

Clinic and Luncheon 1999

by Faith Farr

About 40 teachers enjoyed camaraderie, fabulous speakers, lunch and our annual awards presentation at the MNSOTA clinic and luncheon in October. As the first event planned and presented by our newly unified organization, the clinic and luncheon was a great success. The fall date allows us to offer string sessions when the teacher convention does not, and leaves members without conflicts during the MEA convention in February. Plan now to come next year — Thursday of MMEA weekend next fall.

Towards String Mastery

Sarah Hersh stimulated us with a pot pourri of ideas for beginning and intermediate players, and especially some great ideas for classes with students at different levels. A tiny sampling from her eight page handout:

A teeny beanie will sit on the scroll of a violin or viola to encourage that horizontal instrument hold. If you sag, the beanie will fall! While listening to

Squishy cat toys can be used to help form the round shape of the upper strings left hand.

Have a “smiling” right thumb. Choose the deepest crease on your thumb joint and use a pen to draw a smile there; add two eyes above for a delightfully friendly effect. As long as your thumb is nicely bent on your bow, you can see the smile. If your thumb straightens out, the smile will disappear or change into a frown!

The image displays six staves of musical notation for the piece 'Bile Them Cabbage'. The first two staves show a basic melody in G major (one sharp) with a common time signature. The third and fourth staves illustrate double stop techniques, with notes from different strings played simultaneously. The fifth and sixth staves demonstrate string crossing techniques, where the hand moves between strings to play notes that are not adjacent on the fingerboard.

Bile Them Cabbage

Basic, Double Stop and String Crossing Versions

others play, beginners might just hold the instrument and see if they can keep the beanie up until the end of the song.

“The frog is light” will help avoid crunches on bow circles.

“Tuck a message into the music.” i.e.



Dr. Sarah Hersh

Don't just play the notes, tell a story! Be angry or a tired turtle. The teacher can guess what the student's message is.


Scales taught by tetrachord — 4 notes (e.g. 1 - 2 - 3, 4), then the next 4 notes in the same pattern — can be transposed to any position.

Perform scales like a solo without piano to set the tonal center.

Audiate, think ahead, “visualize in sound.”

Use *Bile them Cabbage* as a multi-level piece. Beginners play just the single note melody; more advanced players can try the double stops; even more advanced players can add the string crossings. Transpose down a whole step if you want to work on low 2.

Simple tunes that are multi cultural: *Moon Over the Ruined Castle* by Taki, published in the Suzuki Cello and Suzuki Flute books; *Yonder Come Day* (“Yonder come day / Day is a-breakin' / Yonder come day / Oh my soul”) sounds snappy with a conga rhythm open string pizzicato accompaniment; *Engelska Från Småland*, a Swedish folk tune arranged by Sven Sjogren, needs low 2 in the first violin and high 3 in the second violin, but uses

only open strings in the Suzuki rhythm  for third violin.

Bill Dick and Laurie Scott in the Austin TX public schools have developed a Mastery Approach for school use. Students

lead to mastery. For example, there may be 24 steps in vibrato development from doing a single finger at one vibration per second (quarter = 60) up to doing all fingers with 4 wiggles per metronome

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Prelude to the Future

Jan Weller got us all thinking about how we prepare and encourage our serious students for college study.

Should we encourage students to major in music? Jan says “yes, if...”: if we make sure we mix a dose of reality with the students’ dreams; if we prepare the students well — including theory, ear training and piano proficiency with their high school performance training; and if the students clearly have a passion for music — they practice, they go to concerts and they can’t imagine doing anything else.

Jan recognized that students who love music but don’t want to major in it are preparing to be life-long musicians, players in community orchestras. Music can be a scholarship opportunity for non-majors going to a smaller college eager to have students fill out the orchestra. An undergrad music degree at a smaller college can be an excellent major for pre-med students or those interested in general liberal arts. Employers know that music students show discipline over the long haul through practice and hard work.

To help students plan, prepare and consider their career options, Jan has written a 40-page workbook, *Bowing for Dollars*, packed full of information and self-evaluation tasks. Because music is evolving so quickly, students need to be aware of changing roles and new challenges for the future. Since most musicians do many jobs simultaneously, students need to know the multi-faceted aspects of our work and need to build their music administration skills too. Students need to be aware of areas of music other than orchestral performance, school and private teaching. Music Therapy, for example, is a growing field and the program from UW Oshkosh has 100% placement rate for its graduates. Students need to be technologically literate to be able to use an amp on a gig, to use mics and a mixer to make a recording for students, and to use computer programs in music notation, accompaniment or theory.

