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Message from the President

Dear Esteemed Membership,
This is my last letter to you as President of ASTA MD/DC Chapter. I heard a quote at the 2010 ASTA National Conference in Santa Clara, California, this past February. "The price we pay for the space we occupy is service." I have *never* felt in the last four years of service to ASTA MD/DC that I was paying a price. Rather, I felt that ASTA was paying me! How else could I have met and worked with so many wonderful string teachers and performers, learned so much about how ASTA works and how much good it can do, learned that I would even be capable of taking on the task of resurrecting our chapter? It's been a wonderful time, and I am grateful.

At the National Conference in February, we were given the "Best Newsletter" Award. This *Stringendo* is the proof of Lorraine Combs' and Jaque Lyman's hard work, as well as that of all of you who have contributed articles. We also received the "Most Improved Chapter" Award, which reflects the work our active members have done in the last two years. Printed below is what I submitted to the National Office in order to be considered for this award, along with the updates of what was accomplished since. Please read through this! I hope you will be inspired to help our chapter next year to achieve "Chapter of the Year" as Cathy Stewart takes over the Presidency. Thank you, membership, for allowing me to serve.

Dorée Huneven

Annual General Membership Meeting Sunday, June 6, 2010

ASTA MD/DC Chapter members and their guests are invited and encouraged to attend our Annual General Membership Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on Sunday, June 6, 2010, at The Lutheran Church of St. Andrew, 15300 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, Maryland. It will follow the Mark Wood Workshop for Teachers at

the same location. On the agenda: presentation of MD/DC Chapter awards and introduction of newly elected chapter officers. Guest speakers: Mark Wood and Bridgid Bibbins.

Please visit our website, www.asta.net, for a registration form. Members without access to a computer may contact Cathy Stewart, 301-260-0858.

Reasons for Winning the "Most Improved Chapter" Award

1. We have a new website that is rich in information about our events, programs, board members, and news items. It has a photo gallery, list of studio teachers for those seeking to find a teacher, archived copies of its newsletters online and a vast links page. It is easy to use, beautifully designed and maintained, and always completely up-to-date. We also have a presence on Facebook.
2. In regard to programs, we developed a profitable partnership with the Maryland State Music

Teachers Association (the state chapter of MTNA) in co-sponsoring an annual Solo Strings Festival. (In 2009: 38 teachers and 160 students participated.) We re-implemented the National Solo and the National High School Honors Orchestra Competitions with a person in charge of them both. (2009: one student accepted for the NHSO) We established a second location for our yearly ASTACAP exams. (2009: 14 teachers, 102 students participated.)

3. We created 9 new board positions, representing

the double-bass, cello, public schools, private schools, universities, Suzuki liaison, events, Eastern Shore (of Maryland), and industry. Update: Now there are 3 more board positions: D.C. Representatives (2) and Youth Orchestra Liaison.

4. Our chapter events calendar is rich with training for students and teachers alike: an O'Connor Teacher Training Seminar, a Brian Lewis Workshop, a Mark Wood Workshop, various state string competitions, an instrument repair workshop, and monthly studio teacher enrichment sessions. At these sessions, we hosted presentations by concert artists Leonid Sushansky and Jeffrey Howard, a meeting with area youth orchestra conductors, teachers' practice colloquiums, a presentation by Mark Pfannschmidt of newly discovered etudes, and an ASTACAP informational meeting. There are many more planned.
5. Instant communication with our members is handled by our Events Chair, who regularly publicizes ASTA members' events and news via email. This has proven to be a highly effective way for our far-flung members to know what is going on in the state.
6. We are actively recruiting new members, particularly through our Public Schools Representative, who sets up an ASTA MD/DC table at in-service days at the statewide

and county levels and distributes ASTA advocacy tools and membership applications. New memberships are also given as prizes in drawings. All board members are active recruiters as well.

7. Our newsletter has always been excellent, but is now even more so because of a rotating requirement of articles from our outstanding board members: each issue is assured of at least six!
8. Our Chapter financially enabled six board members to attend the National Conference in Atlanta, 2009. The State Basket for the Silent Auction at the Conference included a violin and bow worth \$4500.
9. Our Annual Membership Meeting grew from fifteen to over sixty attendees, and included a sit-down meal, presentation of awards, a presentation about "El Sistema" of Venezuela, and a performance by a harp soloist, finalist in the National Solo Competition in Atlanta. (We also helped this soloist financially to go to Atlanta.) Update: We also helped a winning entrant in the National High School Honors Orchestra to attend the National Conference in Santa Clara, 2010.

Everything above is a new addition to the chapter in the last two years, or else newly re-instated after years of non-existence.



Contents of 2010 State Basket

Our chapter thanks all the donors of items for the State Basket for their generosity. The items were auctioned at the silent auction at the ASTA National

Conference in February 2010. Proceeds from the silent auction benefit the **Foundation to Promote String Teaching and Playing**.

1. Donations from The Potter Violin Company:
 - Highlander Violin Case (green interior)
 - ZipBeat 6000 Digital Metronome
 - *Kitchen Table Repairs* book, signed by author
 - Susan Jones CD
 - Jeremy Kurtz CD
 - Telemann Sonatas CD
2. Jeffrey Howard: *Scale System for Violinists*, signed by Jeffrey Howard
3. New editions of J. Palaschko: Etudes, Op. 55 for Viola, Op. 51 for Violin, Op. 51 for Viola, and Telemann: Violin Concerto. All edited and published by Mark Pfannschmidt, signed
4. Bruce Molsky: 3 CDs, signed
5. James Queen: CD, signed
6. Annapolis Symphony Orchestra CD
7. Laurien Laufman CD



2010 ASTA National Conference Reports

Santa Clara, California, February 17–20, 2010

From Dorée Huneven:

First of all, I would like to thank ASTA MD/DC for paying my way to this conference for the fourth straight year. I am so grateful for the opportunity to attend this marvelously stimulating event and to bring back fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the Chapter.

The highlight of the conference was winning awards for “Most Improved Chapter” and “Best Newsletter.” This was a great joy to me personally—especially since now we in Maryland and the District are known to the ASTA leaders on the national level and in their sights! Of course, it means that we can’t stop here! I realize how much needs to be done in terms of gathering new members, programs, events and involvement in general to be considered a great chapter. But we are on the way!

I greatly enjoyed meeting with members of the String Industry and with other exhibitors in the Exhibitors’ Hall. Many are friends from years past, and many are new acquaintances from California. Some might end up advertising with us in *Stringendo* and on our website, but the important thing is that we know each other face-to-face. Business can help our chapter in many ways.

Of course, I met old friends from all over the country. How nice it was to sit down for coffee with Dr. Sarah Hersh from SUNY Potsdam, who taught with me in the London Suzuki Group in the 80’s, to share ideas for bigger and more exciting projects. Or to chat with the Preucils, composers of the Suzuki Viola School, or Robert Lipsett, father of my first-ever three-year-old beginner, who is now Professor of Violin at the Coburn School in Los Angeles! Every day, every walk down the halls brought more reunions, more chats, and more inspirations!

Sitting at the hotel’s sushi bar (Yes! Raw tuna is the perfect ice-breaker!) I met many new people. It is the character of the National Conference to be open and friendly. I corralled David Wallace, Keynote Speaker and on the faculty of Juilliard, for a recorded interview about how I could possibly break into Texas swing fiddling. He gave me suggestions representing 10+ years’ of work in ten minutes flat!

There were concerts each night, and I attended all three. “iPalpiti” is a “pick-up” orchestra of international contest winners who gather together from all over the world to tour under the direction of Eduard Schmieder of Temple University. Their performance was as beautiful and virtuosic as can possibly be imagined. The following night was a lustrous performance by the National High School Honors Orchestra, playing Mahler’s Symphony No. 1 in D Major, under the direction of Raymond Harvey. Maryland’s own Brian Kim was, of course, a member. The final concert featured the Quartet San Francisco, which played the wonderful jazz arrangements of its founder and first violinist, Jeremy Cohen. A highlight was the participation of about twenty students from the school founded in memory of Cohen’s violin teacher. At this school, the first two hours of the day are devoted to chamber music, and this could be readily discerned in the wonderful collaboration of the students with the quartet members.

Finally, I attended thirteen educational sessions in three days. All of them were fascinating, and a few were alone worth the price of admission to the entire Conference.

I would rank David Wallace’s Keynote Address “Reaching Out” as such an outstanding moment. The NY Philharmonic’s fostering of musical composition in grade school children, and then their subsequent performance by the orchestra, was made into a moving short documentary film. This film served as a strong plea for the inclusion of music education as a primary subject in human education.

Eduard Schmieder’s presentation, “Russian Violin School: Myth or Reality” went far beyond its title to explore such questions as how violin “schools” start and flourish, what is the history of them, and what are their long-term influences. In the style of a personal essay/lecture, Schmieder gave a fascinating, insightful, and very funny account, enlivened with his own violin demonstrations.

