removed](#): A GoogleSheets list that has specific arrangements and publications that are potentially problematic for band and choir.
- ▶▶ [Crowd sourced insensitive songs](#): Another GoogleSheets list that has a few songs with insensitive lyrics or context.
- ▶▶ decolonizingthemusicroom.com: A non-profit organization that offers free educational content, training and community programming centered around Black, Brown, Indigenous, and Asian voices in music education and related fields for people of all ages.

It was a delight to hear Murphy speak so passionately about this topic and to explore the folk songs he recommended as potential harmonization swaps. ◀◀

Dr. Meily Mendez, NCTM, is an instructor of piano at the University of Arizona's Fred Fox School of Music where she received her doctor of musical arts degree in piano performance.



Creative Group Piano Activities to Reinforce Repertoire

Presented by Dr. Jenna Klein

Including numerous activities and tips to make repertoire assignments more engaging in group piano courses, Dr. Jenna Klein, assistant professor of piano at Mississippi State University, shared a presentation to help instructors reinforce concepts from repertoire assignments. Klein encouraged attendees to use creative activities to help keep students focused during the semester and to increase their engagement and interest in class assignments. In all the activities, a core element of the learning process was highlighted as students develop a deeper understanding of form, patterns, phrasing and tempo stability. The presentation included six activities to challenge instructors and their students.

Score Assembly

Klein's first suggestion was an activity called "Score Assembly." She advised instructors to make a copy of the score and cut it into multiple chunks. The instructor would then hand the students the various pieces, asking them to work in small groups to arrange it back into the correct order. After taping together their final product, students can be asked a range of different questions regarding the form, key changes, harmony and more. Through this exercise, students must

use mental recall as well as what they already know about form to rebuild the piece.

Pass the Melody

To help students establish better rhythmic and tempo stability, Klein's second activity was "Pass the Melody." The instructor begins by assigning each student a specific passage of the melody—about four to eight measures. Together, the students and the instructor perform the accompaniment material or patterns and take turns adding the melody. The challenge in this activity is that students must listen carefully, counting and following along so they can time their entrance of the melody correctly. The pressure of performing in an ensemble in this way requires them to focus on keeping a steady tempo, so they do not lag behind the rest of the group. A more challenging version of a similar activity involves pairing two students and asking them to pass material between each other. This requires more independence between the students to keep the exchanges smooth. To make this activity even more engaging, Klein suggested experimenting with a backing track.

Map Making

In addition to working as a team to form an ensemble, Klein also suggested using

Creative Group Piano Activities to Reinforce Repertoire

teams in her next activity called “Map Making.” As students become more familiar with a piece before a performance, it is helpful for them to develop a deeper understanding of the music by transforming traditional notation into a new visual representation using different symbols. In this activity, students work in small groups to create a new “map” or score of this piece. Students can use symbols such as lines, arrows and circles to replace elements of traditional notation. Certain elements can be maintained between the original score and their map as needed. After creating their map, groups can share their representations with the class and record them reading from their finished product. Students can also trade maps, discovering how other groups represent the same material in different ways. Klein said that in addition to deepening a student’s understanding of form, phrasing and patterns, this activity would also potentially help a student to memorize a repertoire selection.

Tutorial Videos

An activity that would be useful to all students, but especially music education majors, is Klein’s fourth activity—creating “Tutorial Videos.” Selecting a skill or concept from their repertoire piece, students create a video explaining how to introduce this topic to a student learning the same piece for the first time. The students are asked to write a script for their video, which is approved by their instructor before recording. After students submit their videos, a portion of class could be devoted to watching the tutorial videos, giving students an opportunity to comment on one another’s teaching. In doing so, students will incorporate technology, practice

and pedagogy into the same assignment. A way to make this same assignment more engaging and community-driven is to pair students, so they can work on the assignment with another person.

Fill in the Blank

Klein’s fifth activity similarly involves the use of technology as students learn to fill in the missing pieces. In this activity called “Fill in the Blank,” the instructor performs a short excerpt from the repertoire assignment, stopping and asking students what comes next. Students must choose the correct answer from several different options listed on a PowerPoint slideshow. Klein stated that this particular activity works best before an exam or performance, allowing students to review and strengthen their mental recall of the piece’s structure and phrasing.

Call and Response

The last activity Klein shared with the attendees was “Call and Response,” designed to help students become more comfortable improvising and keeping a steady tempo as an ensemble. Similar to “Pass the Melody” (Activity No. 2), students are assigned a specific passage from the middle of their repertoire assignment. As a group, the class performs the opening phrase together, followed by a round of improvisation from each individual student in their assigned passage. The activity continues until all of the students in the class have improvised separately. As some students are more hesitant to improvise in front of an entire class, students are invited to keep many elements from the original piece, making small alterations as a preliminary exercise.

Conclusion

With Klein’s suggested activities in mind, instructors can create an engaging experience for their students. Instructors are encouraged to think creatively about ways to make the learning process more enjoyable for all. ◀◀

Dr. Curtis Pavey is an Ohio-based pianist, harpsichordist and educator. He holds degrees from Indiana University and the University of Cincinnati, where he currently serves as an adjunct instructor of harpsichord and piano pedagogy.



GP3 Lightning Talks and Performances

On the second day of the GP3 Forum Lightning Talks and Performances, six presenters and two performers shared their ideas and performed solo selections by underrepresented composers. Each presenter had five minutes to succinctly share their topic; this was followed by a two-minute question-and-answer session. Performers played selected movements from larger collections by their chosen composer.

Not All Bad: 3 Pedagogical Practices We Kept from 2020

Presented by: Dr. Michael Clark, NCTM; Kate Acone

Dr. Michael Clark, NCTM, and Kate Acone (in absentia) presented a lightning talk on three pedagogical practices adopted in 2020 that have enhanced the way we teach piano. Clark invited participants to reframe the adaptations made to piano lessons amid the COVID-19 pandemic as a year of growth in our pedagogy.

