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**BM:** Prepares for a career in public, private, or charter school music teaching. Options are available for degree-seeking students or students already in possession of a music degree but who desire teaching certification.

**MM:** Students engage in courses related to research, pedagogy, history, and philosophy, and music theory. Declare with an emphasis of either elementary, choral, or secondary instrumental.

**BM/MM: Music Performance**

**BM:** Provides a strong background in repertoire and performance, and prepares for graduate work in the creative and performing arts and a professional career at the university level.

**MM:** Designed for those seeking a performance career, further graduate study, private studio teaching, and/or collegiate applied teaching. Course work centers around applied study, music theory and history, pedagogy, and literature.

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Provides basic knowledge of music and a broad liberal arts background with electives available to allow exploration of other areas of interest.

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If you want to major or minor in music, you must complete a separate audition to be accepted into the Department of Music.

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**Editor’s Desktop**

Welcome to our Spring Music Notes issue!

The many excellent articles in this issue are the work of dedicated, informed, and creative teachers.

If you would like to write and share an article for your fellow teachers, please do it and contact me! People would love to hear your ideas & thoughts.

Stay well and safe until we see you in the Fall Newsletter.

—Ted Hadley, Editor

thadley@caibone.net

208-600-3052

**Newspaper Links**

[IMEA Music Notes Spring 2021](#)

[www.idahomusiced.org](http://www.idahomusiced.org)

[www.nafme.org](http://www.nafme.org)

The mission of the Idaho Music Educators Association is to advance, promote, and advocate for standards-based Music Education in all Idaho schools, to foster personal and professional growth of music educators, and to encourage and enhance musical opportunities for all students throughout the state.

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Dr. Thomas Kloss, IMEA President

As I write this, we have about 60 more days until Memorial Day weekend, which means we are at the home stretch! There is much optimism about getting back to a more “normal” fall semester, although still plenty of challenges ahead. Idaho is just about to open vaccinations to everyone 16+ years old, but as that is happening, our National COVID numbers are also increasing. Planning ahead will still be a nightmare for a while.

The IMEA board has been behind the scenes working to make sure we all will be ready for our future. Here are a few things that we have been doing, and some new updates to our 2022 Conference and All-State.

ADVOCACY: Kathy Stefani, future music educator Fayth Waters, and I met via phone with Rebecca Alcorn, Legislative Assistant to Senator Mike Crapo. We had the opportunity to speak about how difficult it has been to be a music educator in Idaho during this pandemic, how Fayth attended a district without middle school music and developed a love for choir in high school, and we asked Senator Crapo to consider voting for funding for music education (Specifically to increase funding for Title IV, Part A; Title I, Part A; and Title II, Part A). We also encouraged the senator to consider voting for the COVID-19 Relief Package (which ultimately passed), and the Reopen and Rebuild America’s Schools Act (which also ultimately passed). In all, it was a positive experience that we hope to continue annually. This information was sent to our other three Congressmen, who did not accept our meeting request.

STATE SOLO AND ENSEMBLE: Eva Hale and I met with the leaders of HeartOut.io and look forward to this virtual State Solo experience. I would encourage all of you to START EARLY and definitely READ the “director information” packets that will be sent to you. DO NOT WAIT FOR THE LAST DAY to find out there is a problem. Remember that each student can record three performances via the HeartOut app, and must choose one of those three to upload. We will probably have a few hiccups along the way, but if you wait until the last day, we will ultimately not be able to help you.

Many of you have questions or have asked for changes to the State Solo rules and policies. The time to do that is AFTER THIS FESTIVAL and before our annual June meeting. Send your suggestions to Eva or myself to submit and discuss with the board. We also anticipate hosting an in-person festival in 2022.

2022 CONFERENCE AND ALL-STATE: Because of many factors, the Executive Board asked district presidents for feedback about how to proceed with planning our next conference and all-state festival. I started by asking Dr. Philip Miller, Music Chair at Northwest Nazarene University, if they are still able to host us. He said they would definitely be ready by next February. I then asked our Band clinician, Richard Saucedo, if he will be ready to fly out and stand in front of a full ensemble of band kids, and he also agreed that he'd be ready when vaccinated. Teachers I've talked with are also pretty sure that principals will allow travel to our event. We still have many questions to ask, including if IHSA/NFHS will restrict group activity, or if we will have to add waivers or even vaccine-proof for students to attend our festival, or if Nampa HS will allow us to host 150 kids in one room. We don't think anything will be of great issue, but we want to be prepared. We feel like there is more good news ahead, and are moving forward cautiously.

What is still problematic in our “new normal” is the sheer size of the number of participating students within our typical All-State festival. Because we have to plan a year in advance, the executive board has decided only to support FIVE ensembles in 2022. We will host the two Jazz Ensembles, one Band, one String Orchestra, and one Mixed Choir as part of our 2022 festival. We will be discussing other options for our elementary and middle school groups for next year and hope that when we return to Nampa in 2024 we can be together again.

That being said, in thinking about our future, we’ve pretty much outgrown EVERY space in Idaho. That is making us think about some other creative ways in which we can hold future conferences and all-state festivals. We hope to present some ideas for our future that can be more sustainable, and get some feedback from you as we go.

In all, I hope you are all hanging in there and will use your summer to recharge and get ready for another (hopefully easier) school year.

Tom Kloss, klosthom@isu.edu

Mentor/Mentee Network

Isn’t There a Pill To Fix This!? 

Kathy Stefani, IMEA Mentor Chair

They say, “patience is a virtue”——it’s just not one of mine. I’m a list person. Make a list and check things off as they get done. I’ve always hated term papers, book reports, the Danielson evaluation, things that take time and have numerous steps before you can truly “check it off” the list.

Three years into my teaching career, I taught in Fernley, Nevada, about 20 miles east of Reno. I was the first music teacher the elementary school had seen in years, so they started the position not with a room but a cart. This school had no indoor hallways, so I always pulled the cart out each classroom door and down the outdoor sidewalk to the next room. On one seemingly uneventful day, as I pulled the cart over a classroom threshold, the door went over the top of my left foot I was using to brace it open. It definitely hurt, but no more than a stubbed toe. I reacted accordingly, and hobbled on to the next classroom.

Over the next three days, my foot became colder, turned white, hurt more and more, and no amount of aspirin would alleviate the pain. I saw a doctor, then saw another, then a specialist, then had an angiogram, then heard, “have you recently had frostbite or been struck by lightning?” I knew there was a problem. I had developed Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, or RSD, which in layman’s terms meant my body thought my foot had “died.” My heart had therefore cut off the blood flow to my foot to save the rest of my body.

The treatment was to send me daily to the Reno physical therapy rehab where the US Ski team was treated. I performed hot/cold water shocks to my foot three times a day — at least two could be at home — and they “hoped” they could get it turned around. I was 26, married with a two year old son, a school to teach, and there was no time for this nonsense. I shared all this with my therapists and asked “isn’t there a pill I could take to fix this”? They were unimpressed. And, of course, there wasn’t.