Here were the other presentations I attended:

- **Excellence in the Private Studio**—Philip Baldwin

- **Collegiate Master Class**—Robert Lipsett
- **ASTACAP Panel Discussion** (I was on the panel)—Leslie Webster, et al
- **The Capricious Composer: Selected Virtuoso Violists from 1757 to 1995**—Pamela Ryan
- **All Hail the Scale**—Susan Brown and Daniel Levitov
- **Improvising North Indian Style and the Evolution of East and West Styles**—Vicki Richards
- **Can One Become a Virtuoso Player?**—Eka Gogichichashvili
- **Viola Collegiate Master Class**—Don McInnes
- **Artistry from Day One: A Positive Look at Micromanagement**—Laurie Scott and Andrew Strietelmeier
- **Lights, Camera...Audition**—Daniel Levitov
- **Engaging the YouTube Generation: The Web Camera as Practice Partner**—Martin Norgaard. Mr. Norgaard showed how using a web camera in lessons could help both the teacher and student by giving clear feed back.
- **Alternative Style Master Class**—Christian Howes. I was very impressed with the way Mr. Howes made the students comfortable in his class. He wanted them to be relaxed enough to take chances and improvise in front of a class of teachers, and he succeeded—no small feat.
- **Using Sophisticated Bow Speed Patterns for Phrasing and Expression in Classical Violin Sonatas by Beethoven, Mozart and Schubert**—Kurt Sassmannshaus Mr. Sassmannshaus discussed bowing and articulation, and one of his students demonstrated for the observers.
- **We're Different, But We're the Same: Finding Comfort and Usability in Chin Rests and Shoulder Rest**—Lynne Denig, Gary Frisch, Elizabeth Guerriero, Judy Palac Various set ups with shoulder rests and chin rests were discussed.
- **Teaching Gem: Our Multi-Faceted Role in Students' Lives**—Cornelia Watkins. This was one of my favorite classes. Ms. Watkins explored how important teachers have been in our lives and how important we are in our student's lives.
- **The Future of Strings: The Electric Orchestra**—Bridgid Bibbens and Mark Wood Rocking on with Mark and Bridgid! They explored the future of string playing and discussed their "Electrify Your Strings" program. And they played!

In conclusion, I would like to tell all Chapter members that attending the National Conference is a huge privilege of being an ASTA member. Whether you are a public school, private studio, or university teacher, there is more than enough at each national conference to give you as many ideas as you can possibly absorb for your current year and for years to come. Go!

From Catherine Stewart:

I too, would like to thank ASTA MD/DC Chapter for sending me to the National Conference. Attending the conference this year was a wonderful opportunity to see old friends, meet new friends, strengthen business relationships, be exposed to wonderful music educators, and be challenged by new ideas. Through me, ASTA is fulfilling its mission of "Enriching Lives." I have brought back the ASTA vision to my students and my colleagues.

The State Leadership Luncheon started off the conference. If this were the only event I attended, it would have been worth traveling to California. I learned so much about ASTA chapters and got so many new ideas. This is of direct benefit to our membership, and I look forward to implementing many of the new ideas I got at the conference.

I attended many of the sessions that Dorée attended. Additionally, I attended:

The concerts were outstanding. All the groups had donated their services to ASTA and said they were honored to be playing for us. We were certainly honored to be hearing them! But I think we all have to remember how important we are as teachers—none of us learned to play our instruments by ourselves and now we are passing on that legacy. Through ASTA we have support, resources, and continuing education. I am delighted to have had the opportunity to be a part of the ASTA conferences for the past two years and now wouldn't miss one! Thank you so much for sending me!





Potter Violin Company and ASTA MD/DC Chapter
present

ELECTRIFY YOUR STRINGS

A Workshop For Teachers

With celebrated Electric Violinists *Mark Wood* and *Bridgid Bibbens*

Sunday, June 6, 2010, 1:00 P.M.–6:00 P.M.

The Lutheran Church of St. Andrew
15300 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20905

Registration Fee: \$40 ASTA members
\$50 Non-members

Registration deadline: Friday, May 21, 2010

Workshop Outline (*Note: You should not bring an electric instrument!*)

- Section I Introduction
- Section II Basic Improvisation Methods—Hands on!
- Section III New Techniques
- Section IV Focusing on Rhythm
- Section V Documentaries from Virginia & Fargo
- Section VI Welcome to Wood Violins!
- Section VII Reading Session
- Section VIII Recruitment Ideas/Message to Teachers/Q&A

Mark Wood, award winning composer, international recording artist, and electric violinist, is widely acknowledged as the premier electric rock violinist of his generation. Mark studied under maestro Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood and attended the Juilliard School of Music on full scholarship, which he left to pursue his vision of bringing rock violin into the mainstream. His first release, “Voodoo Violince,” is widely hailed as the quintessential rock violin record. He was a member of Trans-Siberian Orchestra for 13 years; receiving two platinum and three gold records from his work with them, and has toured and performed with Billy Joel, Celine Dion, Dee Snider’s Van Helsing’s Curse, Lenny Kravitz, Steve Vai, Roger Daltry of the Who and Jewel.

In early 2008, Mark was elected to serve on the board of the prestigious American String Teacher Association (ASTA) and will bring his knowledge and expertise in the field of progressive string education to a much wider audience in the US. As educators across the country are quickly catching on to the importance of incorporating “American styles” teaching methods into their curriculum, Mark’s “Electrify Your Strings” series of music education

programs have become enormously successful and in demand. In 2007 alone, EYS reached over 20,000 string students.

Bridgid Bibbens joined the staff of Mark Wood Music Productions and Wood Violins in August 2007 and has been trained by Mark Wood in his groundbreaking educational methods in conjunction with his “Electrify Your Strings!” series of music education programs. An accomplished musician in her own right, Bridgid has become a great asset to the company and has extensive experience, both as a performer and an educator.

Bridgid received a full scholarship from Syracuse University, where she received her bachelor’s degree in violin and oboe performance and her master’s degree in music education. In the role of educator, Bridgid has directed public school orchestra programs in upstate New York and Boston, MA for over 10 years. Bridgid is an active member of ASTA and teaches at New York’s ASTA String Institute at Ithaca College each summer. She’s also taught at the Cayman Island Music Camp.

Registration Form

(Please duplicate as many forms as you need. This form is also available on our website: www.asta.net/otherprograms)

ELECTRIFY YOUR STRINGS

Teachers Workshop Sunday, June 6, 2010

Registration Deadline: Friday, May 21, 2010

Note: You do NOT need an electric instrument to participate!

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Emergency Contact Name _____

Emergency Contact Phone _____

FEES: All fees are non-refundable

Workshop: \$40 ASTA Member _____ x \$40 = \$ _____

\$50 Non-member _____ x \$50 = \$ _____

Late Fee: \$10 (after 5/21) _____ x \$10 = \$ _____

T-shirt: \$16 each _____ x \$16 = \$ _____

Please indicate size: Adult S M L XL

TOTAL: \$ _____

Make check payable to: **ASTA MD/DC Chapter**

Mail payment and registration form to:

**Marissa Murphy
3414 Woolsey Drive
Chevy Chase, MD 20815**

For more information & questions, contact:

**Cathy Stewart
cathy@stewartstellarstrings.com**



PHOTOGRAPHY & FILMING

Photography and filming may be done for personal use only!

The sharing of amateur videos on websites such as YouTube or MySpace will not be permitted.

If amateur videos are found on these websites, appropriate action will be taken.

Brian Lewis Workshop Report

by Cathy Stewart, MD/DC Chapter President-Elect

The violin studio of Catherine Stewart, MD/DC Chapter of ASTA, and The Potter Violin Company presented a workshop by master teacher and performing artist Brian Lewis on March 6 and 7, 2010, at the Lutheran Church of St. Andrew in Silver Spring, Maryland. The workshop consisted of a master class, a teacher training class, a scale and technique class, a group class workshop, and a concert.

Thirty-six children, 14 teachers, and many parents, relatives and friends participated in the events.

Six students from Mrs. Stewart's studio performed in the master class. Mr. Lewis, a master of psychology and motivation, found one thing with each child that could immediately improve his or her playing. He encouraged them to have better posture, create better sounds, use their imaginations in their music, and have fun. His humorous anecdotes and attitude let each student relax and enjoy the lesson.

The Teacher Training class was titled "The Art of the Bow." Many bowing issues were addressed, but the primary topic was teaching up-bow staccato. After working with Mr. Lewis, everyone seemed to have a better understanding of the physical mechanics of up-bow staccato and how to teach it.

Much to the surprise of the students, they all enjoyed the Scale and Technique class. For many of them, that was their favorite part of the workshop. Mr. Lewis showed the participants some warmup stretches and explained why they are important. Scales were presented with interesting ideas for practice, such as playing a note at the frog and then quickly at the tip. Students were challenged to play 16 and 32 notes in a bow and were shocked they could do it!

The Group Class raised the level of each piece and each student. Mr. Lewis found the way to challenge the class to improve, whether it was through tempo, dynamics, or phrasing. The students rose to each challenge, surpassing their previous technical limits and soaring to new heights of excellence.

