

impromptu

ARMTA Calgary Branch

Member Newsletter ■ February 2022

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



RACHEL MCLELLAN



I don't know about you, but these past few months have been harder than expected for me and my family. At the risk of sounding preachy, it is in times like these that community matters the most. I myself am trying to use all the community support for my studio that I can, whether that is having my students participate in local festivals, borrowing music books from the library, or asking my fellow teachers for advice with specific situations. 'Many hands make light work' and 'it takes a village' have been the aphorisms guiding me into this new year.

Whether you are teaching online or in person, whether your studio is growing or not, whether this finds you in sickness or in health, I truly hope all of you can find a sense of connection to the larger community behind this organization.

In this issue of Impromptu, you will find some inspiring and thoughtful articles, a celebration of the ACRA winners and OSR applicants, and more. We hope you enjoy the hard work our volunteers have put into this issue. If it inspires you, feel free to submit an article of your own for our next Impromptu in the fall!

Well, 2022, let's see what you have in store for us. I am sure

that no matter what happens, we all can come together and help each other celebrate the good things and move through tough times.

Wishing you all good health and happy days. ■



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GREETING FROM THE BRANCH CHAIR



I have great confidence that most of our membership (who are able) are vaccinated and wear masks. I believe most of us know someone who is not vaccinated or does not wear a mask. This someone may be a family member, a neighbour, a student, a colleague, someone in our faith community, or any person we respect and care about. We may or may not know why, and we may agree or have some sympathy for their position.

In many circles the whole subject has become very divisive.

I want to encourage everyone to consider how to support others. I know I need to maintain my own beliefs and pay attention to my

... Words and actions that feel like a personal attack, cause anger and close doors. That kind of hurt and those closed doors are hard to open.

own safety and comfort level as I encounter other people. But in order to avoid ugly confrontations and divisiveness, and in order to maintain positive relationships, I also need to remain respectful and persist with an attitude of care and kindness. Words and actions that feel like a personal attack, cause anger and close doors. That kind of hurt and those closed doors are hard to open.

My personal experience is that the “others” are also intelligent, thoughtful, demonstrate kindness, and provide value to community. I want to keep doors open. I want to interact with others who are kind and who build community.

I am no longer teaching, so I am not faced with day to day issues with students and their families, or with rules and recommendations from government and health officials.

From when I was teaching, I think about the tools I used to manage my studio:

- my studio policy including criteria for accepting students (keeping in mind our code of ethics)
- selection of teaching space and how to organize it
- determine how many students, how much time between students, whether to work online or in person or some hybrid
- health and safety standards (like stay home when you are sick, wash your hands before you enter the studio)

The pandemic will continue or another will arrive, and we will continue to adapt. It continues to be important to work together and to figure out how to get along with each other.

Be kind and keep those doors open. ■

BETH OLVER

We'd love to publish articles from more members! Write about anything that you want to share with other music teachers.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For the most updated information, visit the events page of our website <http://armta-calgary.com/>

JANUARY 29	ACRA (ARMTA CALGARY RECITALS AND AWARDS) ONLINE LAUNCH	TANYA FOSTER ARMTAHONOURSRECITAL@GMAIL.COM
	CPA (CALGARY PERFORMING ARTS) FESTIVAL REGISTRATION	HTTPS://WWW.CPAFESTIVAL.CA/
FEBRUARY 14	CALGARY BRANCH BOARD MEETING: OPEN TO BRANCH MEMBERS TO ATTEND WITHOUT VOTING PRIVILEGES	BETH BETHOLVER754@GMAIL.COM MARYELLEN ARMTAOFFICERS@GMAIL.COM
FEBRUARY 22	OSR (OUTSTANDING STUDENT RECITAL) ONLINE LAUNCH	RON PROCTOR PROCRA49@GMAIL.COM
FEBRUARY 26- MARCH 12	APTA FESTIVAL (PIANO)	HTTPS://FESTIVAL.APТАONLINE.NET/
MARCH 1	ARMTA CALGARY POSTER COMPETITION DEADLINE	WWW.ARMTA-CALGARY.COM ARMTAOFFICERS@GMAIL.COM
MARCH 5	STUDENT RECITAL 2:00 – 3:00 PM. ONLINE VIA ZOOM.	FRANCES EWINGTON FRANCESANNE@SHAW.CA
MARCH 7	BRANCH BUDGET MEETING	DENISHA CALGARYFINANCIAL@ARMTA.CA MARYELLEN ARMTAOFFICERS@GMAIL.COM
MARCH 21	CALGARY BRANCH BOARD MEETING: OPEN TO BRANCH MEMBERS TO ATTEND WITHOUT VOTING PRIVILEGES	BETH BETHOLVER754@GMAIL.COM MARYELLEN ARMTAOFFICERS@GMAIL.COM
APRIL 18	CALGARY BRANCH BOARD MEETING: OPEN TO BRANCH MEMBERS TO ATTEND WITHOUT VOTING PRIVILEGES	BETH BETHOLVER754@GMAIL.COM MARYELLEN ARMTAOFFICERS@GMAIL.COM
APRIL 22-23	MUSIC CONFERENCE ALBERTA PART 2 IN PERSON BANFF CENTER FOR THE ARTS	WWW.MUSICCONFERENCEAB.CA
MAY 7	STUDENT RECITAL 2:00 – 3:00 PM. VENUE TO BE DETERMINED.	FRANCES EWINGTON FRANCESANNE@SHAW.CA
	CPA (CALGARY PERFORMING ARTS) FESTIVAL	HTTPS://WWW.CPAFESTIVAL.CA/
MAY 9	CALGARY BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	BETH BETHOLVER754@GMAIL.COM MARYELLEN ARMTAOFFICERS@GMAIL.COM
MAY 15	MUSIC MARATHON FROM 9- AT THE CORE	LAURA WHITEHEAD C/O_ ARMTAOFFICERS@GMAIL.COM
MAY	ARMTA STRING COMPETITION	WWW.ARMTA.CA
JUNE 1	ARMTA CALGARY VIDEO COMPETITION DEADLINE	WWW.ARMTA-CALGARY.COM ARMTAOFFICERS@GMAIL.COM