Like so many – too many – things in life, it would just take time. It might take several weeks, months, possibly even years, to treat...
this condition and get the blood flowing back into my foot. It took a
team of doctors, a Vietnamese anesthetist who had treated soldiers
who had neurological damage from shell shock, my husband
who had to do the massage as I couldn't do it myself, and a cadre
of caring students who pushed my wheelchair from class to class. I
learned grace, humility and ....patience. By the grace of God, I am one
of 5% of the people that ever recover from RSD. I can still hear my ther-
apist say, “You’re lucky. You’ll walk again if you do the work.”

In March this year, the IMEA and ISDE sponsored the webinar,
“The First Five Years”, where Dr. Neil Anderson stated that as of 2018,
schools needed 100,000 music positions nationwide but only 55,000
music education majors completed their degree that year. Addition-
ally, 17% of new music educators will leave the profession after their
first year, another 18% after the second. Six percent will leave by that
same time to teach in a different content area ... 40%, gone in the first
two years. All of these numbers are PRE-COVID. This seems to be a
diagnosis too difficult to turn around. But the good news is that An-
derson’s research identified two key factors that made for a successful
transition into the music teaching profession: having a mentor and
observing another music teacher’s classroom.

“Having a mentor” can be as simple or elaborate as desired by the
new instructor, but Anderson’s findings showed that weekly contact
with a mentor throughout the first year of teaching significantly raised
the retention rate of teachers in the field. Seasoned teachers par-
ticipated in his study as well, and though initially halfhearted, these
educators embraced the experience the most, stating that having
someone with whom to share ideas and to analyze practices made
them more confident, capable instructors. It took time, coordinating
schedules, learning to listen, but it made a difference.

Anderson’s second key finding was that getting off their campus
and observing a current music conductor or instructor was hugely beneficial to new educators. The university experience cannot
provide the kind of in-the-classroom experience that is needed for
first year teachers, so for a principal or music supervisor to arrange
time for an instructor to observe another teacher is invaluable and,
in Dr. Anderson’s research, KEY to remaining in the music teaching
profession. It’s not a quick fix, but it’s part of the process.

Idaho’s music teacher shortage is real, but you as an IMEA
member can help turn things around, help us all “do the work”.
We have learned that mentors of all kinds are needed to support
new instructors. Here’s the quick overview thus far: we began with
retired teachers, then added an instructor in years 2-5 to create three
person teams for each mentee. This level of volunteerism is difficult to
maintain. A retired instructor can visit the classroom and be a pair of
neutral eyes to help new teachers reflect on their teaching. Teachers in
years 2-5 have just been where the new teacher is and can empathize
and share updated practices and resources. IMEA has a list of educa-
tors who volunteer their time as content area specialists, i.e., orchestra,
middle school, K-12 teaching. We’ve learned we need to increase our
mentor resources.

Here’s How You Can Involved

Volunteer to be a mentor, connecting weekly with a new
instructor
Volunteer to be a retired mentor, able to visit in the classroom
and meet for conversation
Volunteer as a 2-5 year teacher, able to connect 1-2 month
Add your name to the specialist list, able to answer specific
questions in your expertise or to have a new teacher observe you
Host a “virtual social hour” for a focus group, i.e., new teachers,
elementary, rural
Present a 50 minute “virtual webinar” for the 2021-2022 mentor-
ship cohort
Donate items you may be discarding or no longer need if

retiring, to the IMEA mentorship program as door prizes or support
materials

Financially support mentor expenses for travel and meals
I’m still looking for that “quick fix” to the perfect weight, the clean
house, the classroom that earns straight “A’s”. I want every college
program to be bursting with music ed majors who can’t wait to teach
in Idaho’s schools for the rest of their lives. But as I learned years ago,
there’s rarely a pill or quick fix. Instead, I’m committed to implement-
ing Andersen’s findings and supporting our new educators until we can check “music teacher shortage” off the list.

Kathy Stefani, kathy.stefani@gmail.com

WAYNE MILLETT among Those Honored

with NFHS Music Educator Awards

The Music Association of the National Federation of State High School
Associations honored twenty-two individuals with the 2020-21 Outstand-
ing Music Educator Awards. Among the recipients of the 2020-21 NFHS
Outstanding Music Educator Awards is Idaho’s own Wayne Millett!

From his award announcement: “Wayne Millett became the music
teacher at Aberdeen (Idaho) High School in 1990, and currently teaches
band, choir, guitar, musical and stage crafts classes. Over his entire
38-year teaching career, which includes time spent at high schools and middle schools in Utah,
Millett’s students have been involved in more than 80 musical productions.

“Millett has consistently guided Aberdeen bands to
superior ratings at district festivals and from 2006 to
2019, led them to 10 first-place awards at various other
events including the Music in the Parks Festival and the Gene Harris Jazz
Festival. Millett has been very active at the state level throughout his
career, serving as the Idaho Music Educators Association’s (IMEA) overall
president and president of its Fifth District, and webmaster; and has been
a member of the Idaho High School Activities Association (IHSAA) Fifth
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“Among his numerous accolades, Millett received the IMEA Distingui-
shed Service Award and the IHSAA West Lowe Memorial Award in
2016; Idaho Fifth District Music Educator of the Year in 2002 and 2011; and
Aberdeen School District Teacher of the Year in 2005.”

COnGRATULATIONS, MR. MILLETT!!

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Present a 50 minute ‘virtual webinar’ for the 2021-2022 mentor-
ship cohort

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CONGRATULATIONS, MR. MILLETT!!
Recruit—Retain—Rebuild=
A New Reality

My friend is looking for a cabin in Alaska to return to where he grew up. His wife was 100% onboard when they started looking, until they started touring properties and she noticed one key amenity was missing in all the cabins. She asked the simple question, “Where’s the bathroom?” My friend, who is a trombonist, wasn’t fazed. He swung his arm in a wide arc at the horizon, and exclaimed, “That’s the beauty . . . it can be anywhere!”

Sometimes reality makes us adjust our expectations.

This year has certainly illustrated that concept exceptionally well. As we look to recruit, retain, and rebuild our music programs, there are some important lessons that this year has taught us. Now, more than ever, students need to belong to something challenging, meaningful, and greater than themselves. They need the connection, support, and the challenge of someone pushing them while believing that they can do amazing things. Students need to BELONG, and we have a place for ALL of them in our music classrooms.

- It’s more than getting the right notes at the right time.
- It’s more than simply creating a space for students to feel accepted.
- It’s more than our classrooms and concert halls.
- Tradition is important, but so is innovation.
- Excellence is important, but so is community.

None of these things need to be exclusive. Belonging without meaning is empty, as is excellence without empathy. Music is a universal life-changing gift that we have the privilege of sharing with others.