Parents, students, and guests were delighted by the Group Concert. The students eagerly performed all the pieces they had rehearsed, remembering all of Mr. Lewis' instructions. The highlight of the concert was the encore. Mr. Lewis performed his signature piece, "The Hot Canary." Many of the children had never seen such technical fireworks such as left hand pizzicato. Everyone came away inspired.

The concert was a benefit for Manna Food Center's Smart Sack Program, and over \$1600 was raised.



Memorizing Music and Basic Scale Technique for the Adult Violin Student

by Lorraine Combs

MD/DC Chapter Website Coordinator and Stringendo Layout/Design

I wrote this article thirteen years ago in response to a reader's question in the March/April 1997 issue of *Strings* magazine. The person wrote: "I would like to hear from other readers about any particular insights they may have in the techniques they use to play music from memory. As an amateur player, I enjoy playing viola and violin in community orchestras and string quartets. However, I can do so only from printed music, and I have always admired people who can play without a score. I have been told that such players use one of three techniques: being able to see the printed score in their mind, being able to play the sounds they hear in their mind, or using a semiautonomous technique by which, through some means, the notes come out without any conscious effort. I find myself struggling with trying to learn to play from memory and would like to get some insights from players who feel they have evolved an answer with this problem. My goal is to build up a repertoire of music I can use to play at dances or social events."

To my surprise, the *Strings* editors liked what I wrote, and portions of my article appeared in the next issue. And I got a year's free subscription for my efforts! I also included the entire article in the Spring 1997 issue of *Stringendo*.

Fast forward to 2010. We who are Board members of MD/DC Chapter are responsible for submitting at least one article per year for *Stringendo*. I hope I will be forgiven for reviving and dusting off one of my old articles. The information is still pertinent now.

Also, you will see that I address all my remarks to violin players, but most of the comments are applicable to players of other instruments.

Background

When I was a child back in the 1940's and 1950's, I attended public schools. In those years there was an element present in the entire public school system that seems to be rare in the public schools today.

It was the requirement for *everyone* to memorize poetry, essays, or famous speeches, and to recite them from memory in front of the class. This activity began in elementary school, and continued regularly through junior high, now called "middle school." Some of us found it easy to memorize; others found it difficult, but everyone had to do it. Public schools also offered orchestra, band, and chorus. Many of us who participated in the music programs through our high school years prepared solo pieces for district and state music festivals. We were required to play by memory. This requirement to memorize was not considered unusual, because we had all done a considerable amount of memorizing in our early school days.

The Suzuki method of teaching violin to young children was not available to me when I was a child. Most of us who played the violin did so by first having the printed music in front of us. When our teachers asked us to memorize our music, it merely became an extension of already being able to play the printed music. Since most of us were already accustomed to the memorizing process, we just did it.

People have memorized printed words or printed music for centuries. An actor in a play has memorized many pages of prose or poetry; a violinist playing a concerto has memorized many pages of printed music. But just as there are actors who find it difficult to memorize a work of poetry or the lines in a play, there are also musicians who find it difficult to break away from the printed page.

In my private teaching, I have many students now attending public schools whose first exposure to the violin is learning to play the violin and to read music concurrently. Generally speaking, they seem to be more reluctant to memorize music than we musicians ever were in our childhood from fifty years ago. (Or maybe my students don't find it any more difficult than I did; perhaps they are simply more vocal about their dislikes!) However, when they realize there is

no way to wriggle out of the assignment, most of them are able to accomplish it.

For many years, I have taught the occasional adult student. My adult beginners who never had music lessons as children generally find it easier to memorize their music than do those adults who are taking up the violin again after many years of not playing. (Of course the beginners are dealing with much simpler music!) My adult students who have memorized music in childhood are usually able to memorize music now. The adults who have the most trouble, generally speaking, are those who have continued to play since childhood, but only from the printed page, and who have not made a concerted effort to improve their technique. *It is to this group that my following comments are addressed.* In the following pages I have included comments on basic technical skills and scale playing because I have found that adults who say they can't memorize music usually have deficiencies in these areas.

Memorizing Music

Playing music from memory is much more than merely "seeing the printed score in the mind," or "using a semiautonomous technique." If a person has memorized music as a child, that person will probably be able to memorize music as an adult. But when an adult, who has not done so as a child, tries to memorize music, the actual process is a bit different. As adults, our brains have learned to categorize the things we do. When we try to add new information to a particular category, we will continue to use the same process we used when that category was created however many years ago.

Think about the various skills we must master while learning to play a violin. We have to hold the instrument properly. We have to listen for accurate intonation, for a pleasing tone, and for correct rhythm. And we have to do all of this while visually tracking egg-shaped dots and lines on a piece of paper. This is a complex process. As we mature into adulthood and continue to play our instruments, our brains create a foundation by which all these separate components can hold together. If, years ago, we learned to play the violin from printed music as the foundation, without the requirement also to memorize it, then this the process we continue to follow when we enter additional musical skills into our information banks. I think the problem with trying to add the requirement of memorizing music

into the violin-playing category is that the person doesn't have a slot for it.

When we learn something completely new, our brains must create a new category to put the new knowledge in. Adults can learn new things. With determination, mature adults have learned to use computers, to speak new languages, etc. One has to approach the act of memorizing music as a brand new category for the brain to deal with. Gradually, as the person becomes more and more proficient in this new skill, it can eventually be incorporated into the already established violin-playing skill.

So let's create a new category. Memorize some music. Even if you are able to play a sonata movement, an orchestral musical excerpt, a hoedown, or a popular song from the printed page, these are all much too ambitious to memorize at first. Start with something as basic as an early selection in a beginning violin method, a simple folk song, or a hymn tune. Choose only one or two phrases. In this age of technology, it is a real blessing to be able to use affordable small recording devices as a learning tool, not only for music, but for any subject. It's easier to learn new material if we can hear it as well as see it in written format. Listen to your selection. You should be able to sing or hum the selection you have chosen. (Be sure to sing in tune!)

Put the printed music aside. After all, you already know how to play the violin. Concentrate on what the music *sounds* like. Imagine what it feels like to be playing along with the recording. Then sing the music after you are really positive you have the sound of it fresh in your mind. If you can sing the music, you should try to play the same thing on the violin. Did you play it correctly? Don't refer to the printed music; rely only on your ears. Keep trying until you know you have it right. It may seem impossible at first. Maybe your choice was too complex. Pick something shorter and simpler. After you have memorized your first piece of simple music by listening first, then play it many times. Play it every day and think about the way it feels and sounds to play it on the violin.

You probably won't know what to look at since you no longer have a printed page to focus on. You may want to close your eyes occasionally, but you certainly won't want to do this all the time! Watch your violin, or your bow, or watch yourself in a mirror as you make various adjustments in your

posture, bow placement, etc. Many of my students stare off into space while playing by memory. I usually suggest that this leaves the mind susceptible to distractions, and that focusing on the violin will help keep the concentration from breaking. Some tell me they dislike looking at their instruments. They feel uncomfortable about it. My response is that once they get used to looking at an object that is, after all, only a few inches away from the face, the feeling of discomfort will go away.

This may be a good time to focus on making improvements in your technique. Is your bow traveling parallel to the bridge? Are you playing half way between the bridge and fingerboard? Are there some slow notes requiring long bow strokes in the music? If so, which part of the bow are you using—just the upper half, or are you using the bow all the way to the frog as well? Is the tone full and robust, or is it thin and weak? Or scratchy? (If you have serious problems with bowing technique, I would suggest you take some private lessons in order to improve these skills.)

And the left hand—are you using vibrato? Can you control the width and speed of the vibrato? Can you play *without* vibrato? How about intonation—are you playing in tune? Can you tell? Do you know where all the half-steps are? Is your left hand and wrist properly positioned? Are you clenching the violin with your left shoulder, or is this shoulder relaxed? Remember that a vice-like grip anywhere on the violin or bow is the death of technical progress. (Again, consider taking some private lessons if you know that your left hand technique needs some improvement.) Think about all the violin technique you have learned in your life and apply it to your newly memorized piece of music. Add some more music to your beginning memory collection.

By the way, are you sitting or are you standing? If you usually play music in a seated position, maybe you should try memorizing music from a standing position, or vice versa. It's just a small difference, but it will help to establish that new category in your brain you are trying to create.

Work on memorizing a little bit of new music every day, even if it is only a measure or two. You may find that you can only absorb a certain amount, and then one day you can't seem to fit anything else in your head. Be patient. For a few days, practice what you have memorized. Then get to work and add another measure or two. Each new bit added is hard work.

Don't give up!

Now for the next step! You will begin making the transition from memorizing music you have *heard* to memorizing music that you can *see* on a printed page. This is a big milestone for you! After you can play five to ten minutes of music that you have learned by listening to it first, then pick a very small selection of printed music, maybe only two to four measures, and play the printed music. Play it several times. Listen to yourself as you play it. Turn away from the printed music. Focus on the sound you are making. Watch yourself play. Get used to the visual motions of the left hand and the bow. While you are playing, concentrate on feeling all the physical motions—the way the bow arm feels, the way the left hand feels, the way your whole body feels.

