



MENTOR'S DESK

Mentoring at the Upper Midwest String and Chamber Music Conference

by Jane Linde Capistran

The Upper Midwest String and Chamber Music Conference (UMSCMC), held July 18-23 at The College of St. Benedict, proved to be a successful week of learning and music making—not just for the campers, but for the interns as well. If you remember from my article after last year's session, I gave an account of the interns' experience. Now I will share with you from the mentors themselves, including myself, what a rewarding experience it is to be in a mentorship role.

The faculty of UMSCMC have specific roles during the week, but we all team together in providing our college interns experience with observing, teaching, coaching, performing, presenting and having fun! Mary Budd Horozaniecki, Professor of Violin at Augsburg, Macalester and Carleton, is a founding faculty member of the camp. One of her former students, Karen Moon, was the first intern to be part of the camp. Karen Moon is now the

coordinator of chamber music for the week. Faith Farr, current cello faculty, developed the chamber music component in 1993. Additional faculty include David Arnott, camp director and conductor, Mary Sorlie, conductor, Sarah Hersh, violin, Mark Kausch, bass and myself on the viola.

As the camp has evolved from its beginnings in 1977-78, so has the pool of interns. Our interns are all string players, many of them music education or performance majors. The students who are counselors are also string players and get many of the opportunities that the teaching interns have as well. This year the interns were from Carleton College, Concordia College-Moorhead, University of Wisconsin-Madison, St. John's University, The College of St. Benedict, Bethel University and Augsburg

College.

Faculty and Interns Meet

Our first evening together is a wonderful meal in the Gorecki Center, followed by a faculty/staff orchestra rehearsal. This year Mary Horozaniecki was the soloist in Vivaldi's *Summer*, under Mary Sorlie's baton. David Arnott had also selected the *Capriol Suite*, Dvorak's *Serenade* and Leroy



Intern Martin Granick coaching a student at Upper Midwest

Anderson's *Fiddle Faddle*. Intern Joanna Cochenet conducted the Warlock, and received feedback and support from the faculty. The orchestra is a great way to sit side-by-side and share with the interns. The next morning we had one final rehearsal before the campers arrived.

Mentoring Begins

Campers arrived on Sunday afternoon, and this is the start of our mentoring, as each intern is paired with a faculty member to listen and evaluate the students' playing. The process is valuable, as we can give the interns ideas of how to pace the audition and what to look/listen for in the camper's playing. They also observe the orchestra placement process, which many of them will have to do when they have their own

orchestra program.

Our interaction with the interns is now on full tilt as the week starts. This year, the interns had a rotation schedule, which allowed them to observe all of the faculty members. The drawback was that the hands-on teaching was a bit more limited. Nonetheless, they still had the opportunity to work with the students in the technique classes, sectionals and chamber coaching.

We as mentors are privileged to guide and assess their work with the students, answer questions that may arise while they are on task, give them secondary instrument experiences and *encourage them* along the way.

Chamber Music

The afternoon chamber music sessions are incredible to be a part of—not just to hear the campers' progress, but to see the enthusiasm and excitement driven by the intern/counselor coaches as they connect with the quartets

and figure out what needs to be done and how to articulate it. A faculty member and intern are assigned two ensembles for the five days of camp, and the process of the rehearsing is just as powerful as the performance. As mentors, we touch base with the interns to make sure that strategies are accomplished and if problems arise, how to handle them. On the day of the concert, the interns are much like proud parents! Not only do we see the progress in the campers, but we as mentors have witnessed the interns' growth and confidence.

Pedagogy Presentations

A unique offering of UMSCMC is the afternoon presentation by the faculty for the interns and counselors. Faith Farr has kept a record of the topics covered in the

last five years:

- Renaissance instruments—the viol
- Brief history of the bass
- Introduction to bluegrass fiddling
- The 500 hats of the string teacher
- Life beyond Kreutzer—etude sequence for advancing violinists
- Getting started in alternative styles—resources for teaching jazz, improv, folk, fiddling and mariachi
- Rhythmic-ship and muscle-ship for musicianship (from the Baroque to Jazz)
- Heterogeneous string class for grade school beginners
- Teaching National Standards 8 & 9 in the string classroom: presenting the connection of music to the other arts and disciplines, to history and culture
- Preparing to teach all the elements of a studio lesson: warm-ups, scales, etudes, repertoire
- Developing core bow strokes into musical motions
- Sequenced steps towards artistry with the instrument
- Resources for studio teachers: graded repertoire lists and how to use them
- Matching repertoire to students; assessing the challenges in new pieces

- Accessories—choosing and fitting a chin rest and shoulder pad
- How to use Sevcik effectively
- Teaching Sevcik in the orchestral setting
- Tuning—how to do it on instruments you don't play; how to teach it
- “Big Bach” or “Baroque Bach”? Adapting the modern instrument to Baroque style
- Our inspirational heritage—artists from the past (videos and discussion of master classes presented by Gingold, Casals and others)
- All about beginners—basic set-up for violin, viola, cello and bass. Common principles and differences; coaching instruments you don't play
- Classroom management techniques
- Wiggles and pings (vibrato)
- Teaching improvisation without blues or jazz
- Overview of double bass methods
- Pedagogy resources: texts, magazines, conferences, associations

Mary Budd Horozaniecki envisions a dream model of holding the pedagogy conference portion a few days before the campers come on board, thus dividing the lecture/presentation portion and the practicum portion of

the curriculum offered to the interns.

The Art of Mentoring

As I traveled home from the camp, my college student Sadie Ellingson rode with me, and we talked nonstop about the week's experiences. She was bursting with excitement about meeting such wonderful intern colleagues, observing, teaching, coaching, and truly being immersed in music education in a hands-on way. What struck me was that being a mentor allows you to receive.

You know the commercial:

“Trip to Orchestra Hall – \$600”

“A new violin case – \$1,000”

“Mentoring a Student – Priceless”.

Jane Linde Capistran teaches studio violin and viola and conducts the Symphonia Chamber Orchestra at Concordia College in Moorhead. She is also the conductor of the Fargo-Moorhead Area Senior High Youth Symphony and is the Assistant Concertmaster and Associate Conductor of the FM Symphony. She was the 2005 recipient of the MNSOTA Master Studio Teacher Award and the North Dakota String Teacher of the Year in 2007. She serves on the MNSOTA Board as Mentorship Advisor. Thanks to Mary Budd Horozaniecki, Faith Farr and Mary Sorlie for contributing to this article. ♪