Christy wanted to join the band as a high school freshman. She didn’t play an instrument, but she wanted to belong to something important and make friends. I was a young teacher intent on building a stellar program, but I did have the common sense to know that there is a place for everyone in band. I found her a trumpet and her journey began. Christy worked as hard as any student in our program – practicing diligently and participating in absolutely everything. She was the first one to show up and the last one to leave, and she always had a smile on her face. Christy was proud to be a member of the band, and honestly, she would have worn her band uniform to school every day if she could. She never made it into the top auditioned Wind Ensemble; in fact she could barely play the trumpet at all, even with lots of help. But, that didn't deter her from signing up for Solo/Ensemble contest every year. Four years in a row she played the trumpet solo “My Buddy,” never in time or in tune, but with great enthusiasm. It always ended with a big smile and a rehearsed bow. Her rating didn't matter to her; what did matter was that she got to spend the day with her friends. Before band, she didn't have any friends.

One day, Christy invited the band over to her house for a gathering. It was a very important event to her, so my wife and I made an appearance. The party was outside, but what stopped me in my tracks was the realization that the home that Christy lived in still had dirt floors on the inside. Suddenly, I understood the need for her to belong to our band family even more. Band was everything to her, and when she graduated from high school, she did so with a strong group of friends and a network of support for the future. I don't know what she's doing now, but I do know that band made a difference in her life, and she made a difference in mine.

Music education is an incredibly collaborative way to recognize individuals while creating community. This year has really emphasized the need for the sense of belonging and community that being a part of a musical group can bring. As a music teacher you change lives daily. There is no greater work, and rest assured, you do make a difference every single day!
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*Photo taken before COVID-19

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JUNE 20 – 25

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JUNE 21 – 26

Cougar String Camp
TBA

For more information please visit music.wsu.edu or email music@wsu.edu
How to Sustain Flexible Thinking & Nimble Action

By Susan Robertson

To survive the pandemic, companies were forced to adapt very quickly to radically new circumstances. Even large organizations - where it’s typically difficult to shift directions quickly - managed to accomplish it. Leaders discovered that, when required, their organization could act much more quickly and nimbly than they normally do.

So, the obvious questions are 1) What was different? And 2) How can you “hardwire” this flexibility into your organization so it continues to be stronger in the future?

What was different?

All humans have a set of cognitive biases, which are mental shortcuts that are used for problem solving and decision making.

To be clear, cognitive biases are NOT individual or personal biases. They are a neuroscience phenomenon that all humans share. It’s also important to understand that they operate subconsciously; they affect your thinking in ways that you don’t realize.

You have two different thinking systems, commonly known as System 1 and System 2, sometimes referred to as thinking fast (1) and thinking slow (2).

System 1 is the “intuitive”, quick, and easy thinking that we do most of the time. In fact, it accounts for about 98% of our thinking. It doesn’t require a lot of mental effort; we do it easily, quickly, and without having to think about that fact that we’re thinking.

System 2 thinking is deeper thinking, the kind that’s required for complex problem solving and decision making. This deeper thinking requires more effort and energy; it literally uses more calories. Since it’s less energy efficient, our brain automatically and subconsciously defaults to the easier System 1 thinking whenever it can, to save effort.

Cognitive biases result when our brain tries to stay in System 1 thinking, when perhaps it should be in System 2. The outcome is often sub-optimal solutions and/or poor decision making. But we don’t realize that we have sub-optimized because all of this has happened subconsciously.

In typical circumstances, several of these cognitive biases conspire to make us perceive that continuing as we are - with only slower, incremental changes - seems like the best decision. It feels familiar; it feels lower risk, in sum - it feels smarter. Choosing to do nothing different is - very often - simply the default. It frequently doesn’t even feel like we made a decision; instead it feels like we were really smart for NOT making a potentially risky decision.

But during the pandemic, changing nothing, or changing very slowly, were simply not options. This particular situation was so unique that our brains didn’t have the choice to stay in short-cut System 1 thinking. System 2 thinking was required. Since we consciously realized we MUST change quickly, our brains started literally working harder - in System 2 – and the normal cognitive biases weren’t a factor.

How to Continue to be More Nimble in the Future

The key to maintaining flexible thinking and nimble behavior is to not allow our brains to fall into the trap of cognitive biases. Obviously, since these are intuitive and subconscious responses, this is not an easy task. But there are proven ways that we can better manage our brains. Here are a few ways to start:

1. Knock out the Negativity Bias. Negativity Bias is the phenomenon that negative experiences have a greater impact on your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors than positive experiences. So, you are much more highly motivated to avoid negative than we are to seek out positive. The way this manifests in your daily work is that we are much more prone to reject new ideas than to accept them, because rejecting ideas feels like we’re avoiding potential negative.

   Respond to “yes but…” with “what if…” This requires a dedicated and conscious mental effort, by everyone on the team, to monitor their own and the team’s response to new ideas. Every time “yes, but…” is uttered, the response needs to be “What if we could solve for that?” This reframing of the problem into a question will trigger our brains to look for solutions, instead of instantly rejecting the idea.

2. Short Circuit the Status Quo Bias. The Status Quo bias is a subconscious preference for the current state of affairs. We use “current” as a mental reference point, and any change from that is perceived as a loss. As a result, we frequently overestimate the risk of a change, and dramatically underestimate the risk of “business as usual.”

   When weighing a choice of possible actions, be sure to overtly list “do nothing” as one of the choices, so you are forced to acknowledge it is a choice. Also include “risk” as one of the evaluation criteria and force the team to list all the possible risks. Then comes the difficult part: remind the team that their subconscious brain is making them perceive the risks of doing nothing to be lower than the reality, so they should multiply the possibility of each of those risks.

3. Curtail the Curse of Knowledge. In any subject where we have some expertise, we also have many subconscious assumptions about that subject. Under normal circumstance, this Curse of Knowledge (these latent assumptions) limits our thinking and suppresses our ability to come up with radically new ideas.

   Rely on advisors who don’t have the same Curse of Knowledge. In other words, seek out advice from people outside of your industry. When evaluating ideas or actions, these outsiders won’t have the same blinders that you have, so they will likely have a more clear-eyed view of the benefits and risks.

   The bad news is that cognitive biases are always going to be a factor in our problem-solving and decision making; they’re hard-wired into us. The good news is that, with some dedicated and continuous mental effort, we can mitigate them and become nimble in the face of change.

About the Author: Susan Robertson empowers individuals, teams, and organizations to more nimbly adapt to change, by transforming thinking from “why we can’t” to “how might we?”

She is a creative thinking expert with over 20 years of experience coaching Fortune 500 companies.

As an instructor on applied creativity at Harvard, Susan brings a scientific foundation to enhancing human creativity.

To learn more, please go to: www.SusanRobertson.co.
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Rest, Reflect, & Restore Your Joy

Lori Gray, Boise State University

As we all seek to rest and recover over the summer, winding down from a year of teaching and learning through a pandemic, we can start to plan for a “new normal” in the coming school year. Though our experiences may have differed depending on our location and school communities, we all faced challenges brought about by COVID-19. As a stepparent, a professor, and a university supervisor for field experiences in the schools, the most crucial lesson I learned this year was to avoid making assumptions about anyone’s situation or response to the pandemic. Some people (kIs and adults) enjoyed the process of learning, teaching, or working from home. Other individuals faced mental health issues that came about due to the isolation of remaining at home without a true, daily social connection. Some families strained to provide food and to ensure their children were able to have a reliable internet connection for their classes. Others struggled to keep their jobs or to work during the pandemic.