As you play the printed music, try not to slip back into the lifelong habit of depending on that piece of paper in front of you. Be sure to select small portions at a time, and really *listen* to yourself. Memorize each small bit separately, and then link them all together. As you get more proficient at this, you will be choosing more complex selections, so you will have to memorize fingerings and bowings, as well! Mark your music clearly with all fingerings entered exactly as you intend to play them, and with bowings marked on almost every note. This way, when you have to refer back to the music when you get stuck, you will immediately know what position you are in and whether you should be going up-bow or down-bow.

After you have successfully memorized several simple musical selections of about 32 measures each, you will probably begin to notice that you are developing your own personal technique for memorizing. Determination and day-to-day consistency will help you succeed. Practice every day! Becoming discouraged and only working on memory once in a while is a certain formula for failure. Devote a portion of your daily practice time to this activity for the lifetime of your violin-playing days!

Basic Scale Technique

Don't forget scales while you are working on memory skills. Technique and memory go hand in hand. Some players say they dislike scales because they are "boring." I'm going to describe a lot of different ways to practice scales. Try them all. This may take several days, weeks, months, or years,

depending on your own present technical level.

Eventually you will discover many other variations on scale practice. For suggestions, refer to printed scale manuals, ask other string players, think up variations yourself. Scales will never be boring again!

Start with one-octave major scales in keys up to three sharps and three flats. If you have never learned the names of the keys, and which flats and sharps they contain, learn them now! (By memory, of course!) Use one bow per note in various ways: half bow in upper half, middle half, or lower half. Be able to vary the bow strokes anywhere from a crisp martelé to a seamlessly connected détaché.

Branch out to whole bows. Here is one way to improve your basic personal tone production: Play the first scale note as a whole note (four beats), down-bow, frog to tip. Please start at the silver ferrule, not several inches away from it! Then count four beats rest. During the rest, re-take your bow to start the next scale note (another whole note) with another down-bow. Did you start right at the frog? Continue this pattern of down-bows on every note to the final note of your scale.

Also practice the same kind of whole note scale using all up-bows from tip to frog. Again, when you approach the frog, go all the way to the ferrule; don't stop several inches short.

Then alternate down-bow, up-bow with each scale note. Use whole bows.

Vary the metronome tempo, but always keep the rhythm steady.

Make every note beautiful. No scratching. No weak sound.

Vary the dynamics of each note, for example: crescendo each note, diminuendo each note, crescendo-diminuendo each note, diminuendo-crescendo each note. Please notice that you will have to vary the *speed* of the bow—fast for *forte* and slow for *piano*.

Add slurs. Slur two notes, slur four notes, slur one octave, slur the entire passage.

Sometimes start a scale up-bow; sometimes start down-bow.

Don't always start a scale on the bottom note. You can start on the top note and play a descending scale to the bottom note, then an ascending scale to the top note. Sometimes play only ascending scales;

sometimes only descending ones.

Review all the various bow strokes you can think of, or those that you can find in a bowing manual, for example: détaché, martelé, legato, staccato, sautillé, ricochet, louré, collé, etc. Incorporate each into scale practice.

For complex bowing patterns, use several repeated notes on the same pitch.

Try scales in zig-zag thirds. (C E D F E G F A, etc.) Invent other patterns, (for example, CDE, DEF, EFG, FGA, GAB, etc.)

Use different left hand positions for starting notes. For example: start a D Major scale in first position with open string; start in first position with 4th finger (no open strings); start in second position with 3rd finger; start in third position with 2nd finger; start in fourth position with 1st finger.

Play one-octave scales on one string with various fingering and shifting patterns. Pay attention to where the half-steps are located! *Be sure you know the name of the note you are playing at any given time!*

Don't use printed music, except to get ideas for various bowings and fingerings. Also, you can play scales with many variations in dynamics. Find examples of phrasing in a short printed musical phrase, then play a scale using the same phrasing.

You can also practice one-octave scales with a particular *ornamentation* on each note.

- For instance, trill each note, starting on the main note.
- Trill each note, starting on the upper auxiliary.
- Start with a third above each main note and slur down to the main note. For example, in C Major: EDC, FED, GFE, AGF, etc.
- Add a lower neighbor to your descending three-note run: EDCBC, FEDCD, GFEDF, AGFEF, etc.
- Start with a third below each main note and slur up to the main note: ABC, BCD, CDE, DEF, etc.
- Add an upper neighbor to your ascending three-note run: ABCDC, BCDED, CDEFE, DEFGF, etc.
- Then use four-note groups in the same manner. Then five-note groups, six-note groups, seven-note groups, and octave groups.
- You can ornament each scale note in other

ways—for example, trills with turns, mordents, etc. The possibilities are endless.

Add minor scales and arpeggios.

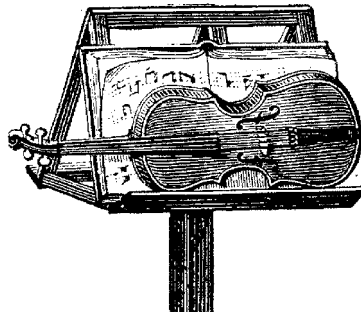
Branch out to two-octave scales and arpeggios, and then to three-octave scales and arpeggios, and eventually add all the other keys. Again, refer to printed scale manuals only for suggested bowings, fingerings, and key signatures; you should eventually work out all the fingerings and bowings yourself and *always play by memory*.

Use a metronome to develop a steady rhythm. Sometimes try playing each scale note *between* metronome beats, not *on* each beat.

Play scales every day, in addition to your work on memorizing pieces. You can set aside a special practice time for scales only. Scales before breakfast! Make this a lifetime commitment!

Learn some music theory

Another facet of memorizing music does not involve *playing* the violin at all. It is always easier to memorize a piece of music when one is able to analyze the form of a musical selection, as well as the basic harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic components. For those who do not have a clear understanding of basic musical theory, it will be extremely beneficial to enroll in a first-year music theory class at a college or university. A certain amount of musical theory can be absorbed simply by being diligent in daily scale and arpeggio practice, but in order to grasp fully the nuts and bolts of how music is constructed, one should really study music theory on a formal basis, at least for a short time.



Thanks!

ASTA MD/DC Chapter
would like to thank
The Lutheran Church of St. Andrew
15300 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20905
and Greg Twombly, building manager,
for consistently making space available
for our many activities.

H. Stevens Brewster, Jr.

A Teacher

by Paul Scimonelli, MD/DC Chapter Bass Forum Chair

Teacher. A beguiling word that carries more weight than it simply implies. To a classroom teacher, it is more than chalk and blackboard, paper and pencil, tests and quizzes. To a private music teacher, it is so much more than rosinning a bow, blowing into a mouthpiece, or proper finger placement. The teacher transcends the mere mundane of the mechanics. Once shown the serious student, the teacher inspires, cajoles, prods, pushes, nags, and loves. The teacher sometimes becomes confidant, friend, mentor, drill sergeant, role model, and substitute parent. Thus it was with my teacher, Steve Brewster.

Herbert Stevens Brewster, Jr., or “Steve” as he was affably known, was born May 10, 1936, in Port Arthur, Texas, and died tragically in an automobile accident while on his way to orchestra rehearsal on April 23, 1984. Growing up in the Philadelphia area, he and his brothers were talked into playing musical instruments by their Haverford Junior High School music teacher, Russell Bixler. Steve started playing bass in the seventh grade and progressed quickly. During his high school and college years, he attended summer music programs at both the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, and the Tanglewood Music Fairs in Massachusetts. After high school, he attended the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied bass with Fred Maresh and Roger Scott. Both were members of the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy, Roger being Principal Bass.¹

Steve’s first major orchestra job was with the St. Louis Symphony, where he worked under the direction of Maestro Edouard van Remoortel. He became a member of the National Symphony

Orchestra in Washington, D.C. in 1960 and served under the batons of Howard Mitchell, Antal Dorati and Mstislav Rostropovich. He was Principal Bassist from 1964 until his death in 1984.



Steve as principal in the bass section of the National Symphony. Ed Skimore is to his right.

In demand as a bass teacher, Steve was on the Adjunct Faculty of the University of Maryland, American University, George Washington University, The Catholic University of America, the Shenandoah Conservatory of Music, and the North Carolina School of the Arts, as well as his private studio. I studied with Mr. Brewster from 1969 through 1974.

In preparing this article, I spoke with Steve’s friends, colleagues, his children, and former students. Remembrances abound, and every story speaks to the dedication and love he had to his craft. In the words of long time friend and former stand partner Ed Skidmore, “His attitude about his profession and about his job

could not have been at a higher standard.” Ed goes on to relate a particularly humorous story:

We were playing the *Symphonie Fantastique* by Berlioz, and in the second movement, which is “Un Ball,” there is a spot in the basses, [measures 123 through 128, cellos and basses tutti, a rather disjointed rhythm] which is an 8th rest, followed by a 16th note and a 32nd note [beamed together] followed by a 32nd rest, and it’s repeated four times. [Ed sings, rest-BA-da, BA-da, rest BA-da BA-da, and so on.] Anybody, the first time they look at it, they see it backwards. We were doing this with James DePreist. Jim came to the NSO as an Associate Conductor under [Antal] Dorati and we all got to know him very well. He’s always been an affable chap, and at times an absolutely brilliant musician. Well, he was doing this with us, and when he got to that point in “Un Ball,” he stopped and told somebody he wanted a passage played in a certain way.