Carpe Diem 2022

By Nathene Arthur

I love asking questions. “Why?” is a favourite question of mine. Why, indeed? Why do we do what we do and why do some things bring us more joy than others? Why?



If 2021 went a bit sideways on you and you are now waiting for “everything to just go back to normal”, well, maybe rethink that.

At the end of 2021, which few of us will probably put on an award on our shelves as “Best Year Ever”, I made a list of many things which I did that brought me joy. Some of them are relevant to this article and others are not. Let’s look at some of the relevant ones. Why? Because it is good for everyone to sometimes sit down, look at what we are doing and ask that big “why?” question.

In the past year, some of the things that brought me joy included preparing for my Speech Arts &



Drama Grade 8 exam in early January 2022. Let me qualify this: I have never ever studied Speech Arts before. I memorized two sonnets, an excerpt from *The Lord of the Rings*, a Shakespeare Scene, presented a 4

and sang “The Last Saskatchewan Pirate”, which was video-bombed mid-song by my husband dressed up as Salty Bob. I am still smiling about that one. Was all of this easy? Not always. But yes I am super



minute “modernized” fairy tale, did an improv story, and had a wonderful discussion with an amazing examiner. I attended the CASSA Jazz Piano Summer Camp and learned how to do improvisations on “Por Una Cabeza” (the fun tango with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jamie Lee Curtis from *True Lies* and other movies like *The Scent of a Woman*). I am learning to sing Gregorian Chant from a newly arrived chant choir instructor from Ontario. I took weekly voice lessons and for one of our Zoom Recitals I dusted off my guitar, got into a flannel shirt with a flask in the pocket

grateful I did these things, especially in a year such as 2021!

Think back on your year. What brought you joy? I doubt it was Netflix (although that certainly has its place when needed). Why is it that some things bring us joy and others just spend our time?

I belong to a small online group and each week we choose a small doable “challenge” that we strive to accomplish, and then share the results the following week. There are some spectacular successes... and some amazing total misses. But

the fact remains: if we do not even know what we are aiming for we may never have the joy of those “ta-da, I did it!” moments.

Is it possible that we all need “something” that we strive for that gives us joy, something new, something fun, something “outside the box”? It can be a weekly small goal, it can be a yearlong course of study, it can be a summer workshop improving our skills and stretching our current repertoire. All those music books staring at you from your bookshelves are calling your name. Is there something in there you always meant to try or would like to retry?

I am reminded of a story sent to Ann Landers many decades ago. In it, a young banker wrote to Ann. He shared that he had always wanted to

be a Doctor. But for various family reasons he ended up forgoing that long educational and expensive training and he became a banker. Now he was 38. But he still grieved giving up his lifelong dream of becoming a doctor. “It is too late now”, he said, “by the time I would graduate I would be 45 years old”. Ann Landers wisely replied “In seven years you will be 45 anyway. But you could be a Doctor by then too.”

Did you know that ARMTA Calgary offers a “Professional Development Grant” every year which is available to help our members pursue a course of study which improves our teaching or our qualifications? Did you also know the total number of applicants for this grant over the past three years was zero, zilch, and nada? Which makes me ask yet

again “why?”