For teachers, navigating the multiple spaces of remote, hybrid, and in-person learning that took place throughout the year was challenging and exhausting enough. Our stress was compounded by the added uncertainty of students’ additional needs and varying levels of access to resources and the internet throughout the year. After such a difficult year of constantly shifting and altering plans to face a daunting global pandemic, it will take time for students and teachers to fully return to schools and feel safe and comfortable once again in our school communities. As we hopefully pause this summer to rest, I believe this is the perfect time for us to reflect upon and reignite our original desire to be music teachers. Why are you passionate about teaching music? In what ways do you aim to inspire students through music every day?

During undergraduate degrees in Music Education, students are asked to consider the type of teacher they want to become. They are encouraged to think about the models they experienced through their own education and what they hope to model for their future students. I begin these important reflection opportunities for sophomores in our Foundations of Music Education class, asking students to explore what it means to be a K–12 music teacher. As they get a bit further in their education, they continue to shape their philosophy of teaching music. Students continue to grapple with questions including: Why do you value music in your life? Why is music an important part of K–12 education? Why do you think it’s important to teach a certain way or to teach certain things in music? By the time our students graduate, the hope is that each student will have a clear picture of the type of teacher they want to become, answers for why they value music and its importance in K–12 education, and an understanding of how to approach curriculum and to make decisions about what and how to teach in the music classroom.

I wonder, though, how many of us go back and revisit our teaching philosophies, or these types of reflection questions? Do you remind yourself from time to time why you got into music and into teaching? How often do you reflect upon the ways that you present content to students and why you present it in a certain way? This was an incredibly challenging year that caused us to shift the way we approached almost every aspect of our jobs. This summer can be a great time to truly reflect upon what we value as music teachers, why we do things a certain way, and whether our approach in the music classroom is the best we can offer for our students, or whether it is time to explore new ways of doing things.

I have gathered questions from texts, research, and my own experiences over the years for reflection activities in Music Education classes. Here are representative questions, some of them paraphrased, for you to consider as you reflect deeply upon your role as a Music Teacher. (I have also provided the references below):

- Why did you decide to become a music teacher?
- Do you think that you get along well with people—all kinds of people—even those who are different from yourself?
- Do you like children and young people, even when they don’t behave the way you would like them to?
- What are some of the characteristics of positive and negative models of teachers you remember?
- How did those characteristics of both positive and negative models of teachers impact your learning in the classroom?
- What personal characteristics or musical attributes do you possess that you perceive to be useful as a music teacher?
- What personal characteristics or musical attributes do you possess that you perceive to be areas for growth as a music teacher, and how do you plan to work on or seek assistance for those?
- What type of teacher do you hope to [be or] become?
- What type of teacher do you fear becoming?
- What should students learn about music and what specific musical experiences should students encounter?
- What types of music should students encounter?
- How should music be taught and how might the music content standards inform teachers’ curricular decisions?
- How will societal and technological changes influence the teaching of music?
- What image do you want to project as a music educator?
- What image do you want your music program to project to others (i.e., what is most important to you in your music program)?
- How would you draw your “ideal image” of a music teacher? How would you draw yourself as a music teacher?
- Think of a metaphor for teaching. You can finish the statement “Teaching is like…” or “As a teacher I will be like…”

I know that we all have summer plans and that teachers are often working on the next project, the next concert, or the next set of lessons for the fall. However, I hope that you will find a bit of space in your summer to take some deep breaths, examine your responses to these questions, and revisit why you chose this incredible calling that allows you to inspire young people through music. Perhaps as you rest and reflect, you will also restore your joy in teaching music, and return to school in the fall ready to share that joy with your students.

References for Reflection Questions:
- Dolloff, L. A. (2004). Evoking beliefs about music teaching and learning, GEMS (Gender, Education, Music, and Society), the on-line journal of GRA (Gender Research in Music Education), 7(5).
- Dr. Lori Gray is Associate Professor and Director of Music Education at Boise State University. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in Music Education and supervises student teachers. Lori joined the Boise State Music faculty in the Fall of 2017, after her position as Associate Professor of Music Education at the University of Montana. Prior to her experience in higher education, Lori taught in public and private PreK-12 schools in Texas, primarily as a general music specialist.

Dr. Lori Gray, Boise State University
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Percussion
Collegiate Feature—
Christopher Hess

1. Name: Christopher Hess
2. Current University: Boise State University
3. What year of study: Senior (Block 1 Teaching)
4. Major: Music Education
5. Graduated from what High School: Twin Falls Senior High School
6. Who was your High School director? Mr. Ted Hadley
7. How did you volunteer for IMEA/NAfME? During the 2020 IMEA In-Service Conference at Northwest Nazarene University, I presided over a panel hosted by Wendy and Phil Hartman called “You Got The Job, Now What?” .
8. How else have you volunteered as a student? There was a science competition hosted at Boise State for high school students during Spring 2020. My fellow NAfME officers and I hosted and judged the competition that involved creating musical instruments.
9. What is your dream job? Currently, my dream job would be to travel as a scholar. There are two different areas I have considered studying: Byzantine Liturgy particularly to recover music lost from the Iconoclastic Controversy, or Modern Metal Music Theory. The two are more related than they seem!
10. If you could be doing anything you wanted right now, what would it be? To be honest, I am doing most of what I want to do. I am gearing up to be a student teacher in the Fall and with luck, will have a teaching position right out of Uni. I still have dreams of being a famous metal guitarist and touring all over, however.

First Year Feature—
Shayla Lewis

Thoughts on my First Year of Teaching

Some people like to be prepared for everything while others leave everything up to chance. I used to think the latter was a poor mindset to be a successful teacher. I always felt comfortable improvising when I needed to, but admittedly was more at ease when I had everything figured out. Now, after my first year of teaching, I’ve welcomed spontaneity into my classroom. Since the beginning of this year, I felt as if I couldn’t plan more than one week ahead, knowing we could lose our two days a week in-person and go completely virtual at any time. This turned out to be the least of my worries.

Lesson plans needed to change at a moment’s notice, as I focused on making sure my students felt comfortable, not only with me as their new teacher, but also adapting to hybrid learning. I had to take time to talk about expectations for virtual learning days, troubleshoot Chromebooks and help my students with their accounts. Teaching bow holds was less stressful than making sure electronic practice logs were being turned in properly. Despite the fears, stressors, and challenges that COVID-19 created, I focused on the positives and forged ahead with my students. However, it was clear that we all were stretched thin and uncomfortable, and we had to learn how to be comfortable with being uncomfortable.