Then he turned to Steve and he said, “Steve, I want a real tight rhythm over there, ba-DAH, ba-DAH, ba-DAH.”

Steve looked down at his music, looked back up, and finally, very quietly said, “Would you like us to play what you sang, or what is written.” And the whole orchestra got very quiet. He wasn’t being mean at all, he was just asking a question. It never occurred to him at all that it sounded a little strange.

Jimmy DePreist looked down at his score for many, many seconds, and finally he looked up and said, “It would please me very much if you would play what is written.”



The coda to this story is, it was several years later, and we again played this with DePreist. We got to that section in the second movement, and he stopped the orchestra, looked back [to the bass section] and said, “You know, since I last did this with you, I have played it with Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Israel Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, and every time when we get to this point, I look back to the bass section, and I see *you*.” And the whole orchestra broke up, remembering the occasion, and I don’t think I ever heard a more gracious “*mea culpa*” in all my life.

One of Steve’s greatest skills was communication. He had a most direct way of getting the musical point across. In one particular lesson, I was struggling mightily with several of the difficult passages in Strauss’s *Ein Heldenleben*. I went on and on about this fingering and that shift and would the interpretation be correct for the conductor. Steve was quiet for a moment and said to me, “The conductor doesn’t care what appendage you use. He just wants to hear the part played correctly and in tune!”

Steve’s youngest son, Lee Brewster, a professional violinist in the Washington metropolitan area, relates the following story:

There was a bassist playing in an orchestra from South America, and he didn’t speak a word of English. He was back stage at the Kennedy Center, preparing for a concert, and wanted some help with a particular passage. Steve used the musical expression and dynamic language of French, German, and Italian, and utilized passages from symphonies and concerti and other pieces in general, and that was the way he communicated with the young man, and the gentlemen actually responded and reacted [to the

teaching.] I was ten or eleven at the time, and that’s how I learned how to communicate with people who didn’t speak the same language as I. You can usually find a common language when you travel, but music becomes a universal language when utilized like that.³

At five feet, eleven inches, and a solid 220 pounds, Steve Brewster was a bear of a man with an intimidating presence but with the spirit of a pussycat. He was kind and gentle to all who knew him, but unforgiving to those who did not treat the music with the intended dignity. In addition to his work as a professional musician and teacher, Steve was influential in the founding of the Mount Vernon Orchestra and the Mount Vernon Youth Chamber Orchestra in 1971 and 1973 respectively, and conducted both groups until his death. The group is now known as the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association and is under the direction of Ulysses S. James, who took over those duties after Steve’s passing. Steve also compiled a book of solo passages for the principal bass player and a scale fingering system, as yet unpublished. His students have gone on to careers in major orchestras, music business, and music education.

Oldest son Andy Brewster of Newbury, Massachusetts, relayed another poignant story that speaks to the soul of Steve:

The [NSO] orchestra was on a concert tour of South America in the 1980’s. At one particular stop, many of the local classical musicians went backstage to meet and play for many of the symphony members. Dad [again utilizing the expression markings of the musical language,] gave an impromptu clinic. Towards the end of the clinic, he noticed one of the bass players playing on frayed strings that were at least twenty years old. Dad went to his bass travel trunk and took out a new set of strings and gave them to the gentlemen, and the gentlemen broke down in tears. This was just the way my dad was.⁵

Not a disciple of, but influenced by Shin’ichi Suzuki, his teaching was truly nurtured by love—the love of the music, the love of playing the instrument, the love of teaching, and the commitment to give back that love through the music you play. Nowhere is that more aptly demonstrated than in this story relayed to me by Steve’s middle son Jamie:

In the summer of 1983 I started playing bass, due to a lack of high school bass players in [Arlington]

county. Because of my years on cello, I picked it up quite quickly and made a name for myself, mostly because of my last name and the fact there was another Brewster who played bass. I started playing in orchestras throughout the area and found myself playing a concert around the holidays with an orchestra where we were playing Dvořák's Ninth Symphony. Feeling a bit out of my league having to be one of two basses playing this piece, I asked my dad for some lessons. He worked with me on my specific issues that I was worried about, then started coaching me on other issues I didn't even know I had! That's what I think he did best. A teacher needs to try to improve the confidence, competence, and capabilities of the student. Sometimes the student already excels in one or more of these areas, and the teacher needs to recognize it and teach to [both] the [strengths and] weaknesses. Dad was great at that.⁶

Steve Brewster was a consummate professional and fiercely dedicated to the art of teaching and playing the bass. His death at age 47 robbed the world of decades more of great teaching, but his legacy lives on in the H. Stevens Brewster Memorial Fund, "established by his friends, family, and colleagues to celebrate the joy of sharing, learning and growing through music which Steve encouraged in all who knew him. [Steve] was particularly dedicated to students—both those he taught privately and those who attended various orchestra events sponsored by the NSO Education Department. In this spirit of sharing, the Brewster Award is made annually to one of the NSO's Youth Fellows—promising young musicians chosen to study with members of the National Symphony Orchestra—to honor Steve's commitment to aspiring young performers."⁴

To all those to whom I have spoke, they were unanimous in their feelings about Steve. He went out of his way to show the beautiful in music, and that technical mastery was the conduit by which to express that beauty. He would say, "The passage is a gift from the composer. Honor it by playing it properly."

The old adage in Music Education is one tends to teach as one was taught. I hear myself continually saying the same things to my students as Steve said them to me, gesturing profusely as he always did.

Honor the passage.



Author's note: Many thanks for the abundance of information supplied by the friends, colleagues, students, and family of Steve Brewster, in particular his sons Andy, Jamie and Lee, and his brother Ted Brewster. Their biographical data was instrumental to the creation of this article.

Thanks to colleague Michael Wu for his most professional editorial eye.

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹ Information supplied by brother Ted Brewster and son Andy Brewster, via internet.
- ² Interview with Edward Skidmore, National Symphony Orchestra Bassist 1958–1994, tape recorded February 16, 2010.
- ³ Interview with son Lee Brewster, tape recorded via phone February 27, 2010.
- ⁴ Notes by Marilyn Taylor, H. Stevens Brewster Memorial Fund Secretary-Treasurer, 1984–1986, National Symphony Orchestra Education Department, Carole Wysocki, Director.
- ⁵ Interview with son Andy Brewster via phone, February 27, 2010.
- ⁶ Information supplied by Jamie Brewster via internet.



Starting a Stringed Instrument

by Sarah Cotterill, MD/DC Chapter member

If you are the parent of a young child who shows interest in music, or if you want to instill a love of music, or if you think wistfully about beginning an instrument yourself, there is no time like the present, and no more rewarding musical experience! If you are like many people, however, you may shy away from violin, viola, or cello because you've been told that 1) it's too difficult, or 2) you have to start by the time you are five years old, or 3) you have to have perfect pitch. These beliefs are fairly pervasive, but untrue. And when children do get started on stringed instruments in the schools, typically in fourth grade, they often quickly become discouraged and lose interest because, through no fault of their own or their parents, they don't have the necessary support. But laying a good foundation for success with a stringed instrument doesn't have to be left to chance.

Here are a few things to consider:

Know your teacher. School music teachers must be generalists. That is, they must know something about many very different instruments: brass, woodwinds, percussion, strings. It is unrealistic to expect them to be able to give more than a few introductory lessons effectively. A music education major at the college level may have studied a stringed instrument for as little as a single semester. A cello or violin or viola performance major, on the other hand, must audition to be admitted to the program. Usually, a successful applicant to a music performance program has ten or more years of lessons behind him/her. Then the program itself requires eight semesters of college instruction on that instrument, in addition to a long list of other music courses.

Qualified string teachers can be found through professional associations, particularly the American String Teachers Association. A online directory of teachers in this area can be found at the ASTA MD/DC Chapter's website, www.asta.net/teachers.

String instruction is rather specialized even in the very early lessons because success depends on developing a correct posture and bow grip, and correct arm and hand motions. Bad habits can be learned in a day and can be notoriously difficult to unlearn.

Stringed instruments require frequent tuning. It is critical that a beginning student learn how to tune from the very beginning. It is impossible to learn on an inconsistently tuned instrument because the pitches actually move around. This crucial skill isn't hard to learn, but it needs to be given the right attention.

Begin with a decent instrument. This doesn't mean you need a Stradivarius. It does mean the violin or cello should be well made and well set up. A poor instrument—one, for example, that has ill-fitting pegs so that tuning is a continuing aggravation—will set the student up for disappointment. A frequent mistake in these "get wired" times occurs when an instrument is bought over the internet. I advise students to rent from a reputable string shop for at least several months. Stringed instrument shops specialize, and their business depends on offering well made violins, violas, and cellos. At the very least, if you are determined to buy early on, get the opinion of an experienced string player or teacher.