So here is a challenge for you in this new year 2022. If 2021 went a bit sideways on you and you are now waiting for “everything to just go back to normal”, well, maybe rethink that. You have the ability to choose your own joys this year. Make a few small (or large) plans and give it a try. And at the end of 2022, I hope that you, like me, have a little list of events that make you smile. Hang in there! And maybe we can even have a list of what our ARMTA Calgary teachers did for fun, joy and “professional development” in 2022 to share in Impromptu in 2023? Spread the inspiration. We are an amazing group and creativity is our middle name. And if you start to hear that little inner voice saying “it’s too late” feel free to ask it, you know, “Why?” ■



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BOOK REVIEW ~ *Odyssey: Music Theory, Prep* by Tamara Vandendool Cable

By Laura Whitehead

Odysey: Music Theory is a new series by Tamara Vandendool Cable published by Grace-Note Publishing. The familiar name is not a coincidence. Tamara is the granddaughter of the well-known theory author, Grace Vandendool. As a blind musician with experience in

than being buried in the text.

Colour is a noticeable aspect of the series. In addition to the full-colour chapter introductions, almost every page has colour somewhere in the instruction. For example, each letter of the musical alphabet is assigned

This book has many appealing features to further engage students. For one, the font is large and easy to read, with a good mix of white space, text and examples. Throughout the book you also find note ‘eggs’ that direct you to audio examples. These audio files are accessed



The book provides a large variety of fun exercises, such as colouring, crosswords and puzzles.

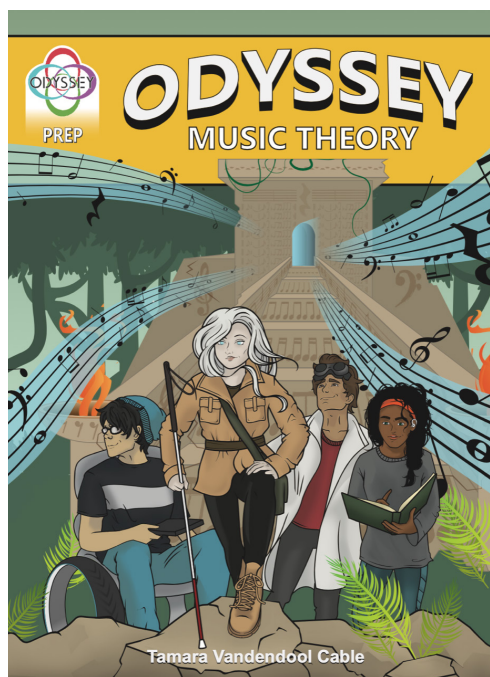
psychology and disability education, Tamara has created a series that is accessible to everyone, including the very young, or those with physical, intellectual, or learning disabilities. I reviewed the first book in the series: Prep. In regards to level and content, this book is comparable to the RCM Preparatory Theory.

a specific colour. This colour coding is used consistently while teaching the keyboard and the notes on the staff. There are also the previously mentioned speech bubbles, with each category assigned a specific colour. The book has many coloured diagrams, as well as colouring exercises for the students. Colour is used to both engage students and to assist with learning.

through the odyssey website: <https://odysseymusic.ca/repertoire/audio-guides/>. The files are clear and easy to use. The book provides a large variety of fun exercises, such as colouring, crosswords and puzzles. I feel that the exercises provide helpful repetition where needed in an exciting way. Lastly, I find that the speech bubbles give appropriate tips and facts. For example, when students are learning to draw notes on staves, I appreciated the large bubble comparing notes drawn properly and improperly on lines and spaces.

Before opening the book, I was impressed with the attractive artwork on the front cover. It showcases the four diverse and inclusive characters who will be the guides throughout the series. These characters appear regularly. For example, the beginning of each chapter has a full-colour page in comic-book style, in which the guides introduce the chapter topics in an interesting way. They explore an ancient temple, using music symbols to solve the clues and escape. The guides also appear throughout the chapters in colour with easy-to-see speech bubbles that provide assistance: note, fun fact, remember and try this. The speech bubbles make important tips and facts pop from the page, rather

I would change one instruction in the book. When the treble and bass clefs are introduced, it states in bold colour that the treble clef is used for the right hand in piano music, and bass clef for the left hand in piano music. I would prefer that the clefs are mentioned as usually for right hand or left hand in piano music. That is; however, an easy amendment when using this book. A teacher could simply make a note for their students.



The website and book forward state that the Odyssey series is fully compliant with RCM's 2016 syllabus. It is planned as a 9-book series, Prep to Level 8, but currently

“If you need a format that is not listed on this page, please reach out to us at <https://odysseymusic.ca/contact/>. We will make every effort to tailor our material to your needs”.

series would be a great alternative for younger students, students with learning disabilities, or students with focus challenges. The price is also comparable with other series. The



Despite the fun features and colour, this book is very comprehensive and covers the RCM material in a thorough manner.

only the prep is available. Level 1 can be pre-ordered on the website. The website also indicates that additional formats will be available soon for different learning styles, including audio books, braille books, and monochromatic books, which is very progressive. Furthermore, the company will attempt to adapt materials to various learning styles:

I am pleased with the move towards accessibility in this series.