Mentor Feature—
Deborah Kovach

The Return of Obi-Wan Kenobi

Or… What’s behind your baton is more powerful than a light-saber

Long ago, in a Title IX high school far away… I tearfully retired from my banddirecting career and returned to Idaho. The last time I was a resident in this natural wonderland, it was 1977. I was leaving for Army Basic Training at Fort McClellan, Alabama, where my cohort dubbed me Obi-Wan, because of the similarity of my unmarried name to Obi Wan Kenobi, of the then-brand-new blockbuster film Star Wars.
Fast-forward to this month, (including multiple viewings of all things Star Wars) and my initial foray into the IMEA community as a Band Director Mentor. Dr. Neil Anderson (Conn-Selmer Institute Educational Clinician) led a cadre of us mentors via ZOOM through an overview of the pressing need for mentors and the differences between mentoring and coaching—coaching being more like the guidance one gets in student teaching and mentoring being more like having a series of reflective experiences with a trusted colleague.

But whatever FOR? Don’t first-year directors have enough on their plates without regular visits and discussions with someone outside their circle of normal contacts? If “current you” could visit “first-year-teacher you,” how would they answer? What if Luke Skywalker’s ONLY experience with the Force occurred while he was on Tatooine with Obi Wan Kenobi?

Student teaching in and of itself cannot possibly provide sufficient mentorship, personal support and direction to establish healthy roots for career music directors. Between that, the demands of teaching in a program that has no district-wide curriculum for your subject, no directly applicable support for your teaching situation, and a considerable demand for extracurricular activities, it is perhaps not surprising that 27% of music educators consider leaving the profession every single year, and by the end of their 5th year, 35% have indeed left for something else. Anderson’s statistics and the steady erosion of funding for the arts in schools and communities might suggest that our high-tech world doesn’t want or need us any more.

Not. So. Fast. Back to Tatooine…

Luke Skywalker stumbles into his relationship with disguised Jedi master Ben (Obi Wan) Kenobi, hiding out in his desert outpost to avoid discovery and execution by Imperial squadrons. But Kenobi is also there to keep protective watch from a distance on the impetuous Luke, who itches to escape the drudgery of desert life, and throw off the stranglehold of the Empire, waiting for the moment when the needs of the boy and the needs of the Jedi match up.

As the saga opens, Ben is forced prematurely to enlighten Luke about the Jedi and the ways of the Force. Plucked from certain death by Han the smuggler and his Wookie, the two barely escape the planet on a mission to rescue Princess Leia. The ensuing clash with Imperial forces gives Luke his first taste of using the Force to advance the Rebel cause and save innocent lives—except that of Ben, who sacrifices himself to enable their escape. Being a Jedi means giving your time, strength, intelligence, compassion, and empathy to develop skills to protect and empower other lives against dark shadows that threaten all that is good in life.

For me, as a young musician entering the military, there was a lot of soul resonance to that theme. My job was to use physical, military and musical training to contribute beauty, precision, decorum, skill, technique, patriotism, honor, camaraderie, respect, discipline, hard work and appropriate pageantry to mark serious and celebratory occasions. WHY? To bring people together, to mark serious and celebratory occasions. Why? To honor, camaraderie, respect, discipline, hard work and appropriate pageantry. What? To celebrate the grandeur of life.

As mentor for a band director, I still hear the voices of my high school, college and military band directors in my own mind, reminding me of phrases, techniques, or nuances to share. And that incomparable feeling when it all comes together perfectly. I have more to say, more to do. I wish I were 20 years younger to be able to pour myself out to 160 students every day…

And this is where you come in. There is an aspiring (maybe young, or perhaps not so much) teacher in your district or community who would love to benefit from hearing what you observe and to reflect on and discuss the questions you ask as a mentor. You will benefit from them as well. You might even strike up a friendship based on other interests (that’s healthy!). Let your WHY extend to your colleagues as well as to your proteges. There may not be a royal medal involved, but you will find it rewarding in surprising ways.

Check out Neil Anderson's presentation yourself using the link below. You may be inspired to become someone else’s Obi Wan, or to seek a Yoda of your own. Know that IMEA is here to help.

And…May the Force be with you!


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Sun Valley Music Festival
Music Institute

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**In the splendor of summer in Sun Valley, Idaho.**

[Image 1 to 144]
For Teachers & Students

GAMA schedules Teaching Guitar Workshops

New to teaching a guitar or ukulele class? Or perhaps you’ve been at it a few years and just want to hang with other guitar/uke teachers? The Teaching Guitar Workshop is a fantastically run event put on every summer by GAMA. Sign up for Virtual Workshops and learn best practices and tips from the comfort of your own home with virtual workshops or sign up for In-Person Workshops. Find information on 2021 workshops @ www.guitaredunet.org

Lionel Hampton Music Camp LiveStreaming June 21-24

Join us for an all-new streaming camp experience via YouTube Live. June 21-24, 2021. Lionel Hampton Music Camp is four days of fun and music making for high school and middle school instrumentalists and singers. All students will receive original arrangements of four different pieces for their instrument/voice, including the sheet music and a backing track recorded live at the camp.

Each morning will be an interactive musical experience streamed via YouTube Live, with performances, play along sessions with the faculty, rehearsals for your music, and more. Each student can also choose to sign up for optional lessons and lectures with the faculty in the afternoons. A professional development seminar will be concurrently available for music educators, led by the music education faculty of the LHSOM. Check out our website at www.uidaho.edu/lhmc for further updates!

Sun Valley Music Festival offers August Education Programs

In pursuit of its mission to instill a lifelong love of classical music in the community, the Festival supplements concerts with summer education programs through its Music Institute. Students in grades 2-12 can participate in programs for most orchestral instruments, voice, and piano August 2-6, 2021 while college undergraduates and exceptional high school students studying piano, strings, and voice can participate in the Advanced Chamber Program July 26-August 7, 2021. Participants hone their musical skills and work on performance pieces with Sun Valley Music Festival musicians, conductors, and guest artists – including Vadim Gluzman, Julia Bullock, and Joyce Yang – while also attending orchestra rehearsals. More information about the education programs, including registration, which is now open, can be found at https://www.svmusicfestival.org/summer-programs.

Idaho State University offers Summer Marching Band Leadership Workshop

SAVE THE DATE: Marching Band Leadership Workshop, July 6, 2021 - All Day - ISU Ballroom with Guest Clinician Steven Hendricks. The workshop is FREE for student leaders!

Contact Tom Kloss @ (208) 282-4626, klosthom@isu.edu

Bandology Summer Music Camps at Eagle High School June/July

Bandology Summer Music Camps for music students will be hosted at Eagle High School in Eagle, Idaho. 

Introductory Percussion Camp (6-12 Grade) – June 14-18
Marching Percussion Camp – June 21-25 - June 25th
Mallet Percussion Camp — June 28-July 2
Drum Major & Leadership Camp (Band/Choir/Orchestra) — July 6-9

Students who register now can receive a $25 early registration discount.
Woodwind & Brass Music Camp  
June 21-23 at Rocky Mountain High School, Meridian

Music Camps @ Wallowa Lake is happening this summer in four Northwest locations this summer, including Rocky Mountain High School in Meridian, Idaho! Visit the website for registration information: wlmusic-camps.org

Brass and Woodwind Students will have the opportunity to participate in a 3-day camp, hosted at Rocky Mountain High School, and receive intensive instruction from the musicians of the Oregon Symphony in small chamber groups culminating with performances on day three.