Clark and Acone's first pedagogical practice was technology-assisted pedagogy. Technology enhances studio communication and organization through online assignment notebooks and virtual lessons. Many teachers learned to create videos that introduced new content to help their students practice. In addition, having students record themselves encouraged self-evaluation and allowed students to share performances online.

Second, 2020 encouraged teachers to develop compassionate studio policies. Clark provided examples of these policies, such as offering students the choice to switch to virtual lessons and looking more closely at what works for each student. State and national organizations have also increased options for virtual performances and festivals.

Finally, Clark highlighted how teachers diversified their teaching curriculum in 2020. Many teachers began exploring underrepresented composers and expanded their teaching beyond classical repertoire to include instruction on pop music, improvisation and other functional skills.

Raag-Time: A Brief Introduction to Indian Classical Music

Presented by: Dr. Omar Roy, NCTM

Dr. Omar Roy, NCTM, shared how to incorporate Indian Raga (or Raag) into the piano studio. Raga is a structured improvisation that includes melodic material, continuo and percussion. Roy explained that Raga is one of the most popular forms of Indian Classical music, typically performed by a multi-instrumental ensemble.

A Raga consists of distinct sections that each become faster and more active. The slow, improvisatory introduction, called *Alaap*, gradually unveils the melodic material for the Raga. The next section, *Gat*, is more animated, consisting of a combination of predetermined and improvised material. The sections that follow *Gat* drive the Raga to an exciting conclusion. Roy also introduced two

books for piano teachers by British composer John Pitts: *How to Play Indian Sitar Ragas on the Piano* (2016, rev. 2020) and *Indian Ragas for the Piano Made Easy* (2018, rev. 2020).

There are several pedagogical benefits to incorporating Raga into a student's curriculum. First, Raga allows students to encounter music from Indian culture, which is traditionally underrepresented in piano pedagogy. Second, the combination of structured and improvised material provides an opportunity for students to practice their improvisation skills. Third, teachers can find opportunities to practice aural skills in the lesson by using Raga's unique scales and modalities. Finally, students can practice ensemble skills by playing Ragas with their teacher in the lesson.

Podcasting: Subscribe and Leave a 5-Star Review!

Presented by: Dr. BeiBei Lin

Dr. BeiBei Lin, the vice president for membership for the Georgia Music Teachers Association (GMTA), started a podcast to promote GMTA membership. Each week, Lin interviewed a Georgia music teacher to hear about their unique background, teaching practices and contributions to the field. Due to the growing popularity of podcasts, Lin asserts that classical musicians and music teachers should consider podcasting to reach audiences and expand their work.

After reviewing the most popular music podcasts, Lin divided them into three categories: interview-based, performance-based and lecture-based. Interview-based podcasts spotlight guest teachers, performers or music experts from a variety of backgrounds to expose listeners to different careers. Performance-based podcasts highlight student performances or preserve recordings from a concert series. Finally, lecture-based podcasts educate audience members about aspects of music history, theory, trivia or performance practice.

As a pedagogical application, Lin encourages teachers to have students create their own podcast episodes. Students can create an interview-based episode by interviewing other musicians, a performance-based episode of their repertoire or a short

lecture-based podcast on a musical topic. Finally, teachers can create a studio podcast channel to archive student episodes.

The Sense of Touch

Performed by: Dr. Rachel Park

Dr. Rachel Park performed four short movements from Samuel Adler's pedagogical collection, *The Sense of Touch: Eight Short Pieces Introducing the Young Pianist to Techniques Used in Twentieth-Century Music* (Theodore Presser, 1983). Park's performance brought Adler's unique compositional style to life for listeners, and her selections from Adler's collection showcased the many touches and articulations that students will experience in his music.

The Lost Art of Improvisation

Presented by: Dr. Kevin Woosley

According to Dr. Kevin Woosley, improvisation is an important skill for all pianists for several reasons, including its historical importance, its ability to serve as a vehicle for personal expression and its practicality for musicians who wish to cross over from the classical tradition.

Woosley argues that improvisation is a "lost art." In addition to not having enough time in lessons for improvisation activities, teachers often do not teach improvisation because they were not taught how to improvise. According to Woosley, once you begin improvising, it is important to accept "wrong" notes and avoid comparing yourself to others who may have more experience.

To incorporate improvisation into your studio, Woosley encourages pianists to build confidence by starting simple. First, create simple rhythms to tap or clap, then add simple melodic fragments to those rhythms. Woosley then suggests taking a familiar piece of music and improvising embellishments on the melodic line or switching the piece from major to minor. In addition, teachers can create improvisation assignments for students to reinforce new theory concepts such as scales and chord progressions. Woosley concludes with the most important rule for improvisation—have fun and let yourself enjoy this activity!

Universal Design for Learning in Group Piano Instruction

Presented by: Dr. Agustin Muriago

Dr. Agustin Muriago proposed a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) for group piano instruction based on neurological research on learning and retention. According to Muriago's research, the brain contains three neurological networks: the affective network ("Why"), the recognition network ("What") and the strategic network ("How"). The application of UDL to group piano considers each of these networks.

To activate the affective network, teachers should select content that allows students to see that the skills they are developing intersect with other areas of music study, answering the "why" of group piano. For example, choral education majors should play score-reading exercises from works they are singing in their ensembles and instrumental students should practice accompanying a piece for their instrument.

The recognition network, the "what" of group piano, is activated when students of different learning styles see the same content through different mediums. Muriago applies this principle to group piano by using software programs like Classroom Maestro, which presents a simultaneous view of the staff and keyboard, and Notice, which allows students to adjust the size and color of the staff.

