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President's Message

Dear Colleagues and Members:

Since I took office in Spring many exciting things have happened. Let me tell you about some of them:

Our Maryland String Certificate Program was a great success. It was held in June at Catholic University and had over 100 participants. Lya Stern did a wonderful job organizing it and seeing it through. Thank you very much to her and all other volunteers!

The Leadership Seminar for new state officers was held in Reston at the national office in July. As a participant I learned many new and useful things that will allow me to be a better President of the MD/DC Chapter. Our String Certificate Program found recognition in a presentation that was warmly embraced by other chapters around the country. There is talk of implementing the Certificate Program on a national level.

The board meeting in August addressed the following issues:

- The need to find a president-elect: In accordance with our state bylaws we will nominate a president elect instead of holding an election. It will be my duty to find the right person for the job.
- Copyright for the String Certificate Program: The board agreed that the String Certificate Program should be protected through a copyright.
- Cooperation with Peabody for a workshop: Mimi Zweig is coming to Baltimore to hold a teacher's workshop in January 2001. Please use the forms in this issue of Stringendo to sign up and/or apply for master classes.
- Donations to other organizations: The DC Youth Orchestra and Catholic University will receive donations from ASTA.

- Web page development: In an effort to make our web page a useful resource, we compared pages of other chapters in order to see what could be included in ours and how ours could be modified. We appreciate any kind of input!
- Involving volunteers in upcoming projects: Thanks to a new feature in your membership renewal form, we now have a list of people who would like to get more involved. Thank you in advance!

The national office is launching a campaign to strengthen our membership base. It is called *Chapter Get a Member Campaign* (CGM). Each chapter will receive points for new memberships joining ASTA with NSOA between July 1, 2000 and May 31, 2001. The national office is offering cash prizes to chapters who recruit the most members during this campaign. There is a scoring system that I will not get into, but it is not just about absolute numbers. Our MD/DC Chapter would actually have a chance to be recognized in this campaign. (See the article on page 15.)

Important: In order for the new memberships to be counted towards this campaign it is necessary to use application forms that have the initials CGM printed at the bottom. If these forms are not available, please add those letters by hand. We are printing an official CGM membership application on page 24 in this issue; feel free to copy it.

I wish you all the best for the Fall and the rest of the 2000/2001 teaching season. Feel free to contact me with input of any kind!

Phone: 301-610-0098
E-mail: alexanderschool@hotmail.com.

Sincerely,

Alexander Starz

From the Editor's Desk

By the time you receive this issue of *Stringendo*, you will no doubt be up to your limit in activities for the fall and winter season. If you are a violin or viola teacher, please take time *now* to look over the information on the Mimi Zweig workshop. About ten years have elapsed since the last time Mimi was in Baltimore doing a workshop. I was one of the fortunate people who attended then. It was a valuable experience for me, so I can wholeheartedly recommend that you set aside the time to attend. Hilary Hahn, as a developing 10-year-old, was one of the master class participants. Who knows—perhaps another budding virtuoso will be playing in the upcoming sessions!

Again, by the time you receive this issue, maybe we will have a winner for the President-Elect of the United States. Maybe we will even have a President-Elect for our MD/DC Chapter! Finding members to contribute their valuable time to this chapter is getting more and more difficult. Please consider picking up the phone, or sending an e-mail to one of the chapter officers if you feel you can spare a little of your time to help the chapter. (We still need someone to update the Adult Orchestra List for Maryland and D.C.)

Lorraine Combs
410-987-2707
Lcombs@cablespeed.com

Treasurer's Report

As of 8/23/00, the following funds are available:

Savings:	\$1,166.03	Checking:	\$1,175.99
Net Deposits to Savings		Net Deposits to Checking	
since 6/1/00:	\$0	since 6/1/00:	\$800
Net Deductions from Savings		Net Deductions from Checking	
since 6/1/00:	\$0	since 6/1/00:	\$1,753.50

submitted by Melissa Hullman

ASTA with NSOA MD/DC Chapter and Peabody Preparatory
Present

Violin/Viola Teacher Workshop and Master Classes

Mimi Zweig (Professor, Indiana University)
with

Rebecca Henry (Faculty, Peabody Conservatory)

Saturday and Sunday, January 13–14, 2001
The Peabody Institute, Baltimore, MD

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Saturday, January 13, 2001

- 8:30–10:45 Registration
9:00–10:45 Mimi Zweig works with Young People's String Program Group Classes
Workshop participants are invited to observe
9–9:45 Suzuki Books 1–2
10–10:45 Suzuki Books 3–5
11–12:30 Masterclass with Mimi Zweig: Elementary/Intermediate Levels (Books 1–8)
Three ASTA students will be invited to participate
12:30–1:15 Lunch
1:15–2:45 Teacher Workshop: The Beginning Stages
Basic Set-up
Pre-Twinkle
Book 1
3–5 Masterclass with Mimi Zweig: Upper Intermediate/Advanced Levels
Two ASTA students will be invited to participate
5:15–6 Question and Answer Session
6 Dinner at Tony Cheng's