The camp is designed for any student in middle school or older who is looking for intimate and effective instruction from some of the leading performing musicians in the country. We will incorporate all of the current safety protocols to keep everyone healthy while you enjoy some fabulous music making!

The cost of the camp works out to about $10 an hour so this is value that is difficult to pass up. Please don’t hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. Quentin DeWitt, Instrumental Music Teacher, Rocky Mountain High School, 208-350-4340 x1601

Sponsor News

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Music shapes and influences young lives in a way that no other subject matter can. For over 45 years, Macie Publishing Company has been dedicated to partnering with music educators to instill a love of music in their students which enriches and brings great joy throughout their lives. We are dedicated to our core belief that “Music is for Everyone.”

Macie Publishing Company was founded in 1974 by a music educator, Ed Sueta. Early in his teaching career, Ed believed that there was a better way to teach young students than with the available materials. He began his life’s work of creating student-friendly, sequential curriculum materials that would better serve his students and nurture and promote their success.

In response to anyone who claimed to “just not be musical,” he would respond that “everyone is musical—it is just a matter of showing them how to bring it out.” His children, Julie and Ed, Jr., have worked with Macie for over 30 years and are committed to continue his work and vision. Macie contributes to organizations such as Recorders without Borders as well as to missions that have brought music teachers to the Dominican Republic, Uganda, Haiti, El Salvador, Cuba and Kenya. Macie just established a series of “Music is for Everyone” educational grants in Ed’s memory for economically disadvantaged schools and budget challenged districts in the U.S.

Ed’s work is also continued by the company’s clinicians (with whom he worked closely), who have shared their expertise at hundreds of state and national music conferences, workshops and professional development sessions throughout the United States.

Macie is totally dedicated to providing the highest level of personalized, friendly service. Our customers are the cornerstone of everything we do. The ultimate measure of our success is the success and satisfaction of the teachers and students we serve. It is truly our honor and privilege.

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SEE THE MACIE PUBLISHING AD ON PAGE 24...

Becky Chaffee & Music Teacher Gifts Special Offer

Becky Chaffee has a special spring offer to music teachers to purchase a minimum of 5 books, and get half off using the coupon code of TEACHER on my website: www.MusicTeacherGifts.com.

Becky reports, “As soon as I made this offer two weeks ago, there were several immediate orders. I received an email from a teacher in Illinois that said, ‘I love your book! Finding motivation to practice is always a challenge. I tell students to try playing in the bathroom because the sound reverberates more which can make them sound better. You have some creative ideas for making practice more fun! I’ll try to get this book into each of my schools.’

“Last week, a parent purchased this book and sent it to her school teacher as a gift. I got this email from the teacher: ‘Your book is absolute perfection. The children laughed, praised, smiled, clapped, oooo-ed, and awww-ed in joyous approval! These children are third grade students. You know it’s 5-star quality when children can’t get enough! Thank you, thank you, Mrs. Chaffee! You should win all the children’s book awards the world has to offer for creating such a fresh concept of a book!’

“In addition, she asked me to consider making another book in this series for world music, and said the students want to make a video about the book! She even sent me several photos of her class with permission to use them! I have attached two.

“The book is available on Amazon. If a teacher wants a complete look through the book before ordering, email me at Becky@MusicTeacher-Gifts.com” Sincerely, Becky Chaffee, amazon.com/author/beckychaffee MusicTeacherGifts.com, Knoxville TN, 865-850-9220

Idaho Fundraising Inc News

There have been a lot of changes in the school fundraising industry lately but over the last year, the changes drastically improved the way we raise money. Idaho Schools are now provided options where fundraisers run online, products ship directly to our supporters nationwide and all recordkeeping is done virtually.

Why is this great? Because it made fundraising easier and more accessible for you, me, students, parents, and our supporters. Next year 21-22, music departments can run 100% online and not touch a dime. I’m also in the process of testing my own software that allows groups to run a donation campaign and retain 100% of the funds. Grandma’s $100 = $100 to your program. Thanks, Greg Betts, 208 371-6924

Worlds’ Finest Chocolate - Cherrydale Fundraising - and more
I was recently reminded just how much we do with and for our music students changes them emotionally. Our time together makes an indelible thumb print on their lives. Indelible. Emotional. Permanent.

For those of us who teach older students, primarily high school and college-age, this is particularly relevant and important. The music that we select to share with our students can reach them emotionally like nothing else. For some, the time they share in your classroom, playing great music, changes them forever.

Some of you already know what I am going to say, yet others never shared a rehearsal hall playing with, and for, an outstanding musician-teacher. Please allow me to share some insight from my morning commute today.

This morning I was driving to work in the wee hours when I realized I was quite tired of listening to the same talk-radio/pollitical schlock coming through my car's speakers. I managed to reach over to punch "play" on my CD player, not really aware of what I might have left in the player. Instantly, out came "Nimrod," from Elgar's Enigma Variations, played by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Wind Ensemble, from the Whirr (2002) CD.

I had played the well-known orchestra war-horse in 1975 when I was a clarinetist in the Swayne Symphony, at the Swayne Summer Music Festival in Swayne, Tennessee and it was instantly my favorite piece of all the orchestral literature we covered throughout that long summer session. I just fell in love with the "Nimrod" movement and could not keep the melody out of my mind.

Reflecting on that amazing summer, I remembered just how much my time at Swayne changed me both musically and emotionally. When we played Nimrod on that last concert, emotions got the better of me and out came the tears. As I am sure you can imagine, playing very exposed clarinet solos, with a king-sized lump in your throat, is precarious, at best. I still do not know how I got through that performance. Music's just like that.

As an undergraduate student at Transylvania University in Lexington, KY, I played my last two years in the Transylvania University Wind Ensemble under the tutelage of Dr. Peter Martin, now Professor Emeritus, Director of Bands, from the University of Southern Maine. Dr. Martin replaced a well-meaning director who did not focus so much on teaching but more on playing as much repertoire possible per semester.

Dr. Martin’s focus was more on choosing music that would challenge and grow our musicianship and, yet, still provide all of the “feel-goods” that come from performing beautiful, challenging repertoire. Our wind ensemble was small, yet he made connections in the Lexington music community, crossing paths with faculty and students across town at the University of Kentucky School of Music, to fill out sections and provide his students the most authentic, exceptional music making experiences.

Dr. Martin programmed, "Blessed Are They," from the Brahms Requiem, arranged by Barbara Buelhman, on one of our first concerts together. While not technically challenging, the exceptionally long, slow phrases and the demands for dynamic contrast and control were nearly overwhelming to this very musically immature undergraduate music major. Playing “Blessed Are They” made a huge impact on me emotionally, while also teaching me about how to play and teach the art of shaping phrases.

Dr. Martin was the first person to teach me how and why the repertoire that we choose for our students is the most important aspect of teaching music. After all, making great music grabs our hearts. It's like that.