You don't need perfect pitch to play a stringed instrument. Being able to sing A on demand is not a requirement. Most professional musicians have excellent relative pitch—that is, they can hear pitches well in relation to a given pitch. Give them an A, and they can sing or play an A scale. What many people don't realize is that this is an acquired skill. Listening is taught and learned by considerable exposure and practice. Intonation, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, nuance of phrasing—all are skills which can be learned.

It's a myth that you have to start very young. Well, if you want to be a concert artist, it may actually be true. But, as in sports or acting or any other discipline, you can develop skills and experience profound pleasure of accomplishment without becoming a star. And you can become a far more discerning listener by studying an instrument.

What is the best age for kids to start? My own experience as a teacher suggests that, on average, second grade is an optimal time for most kids. This is true for social reasons, as much as for music readiness. Start an instrument much earlier, and most

children will be unable to develop good practice habits. Or, more precisely, the parent will have to oversee daily practice. Start much later, and there is a rather narrow window of time in which to develop enough skill to carry the student through the turmoil and accelerating social and academic demands of middle school and high school. Kids don't like to begin new things then. They're self-conscious about being beginners when "everyone else" knows so much.

It not true that it takes too long to sound good on strings. Some last advice to parents: Be patient with your young string player. It does take somewhat longer to learn to make pleasing sounds on stringed instruments. You can't just press a valve and blow, e.g., to get the needed pitch. A good teacher will introduce skills gradually and provide skill-

appropriate music so that the student can take pleasure in accomplishment at every stage of musical development. Given the gifts of time and patient support, your child will advance as a violinist, violist, or cellist. And, whether the investment of time is one year or many, both you and your child will be enriched for the experience—able to hear and savor all manner of music.



Author's note: Looking to expand my studio, and hoping to draw in students who might otherwise choose non-strings, I wrote this essay. My audience is the community in which I live, and this will appear in a community newsletter. If other ASTA teachers feel it speaks for them, they are welcome to reprint it in whole or in part in their own local papers or newsletters.



Music Theory Can Be Fun with Music Mind Games

by Alessandra Schneider, MD/DC Chapter Suzuki Liaison

Two summers ago, I found myself sitting on Michiko Yurko's floor laughing uncontrollably with a few colleagues. We had learned to speak and read many rhythmic patterns using names such as 'jello' and 'huckleberry,' and were now playing a game of Rhythm Bingo. Michiko sang a rhythmic pattern using these 'musical' words and our goal was to find this rhythm on *rhythm bingo cards*. (Language lends itself well to rhythmic segments). Through this game I learned a new method of aurally identifying a rhythmic unit and finding its visual representation. I had many opportunities to practice as we played until everyone had Bingo! Thus the concept of recognizing and identifying rhythms was introduced Tuesday morning during **Music Mind Games, Unit I Teacher Training**.

How It Began

Music Mind Games, created by Michiko Yurko, is a method of teaching music theory and notation to students of all ages and instruments. In development since 1973, Michiko has presented over 200 workshops all over the world. Music Mind Games, which can be found in classrooms, music schools, and private studios, is established in all 50 states as well as in Denmark, China, Norway, the Faroe Islands, England, Scotland, Tanzania, Malaysia, Egypt, Bhutan, France, Sweden, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Ireland, the Czech Republic, Austria, New Zealand, the Philippines, Italy, Hungary, and South Africa. Michiko, who currently resides in Maryland, began developing the method during her graduate work at Ohio University. She has published many books since. These include *No H in Snake*, *Music Theory for Children* (1979), *Music Mind Games* (1992), and *Teaching Suzuki Piano: Ten Teacher's Viewpoints* (1997). In addition, Michiko has created a catalog of Music Mind Game materials such as the game *Musopoly*, student *Puppy Packets*, and new this year for classroom and group teaching, the *Panda Pack*. Besides creating materials, teaching Suzuki piano, and traveling to give workshops, Michiko also offers teacher training and monthly teacher study groups at her home. This is

how I was fortunate enough to find myself studying with her.

The Concept

The Music Mind Games approach is one that focuses on how children learn best: by actively doing! It is a sequential series of games that teach children about the musical alphabet, intervals, staves and notes, reading rhythms, rhythm math, sight singing, dictation, musical symbols and terms, and scales, chords, and keys. Each subject is divided into three levels so students can learn according to ability. These fun, non-competitive games can be used in individual lessons, small groups, or classroom settings. Because children love to play games (and because the approach is centered on this), they can hardly help but be engaged. The games and materials allow them hands-on experience with the subject, while also creating a positive learning environment that is relaxed, safe, fun, and at times silly. Because the games can be played in small or large groups, children often self-correct, help one another, or learn through observation.

The Method

Teachers will usually plan to cover at least three of the musical subjects listed above. In each category there are 'teaching' games. These games are led by the teacher and introduce students to a new topic or idea. Once the concept is understood, the class will reinforce what they learned by playing many 'memory' games. The repetition of these games allows children to gain a solid grasp of the subject. It also allows the teacher to observe and evaluate each child, thus eliminating the need for unnecessary testing.

The Need

The Music Mind Games curriculum is compatible with all instruments and can really benefit those teachers who need a little theory in their lesson plans. It can be challenging to find an appropriate time in the lesson to discuss theory as the student is focusing on orchestra music, solo competitions, and technique. A teacher may manage to teach some

theory but that does not ensure the child is getting a complete and thorough education. By studying and understanding the theory, students are better equipped to read different clefs, transpose, improvise, perform challenging rhythms, and play with improved intonation as they understand and learn to listen to harmonies. With the demands of new music today, students must be even more knowledgeable and flexible in their ability to read and interpret theory.

Studio Implementation

Just as every teacher is different, so is every private studio. Here are a few ideas that come from various teachers in the area. Students can use the first five minutes of their lesson to warm up with Music Mind Games activities. This allows for one-on-one time to focus on areas the child needs to strengthen. The teacher can also use the last five minutes of one student's lesson with the first five minutes of the following student's lesson to have small group games. This can be very motivating as the students can play together and learn from one another. If the studio offers a group class, fifteen to twenty minutes can be designated for theory. The teacher can also offer a separate class weekly that is just Music Mind Games. Students would come in small groups of four to six, and would be grouped by age and ability. There are many other ways to incorporate these games into the studio so be creative! These are just a couple ideas that have been tried and work well.

Classroom Implementation

Music Mind Games works particularly well in the classroom environment. A sample lesson plan would include the topics to be covered, at what level the students are (if they need a 'teaching' game or a 'memory' game), and some form of evaluation. Many of the games lend themselves to creative variations and can include instruments. Examples include reading a dictation on instruments, playing a rhythmic or melodic line from the bingo board, and improvising with dynamics.

A sample class may progress as follows. The class would begin in a large circle with a 'teaching' game. This would be followed by the class splitting into smaller groups for 'memory' games. These small groups let the teacher pair children according to ability and compatibility. The class becomes almost completely self-managed as peers learn and teach each other allowing the teacher to give individual help when needed.

For the past year, Michiko has been training music teachers in the Prince George's County Maryland public schools. Teachers have been implementing Music Mind Games into their classrooms with great success.

The End

Theory does not have to be a daunting and dry subject, nor do children have to wait until college to benefit from it. If presented in a child-friendly, engaging manner, children will be excited about theory, and consequently about music. Engaged children are children who will learn. If you would like to learn more about Music Mind Games, view some games online, or contact Michiko, please visit www.musicmindgames.com.



Performance Practice on Modern Instruments? You Bet!

by Elizabeth Field and Stephanie Vial

In June of 2009, we (violinist Elizabeth Field, and cellist Stephanie Vial) put to the test a claim that we have long been making: that the language and expression of seventeenth and eighteenth century music can be effectively and convincingly conveyed on modern instruments. For the opening recital of our first Modern Early Music Institute (MEMI), offering professional string players the opportunity to study historical performance practices using their own modern instruments, we prepared a program to be performed twice, first on baroque instruments at A=415, and then after intermission, on modern instruments at A=440. The institute participants were given copies of the music—works for violin and cello (with the figured bass realized on the harpsichord) by Stradella, Corelli, Vivaldi, and Telemann so that they could compare notation and performance practice. Our aim was to approach both performances with the same musical intentions, even using roughly the same ornaments for the sake of consistency.