The brain's strategic network helps students understand "how" by providing multiple means of assessment. For group piano assignments, Muriago suggests giving students the option to submit video assignments in addition to live performances. Additionally, he suggests incorporating critical listening videos so students can self-reflect and provide feedback to peers.

A New Piece of the Pedagogical Puzzle: Incorporating the Steinway Spirio/ Yamaha Disklavier into the Private Lesson

Presented by: Dr. Andrew Staupe

As technology continues to introduce new teaching practices, Dr. Andrew Staupe suggested we incorporate the new technologies

of the Steinway *Spirio* and the Yamaha *Disklavier* into our pedagogical model. These technologies immediately reproduce a performance on an acoustic piano, allowing the performer to hear exactly what they played.

In a traditional applied lesson, the student performs their piece at the beginning of the lesson, followed by a "back and forth" between the student and teacher. According to Staupe, the technologies of the *Spirio* and *Disklavier* eliminate the imitation game between student and teacher. Instead, teachers can record the student's initial performance and spend the lesson guiding the aspects of their performance that need continued improvement. Steinway's *Spirio* app allows students to see data like pedaling, articulation and dynamics in real time, providing visual feedback to aspects of their performance. Staupe suggests this new lesson model will further enhance student/teacher trust and help students listen more carefully. Instead of replacing the traditional private lesson, the technology of the *Spirio* and *Disklavier* enhances student learning and engagement, allowing them to find their unique artistic voices.

Five Scottish Folk Songs

Performed by: Dr. Hannah Roberts

Dr. Hannah Roberts performed two movements from *Five Scottish Folk Songs* by American composer Helen Hopekirk. Published in 1919, Hopekirk's early-advanced collection features five concert arrangements of Celtic folk melodies for solo piano. The contrast of Roberts' two selections, "Land o' the Leal" and "Eilidh Bhan," showcased the diversity of Hopekirk's writing, bringing this session to an exciting conclusion. ◀◀

Dr. Hayden Coie, DMA, NCTM, is a pianist and teacher in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He works as an adjunct professor of piano at Southern Nazarene University and Oklahoma Baptist University, teaching applied and group piano.



Exploring 20th-Century Chinese Piano Music

Presented by Dr. Yangmingting Fang

Although Chinese piano music does not have a long history compared to western musical traditions, it has developed rapidly. The major development of Chinese piano music happened during the establishment of the People's Republic of China, when composers emphasized themes of happiness, hope and children as symbols for the future. In addition to this focus on children, composers also paid attention to the educational aspects of their music by addressing various pedagogical needs. This poster explores the characteristics of 20th-century Chinese piano music by examining two significant works: *Cowboy's Flute* (1934) by He Luting and "Butterfly Chasing" (1953) by Ding Shande.

Cowboy's Flute was the first major piano work in China that combined western polyphonic writing with traditional Chinese practices to create a uniquely Chinese pastoral sound on a western instrument. "Butterfly Chasing" comes from a piano suite, *Happy Festival*, consisting of five pieces with descriptive titles, which portray scenes of children playing. Both compositions are of great significance because their composers incorporated Chinese elements, such as the pentatonic scale, folk songs and impressions of ancient Chinese instruments at the piano.

In addition to addressing the pedagogical aspects, this poster introduces possible lesson plans for teaching these pieces in group settings. It is the author's hope that this poster's exploration of Chinese compositions will broaden students' and teachers' understanding of, as well as foster an exposure to, the 20th-century Chinese piano repertoire. Similarly, it may also provide inspiration and appreciation when pianists are seeking unique selections to instruct and to perform. ◀◀

Dr. Yangmingting Fang holds a DMA degree in piano performance with a secondary concentration in piano pedagogy from the University of Alabama. Fang is currently a piano instructor at Orpheus Academy of Music in Austin, Texas.



Exploring the 20th Century Chinese Piano Music

Dr. Yangmingting Fang
tingtingfang.piano@gmail.com

Musical Culture in China

- China is a country with more than five thousand years of history
- Well-known for a rich tradition in music
- Chinese folk music: folk songs and traditional instrumental music from different regions of China

Piano in China

- Not popularized until early 20th century
- Rapid development, which majorly happened around the year of 1949 (establishment of People's Republic of China)
- Popular themes of early piano works: children, hope, and happiness
- Mostly pedagogical pieces instead of being technical demanding

Chinese Pentatonic Scale

- Five tones: Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi, Yu
- the pitch names denote the relationship between notes
 - each of them may serve as the tonic of a five-tone scale

Examples:

Approaching Solo Repertoire in Group Lessons

- Choose pieces that are interesting to both students and teachers
- the students will be motivated to learn
- the teachers will be motivated to seek more inspirations and create more possibilities with the instructional process
- Three main questions:
 - 1) Do I find this piece appealing?
 - 2) Is this piece easy to relate to?
 - 3) Will the student acquire a better understanding of this piece after working in group?

Selected Work 1

Cowboy's Flute (1934)

- Composer: He Luting (1903-1999)
- Other translation: *Buffalo Boy's Flute*
- Publisher: Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press
- The first mature piano composition in China
- Composed for a competition that sponsored by Alexander Tcherepnin (1899-1977), which specifically sought piano compositions in Chinese style (and he won first place!)
- Peaceful and pastoral, ABA form
- A groundbreaking work in the new genre, showing "originality, clarity, and a sure hand in counterpoint and form," according to Tcherepnin.