Despite the fun features and colour, this book is very comprehensive and covers the RCM material in a thorough manner. I am confident that my students would be fully prepared for RCM Level 1 theory after completing this book. This

suggested MRSP is \$19.95 CDN.

I am very impressed with the book and plan to use this series in my studio. I recommend getting a copy for yourself, especially if you teach young students or those with learning challenges. ■

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ARMTA Calgary Announces a New Creative POSTER Competition!

Deadline March 1, 2022

Students of ARMTA Calgary teachers are invited to submit an original poster that represents a piece of music or speech arts selection that they are studying or have recently studied. The entries will be submitted in one of two age categories:

- 12 years and under
- 13 years and over

Each category will have five cash prizes available:

- First place: \$150
- Runner up: \$100
- Three draws of \$50/each



Winners will have their posters published in the Impromptu newsletter and on the ARMTA website in the Calgary members area. Full contest details, regulations and entry forms are available on the [ARMTA Calgary website](#).

VOLUNTEER JUDGES ARE NEEDED FOR BOTH CONTESTS. Adjudication for the poster competition will occur in March and April. It can be done on your own time, from home. If you would like to volunteer, please contact armtaofficers@gmail.com, specifying which contest you'd like to judge.

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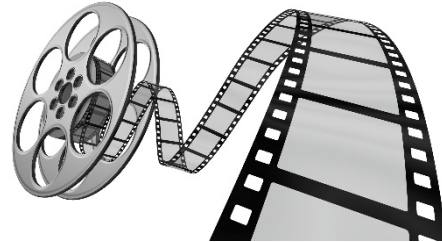
Deadline June 1, 2022

Students of ARMTA Calgary teachers are invited to submit an original video that represents a piece of music or speech arts selection that they are studying or have recently studied. The entries will be submitted in one of two age categories:

- 12 years and under
- 13 years and over

Each category will have six cash prizes available:

- First place: \$200
- Two Runners-up: \$125/each
- Three draws of \$50/each



Winners will have their videos published in the Impromptu newsletter and on the ARMTA website in the Calgary members area. Full contest details, regulations and entry forms are available on the [ARMTA Calgary website](#).

VOLUNTEER JUDGES ARE NEEDED FOR BOTH CONTESTS. Adjudication for the video competition will occur in June and July. It can be done on your own time, from home. If you would like to volunteer, please contact armtaofficers@gmail.com, specifying which contest you'd like to judge.

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CONGRATULATIONS

to the Winners of ACRA (ARMTA Calgary Recitals & Awards)

The Endowment Society of the ARMTA Calgary Music Teachers' Association has split among 35 winning students a total of ...drumroll please...(no pun intended)...

\$1810!

Piano

Junior I

Adrienne Lam (Gold)
Kian Kundert (Gold)
Anaya Ody (Silver)
Parker Soo (Silver)
Sophia Fabris (Silver)
Alexander Sokolov (Bronze)

Junior II

Teaghan Krahn (Gold)
Jia Ning He (Silver)
Ethan Shu (Bronze)
Elijah Laser (Bronze)

Intermediate

Vivian Liu (Gold)
Joel Cook (Silver)
Jackson Xu (Silver)
Evelyn Shu (Bronze)
Ethan Leung (Bronze)
Gabriel Cook (Bronze)

Advanced

Sarah He (Gold)
Cindy Ma (Silver)
Erika Shan (Silver)

Voice

Junior I

Kealani Lafontaine (Gold)
Sophie Jirov (Silver)
Mikayla Waites (Bronze)

Junior II

Kamea Lafontaine (Gold)
Sophie Obrigewitsch (Silver)
Claire McCluskey (Silver)
Aleksandra Skibo (Bronze)

Intermediate

Nora McCluskey (Gold)
Aidan Pfeifer (Silver)
Robert McDonald (Silver)

Speech Arts

Junior I

Emilie Ha (Gold)
Malia Datta (Gold)

Junior II

Gordon Lu (Gold)

Intermediate

Austin Ewington (Gold)

Strings

Junior I

Nicholas Chwee (Gold)
Jerry Zhang (Silver)
Anika Smith (Bronze)

Junior II

Yueyan Chen (Gold)
Kailey Leong (Silver)

Woodwinds

Junior I

Maisha Mesbah (Gold)
Ava Goertz (Silver)

ACRA (...CONTINUED)

CONGRATULATIONS to all winners, teachers, parents and performers.
And a BIG thank you to our sponsors and our ACRA Convener, Tanya Foster!