Fast-forward to 2002, my last semester in my master’s degree program, when I got to play a wind band arrangement of The Enigma Variations, under the direction of Dr. John R. Locke, Professor Emeritus, Director of Bands, at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Mind you, I was an ancient artifact among the bright young faces in that incredible ensemble; but, nonetheless, I felt like I was a part of something so much bigger than myself. For me, just being able to play in Dr. Locke's wind ensemble was overwhelming. Sitting on the first row in the clarinet section, playing the first part, was utterly electrifying. Playing Nimrod again was an experience I will never forget. NEVER. And, of course, once again, I was a blubbering, sobbing mess. Music's just like that.

Recently, I was sharing my Nimrod emotional flashback experience with some of my 1969-1972 Daviess County High School (KY) band-member friends on Facebook. I posted a US Marine Band YouTube recording of Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral, on my Facebook page. “Elisa” was our “slow” contest piece at the spring KMEA 1972 concert band festival in Madisonville, KY. Despite being 49 years ago, we all - without exception – remembered unique details and emotions from our performance and all spoke both about how the piece changed us on a deeply emotional level and how hearing the piece again took us back to the 1972 contest venue and the emotions of performing a beautiful, yet incredibly difficult work in the grade 6 standard repertoire. We will never forget that, when the last note faded to silence, nobody moved. We were overwhelmed. The audience was pinned to their seats. Some had tears. It was dead quiet for at least 30 seconds after the last chord faded to silence and until our parents jumped up and burst into applause. Music, you know, it’s like that.

My goal in sharing these thoughts is multi-faceted. First, I want you to stop what you are doing and realize that even in this upside-down, pandemic-focused school environment, what you do matters. Actually, now it matters more than it ever has. I know so many of you and I know how hard you try to give your students memories that will last 50 years like my teachers did. We will get through this and you will always come through emotionally engage your students.

I would be willing to bet that, if you were to ask your students which music brings them emotional memories of their time in your classroom, you would be amazed at how many will immediately name playing or singing a piece that you considered inconsequential, when they, however, were emotionally uplifted because you selected and chose to teach and share wonderful repertoire with them. The challenges and emotions invested in a great performance demand our hearts and souls. All of us. Students and teachers, alike. During this pandemic, when most of us are doing all that we can just to keep our programs not only alive, but vibrant, please grasp and hold onto the knowledge that you all leave indelible, emotional thumb prints on your students that last a lifetime. What you do matters to your students.

A couple of weeks ago, I was talking to my eighth-grade band students about my Nimrod experience. Without exception, they all smiled and shared their own thoughts about our performance at contest last year. My drum major and clarinet section leader shared, “Those lights came up, Dr. E walked out, and it was ‘show time.’ I’ll never forget it! We all knew our music; we played well, and we received our second superior rating. I will always remember that music and that experience.” Looking into the future to my eventual retirement from teaching music, it occurred to me that all the superior ratings in the world are essentially meaningless when compared to the emotional experiences our students have when they are a part of something much bigger than themselves and are emotionally changed by playing great repertoire with us. I’m so glad that music's just like that!
Honestly what I appreciate the most about NNU is the opportunities it gives you. If I went to a state school... I would have never been given some of the opportunities I have. NNU has given me the opportunity to be in leadership and to start a pep band. This has helped me decide what I’d like to do with my degree.”

Raven Mathison, Music Education major
Mounting a Musical During the Pandemic!

by Penny Prince, December, 2020

As 2020 finally fades away into the history books, we can all take stock of the different ways we’ve learned to live since the onset of the pandemic. For me, that includes my creative and professional life as a composer and professor of music. Little did I know I would become a Zoom aficionado, laboring at the computer 6-8 hours daily to produce my musical!

Since 2003, when I began teaching full time at Lehman College, City University of New York, I’ve been composing and producing collaborative musicals every year. For 20 years before then, I’d composed and directed original musicals at New York City schools, temples, museums, and nursing homes.

My process: compose a score based on a book, a holiday, a fairy tale or a chapter of history; audition students, alumni, staff and community members; assemble a creative team of choreographers, artists, projectionists, lighting, prop and graphic designers, costumers, and stage crew; meet weekly, co-write the script with the casts; advertise, and present the play. In January, 2020, the process was set to begin once again. The chosen material was “Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet,” based on a popular 1954 children’s classic by Eleanor Cameron, and a play by my friend, Jeffrey Beer. (In 2000, Jeffrey and I had collaborated on a musical version of this sci-fi adventure story about two children who respond to an ad in the paper for “an adventure and chance to do something good. Please bring your (spac)ship as soon as possible to Mr. Tyco Bass...”) Now, with several new songs and arrangements, and a new script, I planned to produce this play at Lehman College in May, 2020.

Casting About

The cast we assembled was promising: a sparkling alumna who had been in our Rapunzel’17 production, Krystal Ortiz (Dee Topman); and several new Lehman students including the talented Cristal Sosa (Maybe), Kevin Patino (Shiitake), and Ana Y. Garcia Herrera (Mischa); two community members, and two Lehman alumni. In mid-January, we were ready to begin. We spent the first weeks practicing the ten songs and discussing characters and dialogue. By March 5, we had penned our 6th draft and were beginning to add choreography.

Then COVID struck. The college shut its physical doors, and we had no idea how long it would be until it was safe to return. Since our cast had developed such a good working relationship, we were eager to go ahead with the play someday, so we continued meeting via Zoom, every two weeks. At first, nearly everyone came to the meetings, but by May, some felt they just could not continue. Two actors were overwhelmed with all their online meetings and classes and sorrowfully dropped out; one member and her parent tested positive for covid, but bravely remained in our cast and attended whenever she could; one actor had flown to North Carolina to be with his ailing mother and now was stranded there for the foreseeable future. Several members were experiencing anxiety and sleeplessness and felt they had to opt out. But by June, the small, hardy band of us who wanted to continue resolved we would carry on with a wholly online production: the show must go on.

I contacted Eduardo Resendiz-Gomez who became a shining light in our work. Eduardo is a graduate of Lehman College who has assisted me over the years as actor, writer, projectionist, advisor, lighting engineer. He has been amassing multiple skills and now composes, photographs, records and produces events himself. He signed on as our Technical Director. Our masterful recording engineer at the college, Steve Buonanotte, agreed to work with us, and we enlisted a recent graduate and talented animator, Brandon Marcano, to create animations for the travel-in-space scenes. Our enthusiastic stage crew, Chris Leon and Gregory Reyes, came on board. My friend, Norman Schwab, who constructs sets for Broadway productions, agreed to build us a spaceship! Now our creative team was set.