- Suggested level: 5-6
- Characteristics and Possible Challenges:
 - 1) Contrapuntal texture with Chinese pastoral sound
 - 2) Frequent dynamic, articulation, and register changes
 - 3) Contrasting middle section → faster tempo, with ornamentations and extensive range
 - 4) LH large leaps in the B section

A section:

- Western style polyphonic writing with Chinese style pentatonic scales and harmonies
- conversational, two melodic lines are connected vertically

B section: Homophonic style

A' section: A with embellishment

Possible Group Lesson Plan 1

- Four students, two piano players (Child A and Child B) and two narrators for each child
1. Students come up with lines based on the given scene and rhythm of the piece
 2. Teacher plays the left hand
 3. The narrators will speak the line for A and B along with piano players' playing

**The line should be the same when melody stays the same or similar
Speaking/Playing volume should be in correspondence with the dynamic marking

Possible Group Lesson Plan 2

- Two or three students
1. Guide the students to set text to the music and sing along with it
 2. One student sings Child A, one student sings Child B
 3. Teacher may have the students sing for teammate's part as it might be challenging to sing and play at the same time
 4. Teacher plays LH, or, have a third student play LH

*Sample text-setting

Selected Work 2

Butterfly Chasing (1953)

- Composer: Ding Shande (1911-1995)
- Publisher: People's Music Publishing House
- From piano suite *Happy Festival* (five pieces, each with a descriptive title to portray the scenes of children playing: Going to the Suburb, Butterfly Chasing, Jumping Rope, Hide and Seek, and Holiday Dance)

Section 1:

- quick alternation between intervals and chords
- natural accents, as well as occasional unexpected accents

- Suggested level: 5-6
- Characteristics and Possible Challenges:
 - 1) Toccata style- repeated notes or chords → percussive sound
 - 2) Consistent rhythmic pattern → eighth note throughout, with very occasional quarter notes
 - 3) Straightforward musical idea
 - 4) Hand crossing, unexpected accents and dynamic changes make it trickier than it looks
 - 5) Chordal texture

References

- Bian, Meng. *The Formation and Development of Chinese Music Culture*. Beijing: Huayue Press, 1996.
- Kang, L.e. "The Development of Chinese Piano Music." *Asian Culture and History* 1, no. 2 (2009): 18-33.
- Li, Ying-Hai. *A Study of Modes and Harmony of Han Nationality*. Shanghai: Shanghai Music Press, 2001.
- Tcherepnin, Alexander. "Music in Modern China." *The Musical Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1935): 391-400.

Four-Hand Piano Music from Latin America for Intermediate and Advanced Students

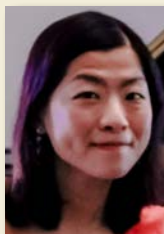
Presented by Dr. Po Sim Head and Shuning Li

Latin American music is one of the most exciting topics among musicians these days. Broadly speaking, Latin American music encompasses a wide range of styles influenced by indigenous and folk music, African rhythms and traditional western European music. When people think of solo piano works written by Latin American

composers, there are only a few names that always come to mind. However, much of the Latin piano music for four hands has yet to be embraced by the general concert audience.

Four-hand piano pieces are excellent for instruction because students can learn with their partners and learn how to cooperate through the more intimate writing style. This poster presentation shares four pieces for four-hand piano written by Latin American composers from Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica and Cuba. These pieces are suitable for students from intermediate to advanced skill levels. Each piece showcases a unique style that reflects the cultural and historical background of the composer. For example, "Los Muñecos" by Cuban pianist and composer Ignacio Cervantes, was written as a collection of his well-known *Danzas Cubanas*. The piece demonstrates how Cervantes incorporated the Cuban dance style with the European compositional style of the time. It is particularly suitable for students first introduced to Latin American music. These pieces are accessible to our ears and fun to explore and listen to. This poster briefly introduces the backgrounds of the composers and pieces. Due to the difficulty of accessing a recording of the works, the poster also includes QR codes that link to our performance of the pieces. ◀◀

Dr. Po Sim Head, NCTM, DMA, is a musicologist-pianist, who maintains a thriving piano studio and serves as an adjunct instructor at the Metropolitan Community College in Kansas City. She is a regular contributor to an online classical magazine, www.interlude.hk.



Shuning Li is a DMA student at the University of Kansas. She has performed in many venues including the Shanghai Concert Hall and Lefrak Concert Hall in New York. She hopes to introduce more underrepresented works to people.



4

HANDS PIANO MUSIC FROM LATIN AMERICA FOR INTERMEDIATE/ ADVANCED STUDENTS

Presented by Po Sim Head and Shuning Li



COSTA RICA



CUBA

Carlos Enrique Vargas Mendez (1919-1998)

- Costa Rican pianist and organist, performer, director, and composer
- Studied piano, organ, and theory with his father, and later studied in the U.S. (Michigan), Italy (Rome), and Germany.
- He succeeded his father to be the director of Escuela de Musica Santa Cecilia in San Jose in 1956.
- Promoted Costa Rican music.
- National Prize for Culture "Magón" in 1994.



Ignacio Cervantes (1847-1905)

- One of the key figures in Cuban piano music
- Studied piano performance at Paris Conservatory
- His virtuosic playing was recognized by Liszt, Von Bülow, and Paderewski
- He returned to Havana in 1870 and continued his solo performing career in addition to embarking on new careers as conductor and teacher
- *Danzas cubanas* for piano are the best-known works among all his compositions.
- Influenced and inspired by Cuban dance style, some of the pieces in *Danzas cubanas* are titled in reference to the daily lives of Cuba during his life time

Los Muñecos

- **Intermediate level**
- combines the Classical tradition with Cuban style
- Classical: binary form with 32 measures- each section is 16-measure long
- Cuban *danzas* and *contradanzas*: use of 2/4 time signature and dance rhythms



Dos Piezas (1949)

- **Intermediate level**
- Two character pieces.
- The first piece is cheerful and march-like
- The second piece is jovial.
- Performers should not take a long break in between the two pieces.