Advanced Theory Scholarships

Level 9 Harmony ~ RanYan Su

Level 10 Harmony ~ RanYan Su

Level 10 History ~ Jackson Xu

Level ARCT History ~ Mariah Atkinson



Teachers of ACRA Winners

Alexandra Andrievsky
Colleen Athparia
Paul Bagley
Esther Bing
Natalie Brodsky
Gloria Chu
Antonina Cox
Marnie Deschenes
Frances Ewington
Rachel Hop
Nadia Khlynovskaya
Linda Kundert
Jacqueline Mendoza
Allen Reiser
Barb Robertson
Peter Rudzik
Rose Schmaltz
Carolyn Steeves
Elisabeth Szojka
Margaret Thomson
Naomi Williams

Click [here](#) to view the ACRA Recital Programme

And click [here](#) to view the performances!

\$750!

Named Scholarships

Piano Diploma Association Scholarship
Harold Saklofske Scholarship (Harold)
Harold Saklofske Scholarship (Frances)
Eileen and Elgar Higgin Memorial Scholarship

Cindy Ma
Jackson Xu
Jennifer Khatanbaatar
Allison Pompu

Named Scholarships

See winners on previous page

Piano Diploma Association Scholarship

The Piano Diploma Association, formed in 1958, is a group of piano enthusiasts who meet monthly to perform or discuss major classical piano works in an atmosphere of friendly criticism and encouragement. They endeavor, wherever possible, to contribute to the musical life of the community. The Piano Diploma Association Scholarship for Senior Piano is awarded to the Senior Piano Student in Grade 10 OR Diploma Level who has earned the highest mark based on both the practical and theory examination marks.

Harold Saklofske Scholarships

Harold Saklofske was an instrumental force in the Calgary music scene since the 1940's as a pianist and band leader. His big band was "the" sound used for all of the big functions and visiting celebrities, right through to the 1990's. Harold always saw the importance of nurturing and inspiring students. With Harold's passing in 2016, his family has committed \$500 a year for eight years to be gifted as a scholarship to promising young musicians, at the ARMTA Calgary Recitals and Awards. There are two scholarships of \$250.00 each named after Harold and Frances Saklofske.

Eileen and Elgar Higgin Memorial Scholarship

The Eileen and Elgar Higgin Memorial Scholarship is awarded to a senior voice student (Level 10/ARCT). Eileen and Elgar were giants in the musical life of Calgary, and their legacy lives on in the teaching and performing careers of their daughters, Elaine Case and Jennifer Higgin. A life sized painting of Elgar Higgin, painted by noted artist H.G. Glyde, hangs in the National Music Centre. Each year the Banff Centre awards a scholarship in honour of Eileen Higgin. Elaine Case has donated the Eileen and Elgar Higgin Memorial Scholarship to ARMTA to honour her parents' devotion to the development of young musical talent.



The High Note in Music Learning™

MYC® has been online since the beginning of the pandemic and continues to offer fun and interactive classes. Now classes are being offered both online, in person or hybrid in accordance with regional health guidelines.

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For more information, please contact:

Marilyn Unrau, MYCC
Regional Coordinator - Western & Northern Canada
1.800.561.1MYC m.unrau@myc.com

myc.c  m

Help Keep the PDA Scholarship Alive



Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Piano Diploma Association Scholarship has been personally underwritten by a generous ARMTA Calgary member for the last two years.

With no meetings taking place, no funds have been collected to cover this scholarship. This is the last year that this scholarship will run unless another charitable member steps up.

Contact any board member or email armtaofficers@gmail.com if you feel led to sponsor the PDA Scholarship.

Why We are Here

By Nathene Arthur

As Second Delegate to the CFMTA I have been attending all of their meetings and am currently serving on the “Program Funding and Grants” Committee. At one such meeting we realized that the foundations we will be approaching for grants may well ask us “What is CFMTA about? What is your mission?” We needed to be prepared to look at how we would describe ourselves in the first sixty seconds before they said “next”. When we looked up the Mission Statement, I kind of yawned at the “official” wording. (No disrespect intended). But it was running late in the evening after a long day, and being challenged to come up with something that had “sparkle, power and integrity” (their exact words) I wrote this unofficial script that I would love to say when someone asks me about what CFMTA means to me:



“At CFMTA our passion is inspiring and supporting the next generation of Canadian musicians, emerging artists, and performing artists. We promote professional development for Canadian music teachers with the ultimate goal of achieving the best generation of Canadian musicians in our country’s history. We are here to see the rise of a new generation of exciting Canadian Speech Arts and Drama artists. We are here to form young performing artists who are alive to our grassroots Canadian heritage and history. We are all things Canadian.” And since I am pretty sure that these words will never ever reach anyone else, I am sharing them with you. Hold your heads up high. We need to aim high. It is an honour to serve ARMTA on these different board levels. ■



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Let's Get Pretending: The Recital

By Bronwyn Schuman

Much of children's worlds are imagined. Children pretend they are adults, driving cars, shopping for groceries, and taking care of babies. Children pretend they are animals, romping around on all fours and jumping up and down. While children's pretend play may seem trivial to adults, this play is quite sophisticated, enabling children to learn about themselves and the world around them.