The next challenge was to fill the roles of members who had dropped out. I reached out to Spencer Grey who had gone to North Carolina. Sadly, his mother had passed away, but now he was ready to come back to New York and was eager to throw himself into creative work. He returned triumphantly as Mr. Bass. Spence introduced me to a wonderful singer who would become our chicken, Mrs. Pennyfeather, who goes to the Mushroom Planet with the children, (more about the chicken role later), I called upon Robert Ellsworth Feng, who had shone brightly as the King in our Rumpelstiltskin play last year. He hoped to join this cast earlier but his graduation from Manhattan School of Music was scheduled for the same day as our live May performance. Now he was headed to quarantine in Hawaii, so he gladly signed on as the King of the Mushrooms. (Since Robert has such a magnificent basso voice, I decided to compose a new song for King Ta.) Robert introduced me to the marvelous mezzo-soprano, Taylor-Alexis DuPont, fresh from Lincoln Center’s Porgy and Bess production, and she agreed to be our Ms. Topman, mother of one of the space-bound children. We still needed two talented actors, and I wondered if Damaris M. Richardson would consider a role. Damaris had been in four of our previous productions, including Cinderella ‘08, but had since moved out of state, so she hadn’t auditioned for this play. Now that all rehearsals would be conducted online, she was thrilled to join us as Maybe Not, a Mushroom. Colette Ambo, another brilliant veteran of our plays who acted as Daniel in Daniel in the Lions’ Den, and JoAnn Robinson in When I Get to Where I’m Going ‘18, had been too busy between jobs and roles to audition, but now she was happy to participate as Matsutake and as our choreographer. Cristal Sosa gamely accepted a second role as Velcro, Mr. Bass’ ground crew. Now we had our dream cast of ten.

Zooming Ahead

One order of business we had to accomplish right away was to ensure that each cast member had two working devices: a laptop for Zooming cues, and a cell phone for filming himself/herself, with all the necessary wires, cables and ear pods. I purchased whatever was needed. (Thank goodness for the United States Postal Service.) Next, we had to construct or purchase props: a giant paper mache egg which Chris created, a scientific journal with the ad which Gregory designed, the spaceship which Norman hand delivered, two leis which Robert sent from Hawaii, a roll of velcro for the Velcro character, a telescope for Mr. Bass, among them. Since each character was responsible for his/her own costume, we discussed, planned, sewed and ordered mushroom caps, wigs, a lab coat, crown, bow ties, and a glamorous chicken get up. Done!

From June through July, we continued to meet every Thursday evening for three-plus hours to tweak the script: we proclaimed it complete at 16 drafts! We rehearsed the lines at these sessions, but we found singing impossible to synchronize on Zoom, so instead, I met with each actor for several hours of one-on-one singing rehearsals, weekly. Colette devised choreography, posted it on Dropbox, and conducted rehearsals with groups of 4-5 for the two big dance numbers. Steve and I met at
Lehman (after filling out loads of paperwork, testing, and having our temperatures taken, we returned to our beloved campus for the first time in 4 months), and recorded the 10 piano tracks. Next, Steve sent the tracks to the cast and each member was responsible for recording her/himself and submitting the takes on Dropbox. Once the mixes were ready, we would begin filming, but this necessitated that each actor was in costume with all props, good lighting, sound conditions, and a functioning camera. Eduardo coordinat-ed all of this with calmness and good humor.

Meanwhile, life went on: one cast member suffered a car accident, one was moving to a new apartment, two had resumed working at outside jobs, one was heading to another lo-cation to join an opera company, several were enrolled in online summer courses at Lehman. Yet, we managed to accomplish the filming. Eduardo, the stage crew, and I scheduled film-ing sessions for each scene until we managed to capture every line of dialogue. Whew!

Showtime

By August, we were in the final stages of production, when we were faced with a huge dilemma. Our Mrs. Pennyfeather was missing in action! She had recorded and submitted her vocal tracks, but none of her speaking parts. No matter how we tried: house calls, emails, texts, we were not able to reach her. This was a major problem and Steve and Eduardo and I were brainstorming a solution. I asked another member of the cast if she would consider taking on the role, and she was willing, although it would mean learning all the lines and songs, recording/filming herself and creating a costume all in two days.

Finally, Steve said, “Why don’t we animate the chicken?” This was an ingenious suggestion and we decided to go ahead with it. We now have an animated Mrs. Pennyfeather! (We subsequently discovered that the actress is all right.) Steve, Eduardo and I met at the Lehman Media Studio several long days, and edited the myriad clips. We pre-pared a cast CD, advertised on social media, and received a YouTube air date for September 22, 2020. Since then, we have happily garnered over 970 hits on YouTube, and our show is being broadcast on Bronx-net Television and streamed worldwide. It has become a great success.

I remember how years ago I used to laugh at people walking around with cellphones. I would say I didn’t want to be dependent on devices the way they were. I grudgingly purchased my first computer only when my daughters’ teachers demanded that every student have one. Now, here I was teaching, directing, rehearsing wholly online, and actually enjoying it. I’ve gotten to know my cast members more deeply, this time, than I probably ever would have at once a week group rehearsals at school, and I relish these one-on-one zoom rehearsals. I am moved by the sharing of experiences and friendship at our meetings. Several cast members expressed that these sessions were the highlights of their week, helping them fight depression and loneliness. I am delighted how the actors have brought brilliance and savvy to their acting, dancing, singing, and computer technology. We are ecstatic to share a fully realized production of Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet with the world! Tune in!

For information, please contact Penny.Prince@lehman.cuny.edu

Dr. Penny Prince is an Associate Professor of Music at Lehman College, City University of New York. She holds degrees from the Manhattan School of Music and NYU Steinhardt School of Education. In addition to composing and directing the Collaborative Musical Theatre project at Lehman, her main interests include the training of pre-service music teachers, and Reentry@Lehman, a committee she founded to welcome and support students who have been impacted by the criminal justice system. Her next online musical will be CINDERELLA ’21. You may contact Penny at Penny.Prince@lehman.cuny.edu
Learn more about auditions, programs, and scholarships at music.byu.edu or 801-422-2660.
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ALL-STATE 2022

PERFORMING GROUPS

April 1, 2021  Group Performance Applications
Open
October 1, 2021  Group Performance Applications
Close
October 15, 2021  Group Performance Application
Screening Completed
October 18, 2021  Accepted Performance Groups
Notified

ALL-STATE HONOR GROUPS

May 3, 2021  All-State Audition
Information posted
August 23, 2021  Online Audition Registration
Open
October 8, 2021  Audition Deadline
October 22, 2021  Notification of accepted
students
November 19, 2021  Registration and Payments Due

December 10, 2021  Music Mailed
February 2, 2022  Check-in/Sectionals/Part Checks
February 3-5, 2022  All-State Rehearsals &
Performances

INTO THE FUTURE...

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2021 - Virtual, April 30-May 1
2022 - Idaho State University, May 6-7
2023 - Mountain View HS, May 5-6
2024 - Post Falls HS, May 3-4
2025 - Mountain View HS, May 2-3
2026 - Idaho State University, May 1-2

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2022 - Feb 3, 4, 5  NNU
2023 - Feb 2, 3, 4  ISU / All-NW Year
2024 - Feb 1, 2, 3  NNU
2025 - Jan 30, 31, Feb 1  NIC / All-NW Year
2026 - Feb 5, 6, 7  NNU
2027 - Feb 4, 5, 6  ISU / All-NW Year
2028 - Feb 3, 4, 5  NNU
2029 - Feb 1, 2, 3  NIC / All-NW Year

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