BRAZIL



Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887 -1959)

- described as "the single most significant creative figure in 20th-century Brazilian art music"
- he took cello when he was six and he learned to play the guitar later
- his composition combines folkloric and indigenous elements with Western classical music.
- his best-known works include *Bachianas brasileiras*, *Chôros* (the choro is a Brazilian country dance), 12 symphonies, *2 cello concerti* (1915, 1955), and *Guitar Concerto*(1951).

ARGENTINA



Juan María Solare (b.1966)

- Composer, pianist
- Held degrees in composition, piano, and electronic music.
- Pursing PhD in music education at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid
- Composed around 300 works
- Also wrote music for film
- As a pianist, he has performed in many countries

Tengo un Tango (2004)



- **Early advanced level**
- dedicated to two friends of the composer, Nicola B. Lahn, and Walter Samsel, for their marriage.
- 4/4 meter
- Tango rhythm: syncopation

Francette e Piá brincam para sempre (1929)



- **Intermediate level**
- The last and the tenth piece of the suite *Francette et Piá*
- the suite is about a Brazilian girl (Piá) who went to France. She met and later became friends with a French girl (Francette)
- The only duet work in the suite
- The piece alternates between the light dance in 2/4 meter and the exciting, tarantella-like passage in 6/8 time

Music Instruction and the Brain

Presented by Dr. Marjorie Lucas

Music and brain research continually produces evidence of the positive effects of music on the brain. However, there appears to be little research on the effects of the complete cycle of natural harmonic functions in musical structures on the cognitive processes of the human brain. Furthermore, there is little research on how each of these elements stimulate brain cell growth for optimal permanent learning and a systemized order of memory storage and retrieval.

What is This Organized Sequence/ Structure?

There are four phases of learning and memory: connection, cognition, consolidation and compartmentalization. In addition, there is an organized sequence or structure of musical elements as presented in the circle of fifths and as presented in musical compositions from a rudimentary eight-measure phrase to a complete symphonic work. These four phases begin with a single stimulus of individual cells (connection) and ends with permanent memories (consolidation). This process involves brain structures that interact to integrate information into a previous body of knowledge.

When neural networks have been properly developed and established, they become a foundation for integration of new information. The brain has two sections: the right hemisphere and the left hemisphere. The right hemisphere primarily involves spatial skills such as emotions, imagination, intuition, rhythm, holistic thinking, arts, patterns and music. The left hemisphere primarily involves language and facts. These two hemispheres each have their own distinct functions and processes that must be developed and linked for optimal connections between both hemispheres.

Learning and Memory

Each hemisphere of the brain has a distinct function, resulting in two basic types of learning: implicit and explicit. Implicit learning is learning complex information without awareness, for example: riding a bike and swimming, whereas explicit learning involves remembering facts and information and expressing them verbally.

Music fundamentals are processed in both hemispheres but in different manners. As music harmony progresses, the different elements are developed in various neural areas with various processes. The continual learning of new elements is integrated with previously learned elements creating a broader body of knowledge, which continues to interact with and integrate multiple brain regions. The two types of learning and functions of the two hemispheres integrate and connect both hemispheres providing a firm foundation of understanding, which can be continually built on and developed. ◀

Dr. Marjorie Lucas served as advisor to faculty/piano instructor for Indiana University School of Music and currently serves as piano instructor/research designer with children with developmental disorders for Butler University Community Arts School.





APPLICATION OF LEARNING PRINCIPALS TO PIANO KEYBOARD

M Lucas, Ed.D; X Jin, Ph.D.

Butler University; Bellas Artes School of Music; Indiana University School of Medicine; Indianapolis, IN



Background

Learning

- Implicit – learning complex information without awareness, e.g., riding a bike, swimming
- Explicit – remembering facts and information and expressing them verbally

4 Phases of Learning

- Connection → Cognition → Compartmentalization → Consolidation
- Starts with individual cells and ends with permanent memories.
 - Involves brain structures interacting with each to integrate information into a previous body of knowledge.

Applying Learning Concepts to Piano Instruction

- Each phase can be paired with specific piano instructions to induce implicit learning
- Tailor piano instruction to specific brain regions (e.g., motor, cognition, memory formation)
- Brain regions interact to generalize and integrate information into a network
- If properly developed, this network can overcome motor and cognitive impairments

Conclusion and Future Directions

Targeting explicit piano instructions to specific brain regions leverages the natural connections between the left and right brain regions. With repetition these connections can be transformed into patterns which facilitate the transfer of implicit and short-term memory into explicit long-term memory.

Pilot studies utilizing EEG methods to better delineate integration of learning and brain function are underway.

Acknowledgements

Contact information: [Marjorie Lucas, Ed.D. mlucas@butler.edu](mailto:Marjorie.Lucas@butler.edu)