Puppets and small toys allow for the exploration of realistic emotions and scenarios.

But, why do children choose to pretend, anyway? What are they getting from it? Well, of course, pretending is fun. But there's more: while pretending, children can feel skilled, important, grown-up, and powerful. They can try on a variety of lives, emotions, responses, and actions. Pretend is a way to alleviate boredom and even frustration. Imaginary friends are created to relieve children from loneliness. Play is also a huge stress reliever. Think back to when you were a child – do you remember any pretend play experiences? Why might you have been pretending?

Pretend play also allows children to respond to situations that make them anxious or frightful. Rehearsing a playful situation can help them understand and navigate their own fears, and pretend play can reduce stress surrounding those fears. For music students, performances can be common sources of stress, whether

they be exams, festivals, recitals, or competitions. Music teachers can incorporate pretend play in their lessons to allow their child students to rehearse stressful musical scenarios from within an imagined musical world. One specific way to do this is to enact, in a variety of ways, the pretend recital.

One form of pretend recital could include puppets or toy characters. Puppets and small toys allow for the

paper, glue, and crayons.

Before an upcoming performance, the student could choose a puppet performer, set up the other puppets as audience members, set up a miniature instrument (either a small toy or a cardboard/paper craft look-a-like), and act out the full performance. This performance could include having the puppet walk up to the stage, bow, put music on the stand, adjust the bench, sit down,

exploration of realistic emotions and scenarios, and they provide distance from emotions for comfort and manageable sizes for control-ability. Teachers don't need to spend large amounts of money on small toys. There are plenty of cheaper and more imaginative options! For example, a teacher could encourage her student to make a puppet or a stuffed animal out of a sock and a little piano out of a small cardboard box and some

take a breath, play the piece (and here, the student can go to the real instrument and play), bow while the audience claps, walk back down to the chair, high-five another animal, and sit down. The student may want to add more fun and even silly steps into the pretend recital! He could act this out with the puppet completely, and he may even want to do this more than once. The repetition of this activity would allow him to



continue to imagine positive outcomes for his future recital.

After acting out the recital with small puppets and toys, a teacher could ask her student if he is comfortable to pretend that he is now playing in the recital. The student's audience may still be the puppets, but he is

the one acting, instead of another puppet. In this version of a pretend recital, the student is putting himself in the position of his future self and practicing the feelings that he might experience in an upcoming performance. To start the process, a teacher might find a simple prop to be useful. For example, she might

place a scarf on the floor to represent the path that the student walks down as he makes his way from his seat in the audience to the instrument on the stage. Depending on the age and stage of the student, puppet audience members can still line the aisles. The student can repeat all performance steps that he had the puppet act out.

The teacher can pretend to be another student in the recital, and they can take turns playing their piece. The more the student senses an environment of pretend play, the better!

While the envisioning of an upcoming performance is nothing new to music teachers, we can take this envisioning one step further for our students by including other characters, toys, props, and ourselves into their imaginative process. Setting the space, finding audience members, and allowing our students to go through the complete motions and emotions of a performance can engage our students' imagination and help them learn from within their natural learning context. Pretend recitals give our students even more performance experience, and they are also fun for all involved, including for us teachers! ■



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Bronwyn Schuman, ARMTA Member

Outstanding Student Recital

Thank you to Ron Proctor, OSR Convener

90+	First Name	Last Name	Instrument	Level
*	Tristyn	Anderson	Piano	3
*	Davin	Chan	Piano	2
*	Kaslyn	Chan	Piano	6
*	Haricharan	Chandramouli	Piano	2
	Elva	Chen	Piano	4
	Gabriel	Chen	Piano	5
*	Evangeline	Cheng-Cappelli	Piano	3
*	Tayvin	Cheng-Cappelli	Piano	2
	Zoya	Christy	Piano	1
	Maithili	Daitha	Piano	5
	Elizabet	Detar	Piano	4
*	Kenzie	Donaldson	Piano	6
	Adrian	Fu	Piano	4
	Gabrielle	Graham	Voice	4
	Josephine	Hamilton	Piano	2
	Selena	Han	Piano	7
*	Sarah	He	Piano	9
*	Ryan	Huang	Piano	4
	Kai	Janin	Piano	3
	Ethan	Jiang	Piano	8
*	Avery	Krahn	Piano	6
*	Hannah	Laing	Piano	5
*	Cole	Lam	Piano	7
	Kristen	Lee	Piano	3
	Kailey	Leong	Voice	6
	Sophia	Li	Piano	3
*	Cynthia (Songyue)	Liu	Piano	1
*	Wilbert	Lu	Piano	4
*	Nevin	Mancell	Voice	4
	Annalina	McDouall	Voice	3
	Michael	McHugh	Piano	7
	Kalina	Nielsen	Strings	1
*	Savannah (Tianjiao)	Niu	Piano	7
*	Hannah	Paethke	Piano	1