I can think of no better way to summarize Jan’s book than to quote her introduction. This workbook a great resource for you and your students. Copies can be obtained from Jan Weller, MacPhail Center

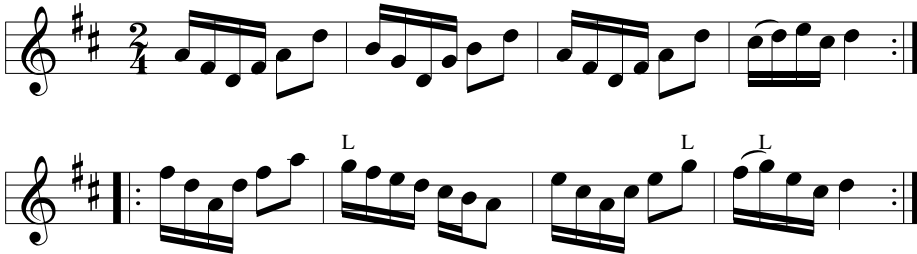


Yonder Come Day

in grades 6 through 9 have lessons with about 12 in a group plus orchestra. Each student gets all the parts in their own clef — so the violinists have the violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello and bass parts all in treble clef. There may be dozens of things each student must master — these

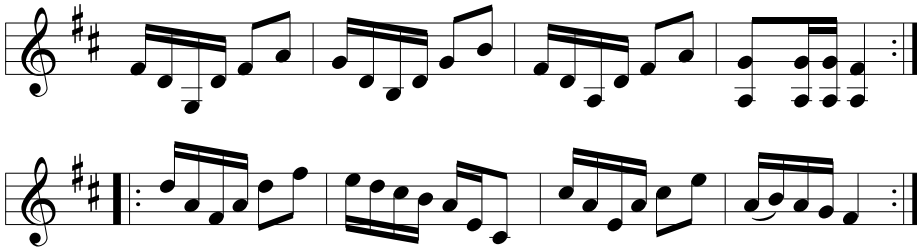
click at a specified speed. One of the many steps in the Fingerboard Geography sequence is saying the names of the open string and finger 1 on each string. To contact Dr. Laurie Scott about a book that is in the works, use her e-mail address: LPSYoung@aol.com.

Violin 1



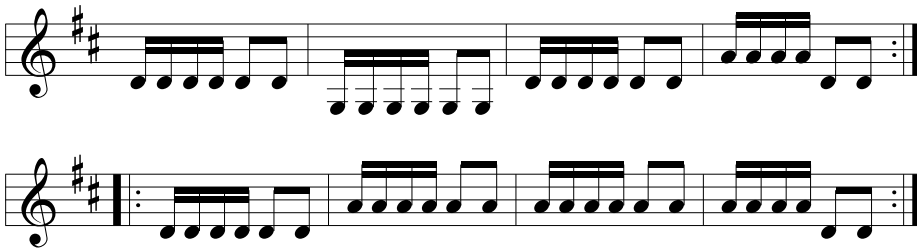
da capo con repris

Violin 2



da capo con repris

Violin 3



da capo con repris

Engelska Från Småland, arranged by Sven Sjogren

are ultra tiny steps in a continuum that

To get a copy of Sarah’s handout,



Janis Weller

for the Arts, 1128 La Salle Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55430, 612-321-0100, jweller@macphail.org. The cost is a \$7 donation to the MacPhail financial aid fund.

Bowing for Dollar\$, Exploring Careers in Music — Introduction

As a high school student and even in college, it can be unsettling and maybe downright impossible to decide what sort of work you might want to do in the future. While these are not decisions

cast in stone at this point in your life, it is definitely time to start the process. This brief workbook is designed to help you begin to explore the possibilities of a college major in music and the variety of careers that could follow.

The College Search starts with skills to develop *before* you get to college, and a series of questions to get you thinking about your college preferences. Should you major in music? A fascinating variety of opinions will give you lots to think about. Audition tips round out this section.

101 Careers in Music explores dozens of different careers related to the music field. Some are very traditional (orchestral musician, teacher, band leader), others may surprise you (entertainment law, music medicine, luthier). The enclosed questionnaires will help you think about educational options and learn more about yourself. Lists of music careers along with some detailed profiles show a sampling of the possibilities that exist.

Preparing for a Career in Music — Getting Started Now gives straightforward suggestions of ways you can develop your skills and interests and

gain some hands-on experience — in short, ideas you can use to get a head start on your music career while you are still a student.

The book concludes with resources — both print and electronic — for you to continue your research and exploration.

Music is an extremely demanding and competitive field. This is equally true while you are in school and later as a career choice. Music is also extraordinarily rewarding, with many diverse and intriguing opportunities that will challenge you personally, artistically and intellectually whether or not music becomes your full-time vocation. Either way, making music can be a lifelong passion. Best wishes in your discovery and growth!

Janis Weller
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(Reprinted with permission.)

Faith Farr teaches cello at MacPhail Center for the Arts and at her home studio in St. Paul. She received the Master Teacher Award from MN ASTA in 1996. She is a member of the MN-SOTA board and serves as editor for this magazine. ‡