Application of Learning Principals to Piano Keyboard Instruction

LEFT BRAIN

CONNECTION

- Pair letter names with color (white key, black keys)
- Involves motor

COGNITION

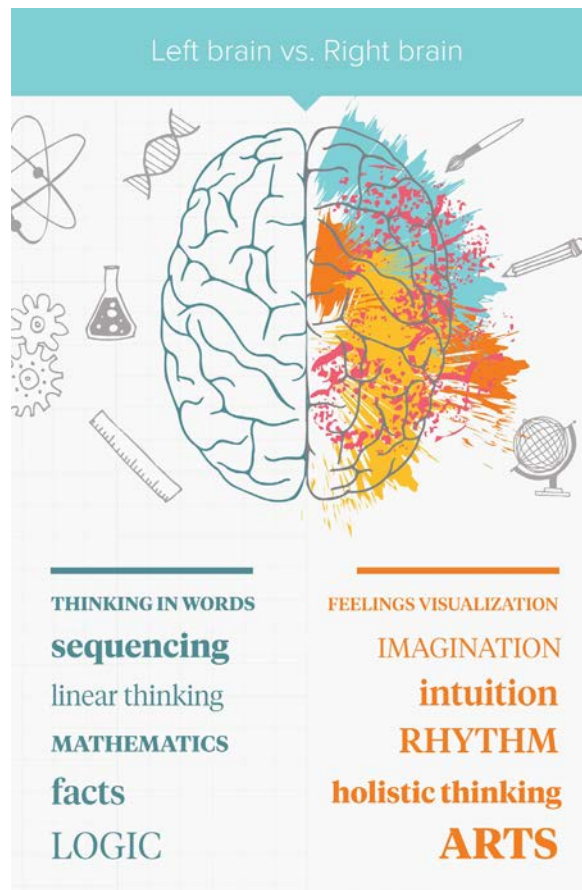
- Expand to octaves
- Expand to circle of fifths
- Sequence of one key to next key

COMPARTMENTLIZATION

- Patterns become musical syntax
- Syntax → foundation for retrieval of stored information
- Integration of language (left brain) and motor functions (right brain)

CONSOLIDATION

- Reading the score
- Transposing melodic patterns into an organized structure



RIGHT BRAIN

CONNECTION

- Color connects language (name) to pitch (sound)

COGNITION

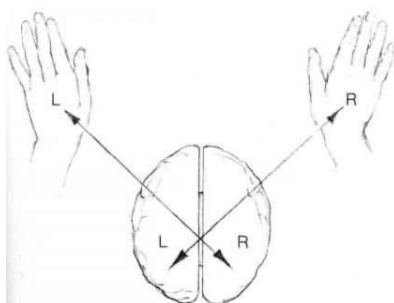
- Color helps integrate octaves, keys, into patterns
- Patterns build on each other

COMPARTMENTALIZATION

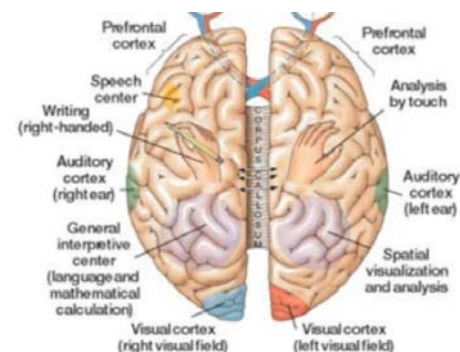
- Syntax becomes harmonization patterns
- Integration of language (left brain and motor functions (right brain)

CONSOLIDATION

- Detection of rhythmical patterns



Luke Mastin, <https://www.rightleftwrong.com/brain.html>



Joshua Nava Arts, <https://www.joshuanava.diz/michofics/lde-000dc-of-000.html>

New Sounds in Chinese Piano Music

An Exciting Direction in Multi-Culturalism

Presented by Yi Chang and Ling Wei

Recently, talented Chinese composers have been writing art music that reflects their roots. While often following the harmonic and tonal structures of western music, the characteristic sounds of Chinese classical music play an important role inspiring many composers to add color, charm and authenticity

to their work. From Sizhu (silk and bamboo) music to Beijing opera, Chinese composers are frequently looking for sounds that depict Chinese traditional instruments. To interpret these compositions accurately, it is important for students and teachers to understand the distinct instrumentation in traditional Chinese music. The goal of this poster presentation is to raise awareness of timbres in Chinese music and to demonstrate how the different sounds of Chinese instruments were utilized in piano works by different composers.

While the four selected pieces are generally written for college-level students, *Music at Sunset*, is suitable for late-intermediate and advanced-beginner students. There are four sections featuring different Chinese traditional instruments: *guzheng*, *bangu*, *pipa* and *suona*. Pictures of these instruments are presented and each instrument's sound and performance technique is also discussed. There are QR codes providing links to pre-recorded videos with audio performances of the instruments and a discussion of how these sounds are used in the selected piano works. ◀

Yi Chang is a DMA student at the University of Kansas. The winner of the 2020 Charleston International Music Competition, he devotes much of his time exploring repertoires by underrepresented composers.



Ling Wei is a DMA student at the University of Kansas. A devoted scholar, she presented at the 2019 MTNA Collegiate Chapters Piano Pedagogy Symposium. Ling aspires to become a respected professor of the piano after her studies.



NEW SOUNDS IN CHINESE PIANO MUSIC: AN EXCITING DIRECTION IN MULTI-CULTURALISM

Presented by Ling Wei & Yi Chang



Eight Memories in Watercolor

Tan Dun (b.1957-)



- Tan Dun is one of the most celebrated living Chinese composer. *Eight Memories in Watercolor* was his opus one, inspired by Chinese folksongs and the composer's childhood memories, as the composer was extremely homesick while composing this piece.
- Many parts of the composition imitate the sound of guzheng, especially in the pieces "Missing Moon" and "Herdboy's Song".



- The **guzheng** - A Chinese instrument with eighteen strings and moveable bridges.
- Guzheng** is an instrument that is expressive via different articulation and technique.
- One of the most common technique is **sliding**, by plucking the string with right hand and pressing the string with left hand. The left hand can change the pressure on the string to raise or lower the pitch while the string is still vibrating.
- This sliding technique is imitated in the piece, mostly by utilizing grace note a semitone apart. It can be seen in the pieces "missing moon" and "herdboy's song".
- Another typical Guzheng technique is the Sweeping gesture, done by either hands.
- The outward sweep is performed by the thumb, creating high to low pitch arpeggio. The inward sweep is performed by the third finger, creating low to high pitch pattern.
- Typically, both hands would sweep in different directions. Thus, in Herdboy's song, Tan Dun indicated the rolled chords to be played in opposite ways to imitate the sweeping gesture done by both hands.