* OSR Students with marks **90** or greater will receive a medal

90+	First Name	Last Name	Instrument	Level
*	Hannah	Paethke	Voice	1
*	Arash	Pilipowicz	Piano	4
*	Lily	Pilipowicz	Piano	2
*	Shaela	Rideout	Voice	5
*	Jocelyn	Ruark	Piano	7
*	Lavindu	Senadheera	Piano	7
	Roman	Sidorov	Piano	3
	Milla	Singh	Voice	2
	Sophie	Sit	Voice	4
	Ava	Sowiak	Voice	3
	Joshua	Sowiak	Voice	4
	Nicholas	Sowiak	Voice	1
*	Billy	Tang	Piano	7
*	Tayven	Vukojevic Drought	Piano	3
*	Zimu	Wang	Piano	4
	Josephine	Wen	Piano	8
	Charles	Xing	Piano	8
*	(Yunqiao) Sherry	Xu	Piano	9
*	Jackson	Xu	Piano	8
*	Emily	Yan	Piano	6
	Greta	Yo	Piano	4
	Alexis	Yuan	Piano	4
	Cynthia	Yuan	Piano	5
*	Jenny	Zhang	Piano	1
*	Mark	Zhang	Piano	8
	DeAnne	Zhu	Piano	4

All performers will
receive a certificate

8 participants will
receive a cash
scholarship

A Musical Mind: Impact of Music on the Mind

By Gloria Chu

Music training has many effects on the mind. Building from our pedagogical understanding in music training and memory this discussion will further explore the difference between musicians and non-musicians in memory and the effect of age on music memory. The power of a melody is validated in an experiment where participants were asked to recall text after hearing it in a melody and in speech. Participants heard three verses of text sung with the same melody and were able to recall the text superior to just hearing the same text spoken. Yet when words were heard with different melodies, participants recalled better when heard in speech. Hence the conclusion is melody contributes more than just rhythmical information, music can chunk words and phrases identifying stress patterns and adds emphasis. Sung verses can be recalled stronger than spoken verses (Wallace, 1994).

received musical training averaging 11 years of piano instructions while other participants had less than one year of music training. The two groups listened to 16 words presented five times, presented with another list of words for distraction, and then asked to recall the initial 16 words. An additional 20 minutes later the 16 words were asked to be recalled again. Results indicated musicians performed better than non-musicians in remembering the words. When analyzed, musicians chunked the words into groups and categories in order to remember, much like understanding the music in phrases and sections rather than individual notes (Jakobsen et al., 2008). Hence musicians' skills and tactics for memorizing music can be transferred to other disciplines such as memorizing words.

Similarly, Park found similar results in a test with musicians. Using electroencephalography (EEG)

responses in the parietal lobe are 400-800 milliseconds faster for musicians. Hence, when given the same amount of time to memorize, musicians have a better advantage as the neural responses are faster (Park et al., 2014). Chan and colleagues comment the stronger memory in musicians is due to a stronger magnetic resonance imaging in the left temporal region of the brain. Hence the reasoning for a superior verbal memory in musicians since the left region is responsible for such memory. Upon studying 60 female college students from the University of Hong Kong with half of the participants over six years of musical training, a list of 16-word lists were presented to the subjects orally three times. After each presentation the participants would recall as many words as they could. They concluded musicians could recall more words than non-musicians and music training have a long-term effect on the improvement of verbal



Musicians performed better than non-musicians in remembering words.

Musicians vs non musicians in memory

The ability for musicians to memorize long works is a mutual skill for musically trained individuals. A two-to-three-hour solo program occurs frequently across the globe. Yet does this ability to memorize music transfer into other disciplines? Jakobsen and colleagues studied 36 college students with 15 whom have

electrical activity of the neurons in the brains were measured for 14 musicians and 15 non-musicians. In testing working memory participants were asked to select pictorial and visual items they have just seen. Musicians outperformed non-musicians in EEG measured working memory. Park explained musicians' neural responses in the brain are 300-500 milliseconds faster than non-musicians and

memory (Chan et al., 1998).