As performers on both modern and period instruments, we have spent years moving back and forth between the two: performing extensively with period instrument ensembles; working with modern groups towards historically informed performances of baroque and classical repertoire; and even working with both instruments in the same concert—for instance, beginning with a Beethoven trio played on period instruments and then playing a Dvořák quartet on modern instruments. But never before had we performed the very same pieces on both instruments back to back. Frankly, we were a little nervous. On the one hand we worried that the pieces would work so much better on the instruments for which they were written and would sound by comparison clumsy and awkward on the modern instruments. At the same time we feared that the modern instruments would sound more familiar, richer and more powerful, especially in the slightly dry acoustics of our modern performance space, proving in fact that there is a good reason why we no longer play on gut strings with light bows. Thankfully, neither happened. Some MEMI participants did express a preference for the

flexibility and sound quality of the early instruments with this repertoire. Others commented on the louder sound of the modern instruments. But the general consensus was that two performances were both successful and shared the same fundamental musical expression and aesthetic. Given the choice, we would always choose to play seventeenth and eighteenth century repertoire on the instruments for which it was written, but in cases where such is either not an option or is simply impractical—for example, in a large hall where projection rather than resonance is called for—there is still so much to be gained through the translation of historical techniques to modern instruments.

Challenges

Part of the challenge in playing early music on modern instruments is to avoid the effect of miniaturizing the music or merely playing by means of subtraction: no vibrato, no sustain, no long notes. But it's impossible to be expressive simply by "not" doing some things or doing "less" of everything. With much of the baroque and classical repertoire, part of the excitement comes from the fact that the music was written to use the entire compass of the instruments for which it was intended. Low strings growl. High notes push the limits of the instrument's upper range. Stephanie recounts how during her first year at Cornell University (where both of us received Doctoral degrees in Eighteenth-Century Performance Practice), a fortepianist with whom she was working on a Beethoven cello sonata shouted, "Look, I can make the piano shake when I play!" The sonata used every inch of the keyboard, unlike a Steinway grand. What's more, there were passages where she could drown out the fortepiano on the cello if she so chose. Power indeed!

Early music frequently seems to call for a lightness and shortness, a delicacy of touch that is difficult to achieve, and which further leads to this sense of music in miniature. When we move to modern instruments for this repertoire, the temptation is, therefore, to use only part of our full capabilities. It

is commonly believed that since later repertoire is characterized by greater volume than early repertoire, it somehow means it is more emotional than early repertoire. This is a superficial equation though, and it fosters the myth that greater volume somehow begets greater musical expression.

Thus we arrive at the mission of our institute. For current generations of musicians who have studied and become professionals alongside a maturing early instrument movement there has unfortunately been a schism between “modern” and “period” instrument players. It is our belief that much of the tension among musicians is falsely placed at the foot of our “equipment.” When laying down our arms, *all* musicians agree that the instrument does not perform the music. Our combined study has led us to realize that the performance practices of this music are about the way we as performers read and speak the “language” of eighteenth century repertoire and not simply about stringing an instrument with gut and playing with an awkward bow.

Why more study?

The truth of the matter is there is a great deal of study involved with learning the intricacies of this different “language.” This can seem like a burdensome amount of work for a well seasoned professional. We are often asked, why should we need to learn about new techniques and learn a whole new set of “rules?” We have been asked, for example, “Why should I play those dotted notes separately, when it is so much easier to play them slurred or hooked?” As professional players today, we have spent years perfecting late twentieth/early twenty-first century bowing techniques, and we use these techniques with great ease. It takes a considerable amount of study and practice to learn alternative bowing gestures. However, the study is so invigorating and refreshing that most musicians find it greatly rewarding and that it inevitably improves their modern playing as well.

For string players especially, there are clear reasons why this extra study might seem superfluous. The bodies of early and modern instruments are exactly the same, and both instruments work on the same principles of bowing and fingering. However, a “modern” instrument, especially one sporting the familiar Italian name brands from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries should really be called a “modernized” instrument.

The modifications made to all stringed instruments at the beginning of the nineteenth century and the complete overhaul of the bow designs were nothing short of dramatic and had a profound effect on the operation and sound of the instrument. A “modernized” violin has nearly double the tension on the strings as a baroque violin, and the modern bow sports camber, twice the width of playing hair, and a substantial weight increase. These changes transformed an instrument reliant on resonance for its sound production to one that demands projection. There is no question that these modifications led to greater potential for volume and projection, especially in a large hall. However, it came at a drastic price to its ability to easily execute the subtleties and complexities of rhetorical expression natural to eighteenth century musicians and composers.

Having said this, modernized string instruments and their bows are still capable of expressing the language in which eighteenth century composers wrote because once again, we are the players and we have potential for great flexibility and adaptation, much more so than the instruments themselves. There are ways of reproducing early techniques and expressions without in any way diminishing the power and scope of the modern instrument.

This may seem confusing, but think of it merely as learning a language similar to one that you are already fluent in. A fluent English speaker can very quickly and easily learn to pronounce Italian without understanding a word of what he or she is saying. But it is clear if this person were an actor, he or she would have to understand the meaning of Italian in order to express the lines effectively. The nuances and inflections of the words can only come with comprehension; they cannot be fully notated.

The notation of eighteenth century music is similarly deceptively familiar. Accomplished musicians can easily understand the notes and rhythms on the page and can play them beautifully without need of original instruments or different techniques. However, it is our belief that simply executing the page (even from a clean Urtext edition) and not understanding the greater meaning of the notated language can result in a superficial reading, much like the English speaker simply pronouncing Italian perfectly. It can be pleasing to the ear but cannot attain the level of expressive art to which we all

strive. The fundamental components of notation (pitch and rhythm) of baroque music can stand alone in this pleasing way but we feel can be stripped of its greater meaning and lifeblood when limited to this execution, often relegating it to pleasant background music—the “wallpaper effect.”

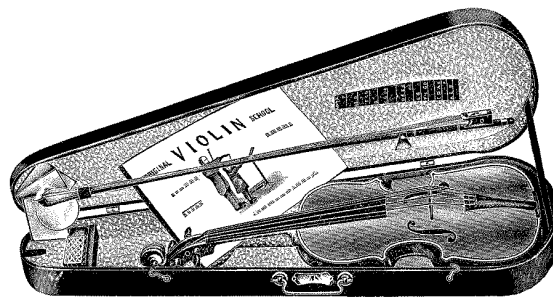
The eighteenth century had no recordings. One of the most liberating ideas for individual players is the realization that their personal stamp, not just on every piece of music they play, but every performance they give, is demanded by the composer. It can be incredibly exciting to realize that our beloved composers from the past are dependent on us and our personal statements to keep their music alive!

For more information about MEMI, please visit:

<http://thevivaldiproject.org/MEMI/>



Violinist Elizabeth Field and cellist Stephanie Vial share a strong belief in the need to translate Early Music practices for today’s performers on today’s instruments. Each received a Doctoral degree in Eighteenth Century Performance Practice from Cornell. Ms. Field’s research charts an evolution of violin performance traditions through an extensive study of the numerous editions of Bach’s unaccompanied violin sonatas from 1802 until the present. Ms. Vial’s work studies the eighteenth century analogy between punctuation in language and phrasing in music. Her book, The Art of Musical Phrasing in the Eighteenth Century: Punctuating the Classical “Period,” was released in May 2008, by the University of Rochester Press’s Eastman Studies in Music Series. Over the years, Field and Vial have enjoyed working together frequently as a team; they are currently co-directors of The Vivaldi Project, a Washington-based period instrument ensemble.



Cello Highlights

by Laurien Laufman, MD/DC Chapter Cello Forum Chair

On November 1, 2009, Zuill Bailey gave a master class under the joint auspices of the NSO Youth Fellowship Program of Kennedy Center and the Kindler Cello Society, as he was here to perform the Beethoven Triple Concerto and the Brahms Double Concerto with the National Symphony. The performance was very exciting and received a standing ovation from the audience.

Mr. Bailey is emerging with a fine solo career and is also Professor of Cello at the University of Texas at El Paso. He is a Washington, D.C. native and is himself a former recipient of the NSO Youth Fellowship Programs, in which, as a student, he has played in various guest master classes. Three students played for him:

Nathaniel Taylor, age 17, student of Stephen Honigberg, played the first movement of the Boccherini B \flat Major concerto.

Nicole Choi, age 14, student of Laurien Laufman, played the Prelude from Bach's Suite No. 3.

Eric Adamshick, age 17, student of Loran Stephenson, played third movement of the Dvořák concerto.

The class was held in Rehearsal Room 1 of the Kennedy Center. Mr. Bailey gave a very interesting and informative class, replete with stories of the composers' lives to embellish the students' and audience understanding of the repertoire.

On November 21, 2009, Steven Doane visited us and presented both a recital at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia with pianist Michael Adcock of the Washington Conservatory of Music and a master class presented by the Washington Conservatory at their Glen Echo location. Mr. Doane is Professor of Cello at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and has enjoyed a long solo career.

Five students played for him:

Jessica Hu, age 12, student of Laurien Laufman, played the first Bach Prelude.

Julia Rosenbaum, age 13, student of David Hardy, played Fauré's "Romance."

Devree Lewis, a first year master's student of Evelyn Elsing, played Bach's Prelude from Suite No. 3.

Andrew Hesse, young professional, played the first movement of the Schubert Arpeggione Sonata.

Erica Basta, age 19, a student of Charlie Powers, played Bach's Prelude from Suite No. 3.