Music at Sunset

Yinghai Li (1927-2007)



- Music at Sunset* was originally a famous tune for the Chinese instrument Pipa. In 1975, Yinghai Li composed an arrangement for solo piano.
- The form of the piece is theme and variation, containing an introduction, the theme, eight different variations, and a slow coda.
- Pipa**: A Chinese lute that is a plucked chordophone. The name of the instrument suggested the way that it is played: "Pi" as striking the strings outward, and "Pa" as plugging the strings inward.



- One of the most common technique on the **pipa** is the 'sweep' (扫) and the 'flick' (拂). The sweep gesture is where the finger sweeps through all four strings on the pipa, and the flick is where the thumb flicks backward to voice the first string.
- Both technique represent the grandeur of the scenery in Chinese music, especially those related to water. They require quick and firm strike on the pipa.
- The arpeggio pattern and the rapid left hand in the first system simulate the effect of 'sweep' (扫) on the pipa.
- The forte rolling chords in the second system imitate the effect of 'flick' (拂) on the pipa. The chords should be rolled downward.
- The chords on the second system is imitation of pipa's tuning, consisting of interval of fourths, with each chords a whole step apart. Chinese music theorists refer them as the "Pipa Chord".

- Another common technique on the pipa is the **repeated notes** (轮指).
- It is accomplished by flicking the strings with multiple fingers.
- This technique is imitated in the beginning of the piece



Pi Huang

Zhao Zhang (b. 1964-)



- Pi Huang* is a representative work of a composition inspired by Beijing opera.
- Zhao Zhang is a national, first-class composer and Director of Composition in Minzu University of China.
- The **bangu** is a combination of a small drum and two clappers that leads Chinese music ensemble, especially in Beijing opera.
- It is usually played by repeated, staccato notes on the keyboard to imitate the sound.

Percussion instruments



- the right-hand melody imitates the glissando of a *jinghu* (high pitches) while the left-hand melody softly imitates the *erhu* in order to hear the clear melody in the right hand.

- In the movement *Erliu*, the left-hand plays repeated, staccato notes which imitate the beat of the **bangu**. The purpose of repeating the same note is to control the tempo of the section.

Melody instruments



100 Birds paying Homage to the Phoenix

Jianzhong Wang (1933-2016)



- A Hundred Birds Paying Homage to the Phoenix* is a popular suona piece featuring bird sounds and was played by Chinese indigenous musicians in Shandong.
- In 1973, Jianzhong Wang composed an arrangement for piano based on a recording by Tongxiang Ren.
- Suona** is often used in ritual and wedding events in some northern Chinese provinces, such as Shandong and Henan. It also appeared in native festivals and military events in the Chinese feudal era.

- originally a popular **Suona** piece featuring bird sounds and was played by Chinese indigenous musicians in northern China.
- transcribed in 1953 by Tongxiang Ren, a suona artist.



- In 1973, Jianzhong Wang composed an arrangement for piano based on a recording by Tongxiang Ren.

- Wang uses sixteenth-note melodies that include many half steps and grace notes to imitate bird sounds.



- the use of 4ths and minor 2nds, which properly preserve the Chinese traditional style by simulating the bends and the melodic style of the suona.

- The accompaniment patterns simulate the sound of traditional percussion instruments, such as the gu and the lu.

Adele Aus Der Ohe

Pioneering Through Recital Programming at Carnegie Hall, 1895

Dr. Grace Shepard
University of South Carolina, 2021

Abstract

The goal of this investigation is to focus on the career and times of Adele aus der Ohe and piano performance in the Gilded Age United States. Carnegie Hall, founded in 1891, was one of the first major halls that witnessed and documented solo piano recital programming. Through analysis of Adele aus der Ohe's programs intended for Carnegie Hall, it is possible to understand some of the complexities surrounding the solo recital, piano performance and audience culture at the turn of the 20th century.

Focus on Adele aus der Ohe allows further understanding of her legacy and contribution to the field of piano performance. Examining the world of the solo recital through the lens of aus der Ohe also demonstrates the possibilities available and the tenacity required to become a successful pianist during her lifetime. The relationship between cultural listening and piano performance will further add depth to comprehension of its place in relation to society.

Chapter One outlines the research and addresses limitations regarding venue, source material, and highlights important literature that will be relied upon in the study. Chapters Two and Three offer essential historical context and biographical information surrounding piano performance, the solo recital and important pianists related to the creation of the solo recital. Chapter Four discusses aus der Ohe's 1895 recital programs. Chapter Five discusses cultures of listening and the last chapter is a conclusion and identifies possible future research.

Dr. Grace Shepard, holds a DMA degree from the University of South Carolina, studying with Professor Phillip Bush. In addition to performing, Grace also arranges and composes, enjoys historical research and is an active teacher.



Full dissertation:

<https://www.proquest.com>

Contact the Author:

gshepard4554@gmail.com

Humor and Irony in Beethoven's Variations for Piano, 1791–1802

Dr. Peng Du Krol
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2021

Abstract

This dissertation investigates the humorous dimensions in Beethoven's seven piano variations from his first decade in Vienna. Documentation of source material comic operas and evaluation of the musical humor of Beethoven's contemporaries are both important components in this research. In addition, this work provides translations of some select operatic works to explore the literary references used as humor devices in Beethoven's variations. Beethoven's intrinsic humor and creative strategies of musical comedy are associated with romantic irony, and in this work, exploration of romantic novels from Laurence Sterne and Jean Paul Richter plays a significant role in understanding Beethoven's humor and irony. After delving into seven selected variations and their historical context, this project explores how high comedy results in Beethoven's hands through: 1) the drama itself from the original operatic source material, 2) the use of parody, which evokes previously established styles and comic exaggerations of those styles, 3) the use of silence, a technique which Beethoven inherited from other Classical composers such as Haydn, and 4) the use of incongruity, in which two or more inconsistent parts in a piece invite both laughter and surprise. Through the study of humor in the musical language of the Classical style, pianists may benefit from a deeper understanding of Beethoven's whimsical character.