As seen in the above studies, musicians show a positive result in memory, specifically in verbal memory. The skill a musician acquires through memorizing pieces is transferable to other disciplines including remembering text of words. This ability is important for one to be aware of to assist in learning and memorizing items

outside of the music domain. Musically trained students can refer to auditory means to learn content, regardless of the topic.

Age impact on memory and music

Upon understanding infants as young as five months of age can remember music passages, the question of whether music can assist with memory deterioration due to age arose. A study by Simmons-Stern and colleagues showed patients with Alzheimers performed superior on a task of recognition memory for the

wrong notes. Hence she was able to detect distortions of music. Results indicate sparing of musical memory may be a feature of some forms of dementia (Cuddy & Duffin, 2005).

The contrast of the patient's response to music versus daily life tasks were significant. It is interesting to note one's memory and recall of music may not deteriorate to the same level as other daily life skills.

With the finding of the resilient nature of music in our mind, further research was explored to

mind, regardless of age and assessed condition of the mind. Even with Alzheimers, music facilitates with memory and can be used to help one to learn.

Conclusion

Music and memory have a massively strong link. With many studies deeply rooted in neuroscientific research, we see music impacting the memory of all ages. As one progresses into an elderly age, although there are signs of deterioration of memories, the ability

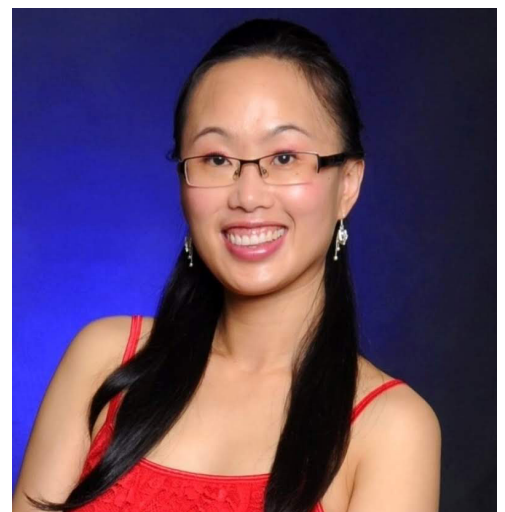


Memory and recall of music may not deteriorate to the same level as other daily life activities.

lyrics of a song when it was sung rather than spoken. The same test was conducted with adults without Alzheimers and the group showed no difference between sung or spoken lyrics. The authors suggest singing the music heightens the arousal in patients with Alzheimers allowed improved memory (Simmons-Stern et al., 2010). Hence from the study we understand music may help one's improvement of memory with Alzheimers. However, how does the process of deterioration of memory in music work for those with Alzheimers? Cuddy and Duffin conducted a case study on an 84-year-old woman with severe Alzheimers. The patient scored low on understanding and recalling standard instructions; yet, when tested on musical abilities she showed positive results. The participant was presented with familiar melodies and she responded by singing along with the words and often continued singing after the stimuli. She did not respond to unfamiliar melodies and showed facial dissatisfaction when she heard

determine how music can assist memory in Alzheimer's disease. Prickett and Moore examined ten patients diagnosed with Alzheimers on their ability to recall material after it is sung and spoken. This test mirrors the above test with non-musicians and musicians. Participants were presented words sung and then spoken. The test was videotaped to allow researchers to examine the patient's face and verbal response. Similar to the above results, patients responded to recalling words stronger when it was sung. An even more positive result was seen when the songs were of familiar tune, participants recalled with an improved 30% accuracy. Researchers also noted the participants attempted to sing the words back, whether it was of a familiar or unfamiliar tune; indicating patients can be stimulated to responsive participation with the use of familiar songs. With practice, patients were even able to learn new songs (Prickett & Moore, 1991). This study witness's music as a powerful tool in facilitating the

of the older brain continues to adapt and retains its musical abilities (Prickett & Moore, 1991). Whether one is an infant or elder there is the programmed ability for music to enhance our memory. Although there are variations between musicians and non-musicians and age differences, studies have demonstrated the ability for the brain to use music to help us memorize. The human brain is truly remarkable, allowing us to use music as a means to remember thousands of frequencies and sounds. ■



Gloria Chu, ARMTA Member

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Beth Olver, Calgary Branch chair


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to the following members who wrote articles for this issue

**Nathene Arthur
Gloria Chu
Rachel McLellan
Beth Olver
Bronwyn Schuman
Laura Whitehead**

Articles by members are welcomed and encouraged! Attended a great workshop or concert? Read an inspiring book? Share your thoughts with ARMTA Calgary members. Inquiries and submissions can be made to the editor at impromptu@armta.ca.

Submissions must be in Word file format (no pdf files) and corresponding photographs will be greatly appreciated.

Rachel McLellan
Impromptu Editor