It was a very nice spread of ages and each student played well. Mr. Doane was very interesting and entertaining, very respectful to all, and gave a wonderfully rich and informative class. His recital the same evening included the second Bach Suite, the Poulenc Sonata, and the Brahms F Major sonata. This was beautiful playing at the highest level.

The last week in January 2010, we of the Washington cello community were treated to the performances and master class of Mischa Maisky, who performed Tchaikovsky's "Rococo Variations," and Tchaikovsky's "Lensky's Aria" with the NSO. He is a prolific performer who performs almost constantly, particularly in Europe. He plays with tremendous flair. Mr. Maisky was raised in Russia and now lives in Belgium. His master class was held January 30, 2010, (during our second big snowstorm!) at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland under the joint auspices of the Barbara K. Stepple Memorial Faculty Fellowship in Cello and the Kindler Cello Society of Washington, D.C.

Three students played for him:

Gozde Yasar, doctoral student of Evelyn Elsing, played Tchaikovsky's "Rococo Variations."

Gilbert Alex Glaubitz, a freshman student of David Hardy at Peabody, played the Prelude from Bach's Suite No. 4.

Devree Lewis, a first year master's student of Evelyn Elsing, played first movement of Dvořák concerto.

Mr. Maisky was very modest, being the first to say that although he is the only student who studied with both Rostropovitch and Piatigorsky, he is not pursuing a career as a teacher, only giving occasional master classes. The class was charming and full of anecdotes about his career.

Saturday, March 6, 2010, Laurien Laufman gave the second recital in her series at The Lyceum in Alexandria. This program entitled, "The Transcribed Cello," performed with pianist Audrey Andrist, featured the Arpeggione Sonata, the Brahms Sonata Op. 78, and short pieces by Bach, Marcello, Gluck, Weber, and Chopin.

The Kindler Cello Society will sponsor "Cello Day" on Saturday, March 27, 2010, 9:00 A.M.–4:30 P.M. at the H-B Woodlawn Secondary Program, 4100 Vacation Lane, Arlington Va 22207.

Cello Day will focus on etudes and how they relate to music. Washington area cellists Robert Battey, Vasily Popov, and Glenn Garlick will give workshop-style presentations. German cellist, Daniel Muller-Schott, in town to perform the Dvořák Concerto with the

NSO, will make a special appearance. The day will culminate in a mass play-in. For further information check the website: <http://kcswiki.pbworks.com/>

Thursday, April 22, 2010, will be the inaugural concert sponsored by The Kindler Cello Society, entitled "Cellists of Washington." It will be held at the Sumner School Museum, 1201 17th St. NW, Washington, D.C., at 7:00 P.M. The series will feature the wealth of fine Washington area cellists. Concerts are free of charge. On this first program:

Robert Battey plays Bach's Suite No. V

Michael Mermagen plays Beethoven's Sonata No. 5 in D Major

Miron Yampolsky plays R. Strauss' Sonata and Romanze



In Memoriam

**Barbara Winslow, professional violist, violinist and teacher
(Jackson, Michigan, April 16, 1915–Rockville, Maryland, November 29, 2009)**

by Margarita Maymi

Barbara J. Winslow was born and grew up in Michigan and started violin lessons around the age of ten. While still in high school, she began teaching violin. She graduated from the University of Michigan and also attended the University of Miami, where she studied with Joel Belov.



Music became her whole life. She was known as a professional violist and violinist, teacher and performer of chamber and orchestral music in Michigan, Florida, Kentucky, and, since the early 1970s, in the Washington, D.C. area.

As a teacher, Barbara was determined to get the best from each of her students and did not hesitate to give generously all her effort, stimulus, patience, support, time, and dedication to each of them individually. Giving

extra time was not a problem for her when she sensed interest, effort, and commitment and her schedule permitted it. Besides the technical aspects, she knew how to guide her students into understanding the music, being creative, having freedom of interpretation, and setting realistic goals. She never admitted discouragement.

For seventeen years she taught violin and viola at Montgomery College in Rockville, Maryland, and gave private lessons throughout her professional life.

As a player, she experienced a rainbow of opportunities not at hand for every one, to perform with different levels of chamber groups and orchestras, from her youth into her early nineties, for more than seventy years. Her modesty, professionalism, and impeccable playing characterized her.

Barbara was for many years the violist of the Potomac String Trio, which played school concerts sponsored by the Washington Performing Arts Society in the area. She played chamber music in social gatherings with friends and personalities of the Washingtonian society. Occasionally, she had the opportunity to play with figures like Isaac Stern, Leonard Bernstein, and other renowned artists. She was a regular player with several professional groups



in the Washington area, such as the National Gallery Orchestra, Kennedy Center Orchestra, Wolf Trap Orchestra, and the Rock Creek Chamber Players.

In the 1990s Barbara was Vice President of Auditions of the Friday Morning Music Club, dealing with aspiring members to the club. She also played with the Friday Morning Music Club Orchestra and chamber groups until 2005.

Barbara was a member of the American Viola Society and the American String Teachers Association. She received the Teacher of the Year Award from MD/DC Chapter several years ago.

As a true humanitarian, she was aware of other people's needs and did not hesitate to offer her support generously to family and friends. She took care of both of her parents' needs until their deaths, both at age 94. She also looked after her only sister Alice Halstead and her good friend Alice Pennington, who died at the age of 100.

Barbara's mother's and sister's deaths of Alzheimer's disease prompted her to donate to the cause of research for its cure. She also contributed to several other humanitarian and social causes.

Her unique love and dedication to music was an inspiration to many of her fellow musicians and students. Personally, I have also learned many positive things from her strong and determined character, embellished by her modesty, professionalism, optimism, and generosity.



Margarita Maymí Pérez was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where she obtained a degree in Nursing. In 1973 she moved to Maryland and, while working at NIH, she obtained a degree in Social Sciences from The American University in Washington, D.C. At the same time she continued taking adult ballet classes and had the opportunity to dance as an amateur. She began taking violin lessons with Barbara Winslow in 1984, and has played in amateur groups and church orchestras. The photographs in this article were given as a gift to the author by Barbara Winslow on 7/22/1994. In 1999, she began researching her ancestry and has written and co-

authored several articles about her family genealogy and origins for the Israel Genealogical Society and the "Sociedad Puertorriqueña de Genealogía," as well as creating her own webpage. At present she is involved in writing a book on this subject. Margarita is fluent in Spanish and English and proficient in French. Currently, she resides in Spain and can be contacted at her e-mail: maymiperez@yahoo.com.



String Quartets The Lighter Side

Pop Quiz for String Quartets Please check the correct answer

How does Beethoven's Op. 18, No. 1 begin?

- down bow
- up bow
- softly, but with character
- every year

The best use for a metronome is to:

- learn a composer's intent regarding tempo
- determine appropriate tempo relationships
- be a practice aid
- humiliate a colleague

Many quartet players feel the most disconcerting audience distraction to be:

- beeping watches during Beethoven's Cavatina
- picture-taking (with flash) during Haydn's *Seven Last Words of Christ*
- rustling of cellophane candy wrappers during the slow movement of Ravel's quartet
- loud wagering between movements of Alban Berg's *Lyrical Suite*

The most important function of a cellist's endpin is to:

- keep the cello from sliding on stage during a performance
- ruin a colleague's living room carpet
- set off airport security alarms
- restore order during arguments at rehearsal

What is the best edition of Mozart quartets and why?

- Bärenreiter because of its superior scholarship
- Henle because it's an Urtext edition
- Peters because it's traditional
- G. Schirmer because it's cheap

When it is best for the first violinist to take a solo bow?

- after Haydn's "Lark" Quartet
- after Mendelssohn's Octet
- after an all-Bach solo recital
- while everyone else is still backstage arguing

The primary function of a music review is to:

- educate and enlighten the public
- promote local concerts

- inspire performers to maintain their highest standards
- make the paper thick enough to meet the demands of any untrained puppy

Amateur quartet players (especially doctors) have the following advantages over professional players:

- they approach the music with freshness
- they are more concerned with musical product than technical perfection
- they own most of the world's great instruments

When do most quartet second violinists leave first position?

- never
- whenever string crossings produce unwanted timbres
- only when the composer specifically indicates it (ex.: finale of Beethoven's Op. 59, No. 3)
- when all strings but one have broken

Certain French and Czech editions (as of Ravel and Janáček) are well known to quartet players because they are:

- the most authoritative editions
- too large to fit in one's case
- printed on paper rejected by Charmin

When may a quartet second violinist be too loud?

- in the slow movement of the Schubert two cello quintet (but only at the first rehearsal)
- during the Grosse Fuge (when everyone else is playing as loudly as possible)
- when playing at the first violinist's funeral
- when his mother is in the audience

What should you do when you are lost in the Grosse Fuge during rehearsal?

- try to find the place
- stop immediately
- play anything (concerto, solo sonata, etudes, etc.)
- knock over your music stand so you have an excuse for another start

Most arguments in quartet rehearsals occur over:

- intonation
- phrasing
- balance
- and over