Full dissertation:

<https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/items/120709>

Dr. Peng Du Krol holds an artist diploma and a doctor of musical arts degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her doctoral research focuses on the humorous dimensions of Beethoven's early piano music.



MTNA Leadership

▶▶ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

President

Karen Thickstun, NCTM
kthickst@butler.edu

President-elect

Peter Mack, NCTM
mackpeter@earthlink.net

Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

William Chapman Nyaho, NCTM
nyaho@mac.com

Vice President for Membership

Cindy Peterson-Peart, NCTM
petersonpeart@comcast.net

Secretary-Treasurer

Christopher Goldston, NCTM
goldston@hotmail.com

Immediate Past President

Martha Hilley, NCTM
mfhilley@austin.utexas.edu

Executive Director & CEO

Gary L. Ingle
gingle@mtna.org

Directors

East Central Division

Andrea McAlister, NCTM
ajmcalister@gmail.com

Eastern Division

Jacqueline Herbein, NCTM
jhpianostudio@gmail.com

Northwest Division

Mary Kaye Owen, NCTM
mary.kowen@att.net

South Central Division

Lauren Schack Clark, NCTM
lsclark@astate.edu

Southern Division

Thomas Swenson, NCTM
tswensonnc@gmail.com

Southwest Division

Noreen Wenjen, NCTM
norwenj@gmail.com

West Central Division

Mary Beth Shaffer, NCTM
mbshaffer@comusicteachers.com

Directors-Elect

East Central Division

Nicholas Phillips, NCTM
phillins@uwec.edu

Eastern Division

Alison Barr, NCTM
abarr54@verizon.net

Northwest Division

Steven Hesla, NCTM
steven.hesla@umontana.edu

South Central Division

Courtney Crappell, NCTM
courtneycrappell@gmail.com

Southern Division

Joy Poole
jbpooles@comcast.net

Southwest Division

Kassandra Weleck, NCTM
kjweleck@gmail.com

West Central Division

Cyndie Caruth, NCTM
caruthpiano@gmail.com

▶▶ PROGRAMS

Business Resources Coordinator

Beth Gigante Klingenstein, NCTM

Certification

Davis Dorrough, NCTM

Collegiate Chapters

Verena Abufaiad

Composer Commissioning

Ann Rivers Witherspoon

Conference Planning Committee

Artina McCain

Development Committee

Timothy Blair, NCTM

Membership Committee

Cindy Peterson-Peart, NCTM

Nominating Committee

Martha Hilley, NCTM

Webinar Coordinator

Chan Kiat Lim, NCTM

▶▶ COMPETITIONS

Director of Competitions

Linda Stump, NCTM
lindastump@mtna.org

Composition Competition

Christopher Goldston, NCTM
goldston@hotmail.com

Junior Performance Competitions

Jacqueline Herbein, NCTM
juniorsmtna@gmail.com

Senior Performance Competitions

Adam Booher, NCTM
aboohier@fhu.edu

Young Artist Performance Competitions

Jeanne Grealish, NCTM
figaro1226@gmail.com

Chamber Music Performance Competitions

Jeff Brown, NCTM
j-brown2@wiu.edu

MTNA–Stecher and Horowitz Two Piano Competition

Kevin Chance, NCTM
k.t.chance@gmail.com

▶▶ STATE PRESIDENTS

Alabama: Laura Mitchell, NCTM

Alaska: Cynthia Epperson, NCTM

Arizona: Debbie Dinkel

Arkansas: Paul Whitley

California: Mona Wu DeCesare, NCTM

Colorado: Andrew Cooperstock, NCTM

Connecticut: Felicia Feng Zhang, NCTM

Delaware: Donna Mulzet Beech

District of Columbia: Hedy Bannon, NCTM

Florida: Diana Dumlawwalla, NCTM

Georgia: Catherine Thacker, NCTM

Hawaii: Monica Chung

Idaho: Nancy Reese

Illinois: Jeffery Kleinsorge, NCTM

Indiana: Ellen Bulow, NCTM

Iowa: Janci Bronson, NCTM

Kansas: Brett Janssen, NCTM

Kentucky: Natasha Pence

Louisiana: Chan Kiat Lim, NCTM

Maine: Christine Kissack, NCTM

Maryland: Junko Takahashi

Massachusetts: Jonathan Roberts

Michigan: Derek Polischuk

Minnesota: Camille Buddecke, NCTM

Mississippi: Jung-Won Shin

Missouri: Jason Hausback

Montana: Mary Reese

Nebraska: Angela Miller-Niles, NCTM

Nevada: Marie Lee

New Hampshire: Christina Wright-Ivanova, NCTM

New Jersey: Wendy Wu, NCTM

New Mexico: Ferrell Roberts, NCTM

New York: Jacob Ertl

North Carolina: Kent Lyman, NCTM

North Dakota: Tamara Bertram

Ohio: Susan Treer, NCTM

Oklahoma: Danny Calhoun, NCTM

Oregon: Elizabeth Willis, NCTM

Pennsylvania: Amanda Gunderson, NCTM

Rhode Island: Yoon Chung

South Carolina: Amanda Montgomery

South Dakota: Symeon Waseen

Tennessee: Mark Hussung

Texas: Richard Fountain, NCTM

Utah: Denise Frost, NCTM

Vermont: Laurel Maurer

Virginia: Jeryl Lynn Kleisler, NCTM

Washington: Kathryn Mortensen

West Virginia: Johan Botes, NCTM

Wisconsin: Michelle Lytle, NCTM

Wyoming: Paula Flynn, NCTM