Sunday, January 14, 2001

- 9–10 Teacher Workshop: Shifting
One ASTA student who is shifting will be invited to aid in demonstration
10–11:30 Teacher Workshop: Vibrato
One ASTA student who is vibrating will be invited to aid in demonstration
11:30–12:15 Lunch
12:15–1:30 Teacher Workshop: Rehabilitation of Incorrect Beginnings
One ASTA student who needs bow work will be invited to aid in demonstration
1:30–2 Questions
2–2:30 Concert: Peabody Preparatory Violin Choir, Rebecca Henry, Director

ABOUT THE FACULTY

Mimi Zweig is professor of violin and viola at Indiana University. She also directs the IU Young Violinists program, the Summer String Academy, and the Retreat for Professional Violinists and Violists at Indiana University. Ms. Zweig has participated in the development of string programs across the United States, and she regularly leads master classes and workshops in the United States and Europe. Her students have won many competitions and teach and perform worldwide.

Rebecca Henry is on the faculty of the Peabody Conservatory and is Chairperson of the String Department at Peabody Preparatory. She is also on the faculty of the Baltimore School for the Arts and the Indiana University Summer String Academy. Ms. Henry was honored as Maryland String Teacher of the Year in 1991 by MD/DC American String Teachers Association. She regularly presents master classes and teacher workshops, and her students are performing and teaching throughout the United States.

MASTER CLASSES

Students who register to play in the master classes must currently study with an ASTA WITH NSOA member. Participants will be selected by the Board and notification will be sent by mail. Those not selected to play in the master class may be invited to demonstrate for a workshop session. To register, fill out the registration form on page 6 and return it before **December 30, 2000**. There is no application fee.

REGISTRATION

ASTA WITH NSOA membership is not required for registration in the Teacher Workshop. To register, return the form found on page 7, before **December 30, 2000**, with your check made payable to ASTA WITH NSOA, MD/DC Chapter. Registration fees are:

- Professional, one day: \$50
- Professional, two days: \$30
- Student, one day: \$15
- Student, both days: \$25

Lunches are not included in the registration. You may order lunches listed on the form. All lunches are \$7.95. You may bring your own lunch. Walk-in registrants on workshop days are welcome, but must bring their own lunches.

WHERE TO STAY

Workshop participants must make their own arrangements for accommodations while in Baltimore. The Peabody Elderhostel (410-659-8193) has rooms for \$50/night and is located on campus. The Mount Vernon Hotel (410-727-2000) is located nearby on Franklin Street, with rooms for \$79/night.

PARKING

Workshop and master class participants can park in the Peabody Garage, located on St. Paul Street. Ample street parking is also available. There are two handicapped access entrances to Peabody, one on Charles Street and the other on the upper floor of the garage.

QUESTIONS?

E-mail questions to mhullman@altavista.com, or call 410-659-8125 and leave a message for Melissa Hullman.

Student Registration Form for Mimi Zweig Master Classes

Application Deadline: December 30, 2000

(Applicants must currently study with an ASTA WITH NSOA member to be eligible)

Student Name _____

Age _____ Instrument _____

Parent Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Teacher's Name _____

Teacher's Signature (required) _____

Teacher's Phone (required) _____

Please indicate which class you would like to participate in:

Saturday, January 13, 2001

- 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Master class: Elementary/Intermediate (Bks. 1–8)
 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Master class: Upper Intermediate/Advanced

Title of Piece _____

Composer _____

A pianist will be provided free of charge for all participants. Participants will have one 15 minute rehearsal with the pianist on Saturday, January 13 before the class. Students who wish to bring their own pianists are welcome to do so.

Students not selected to play in the master class may be invited to participate in demonstrations on Sunday, January 14. Students are needed to demonstrate for the following sessions: shifting, vibrato, and rehab/bow work.

Are you interested in playing for a demonstration on Sunday, January 14? yes no

Mail application to:

Melissa Hullman
3811 Canterbury Road #307
Baltimore, MD 21218

Please feel free to photocopy this form.

Registration Form for Mimi Zweig Workshops

Application Deadline: December 30, 2000

(Walk-in registrants are welcome, but must bring their own lunches)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (home) _____ E-mail _____

Are you an ASTA with NSOA member? (Membership is not required for registration)

yes no

Please indicate lunch choice: (ALL LUNCH SELECTIONS INCL. BEVERAGE ARE \$7.95)

Saturday, January 13, 2001

- Mediterranean Chicken Sandwich
- Tuna Salad Sandwich with Capers and Kalamata Olives
- Pesto Pasta Salad (Vegetarian)
- Beverage choice: coke diet coke sprite bottled water
- I will bring my own lunch

Sunday, January 14, 2001

- Smoked Turkey Sandwich w/ Basil Mayo, Leaf Spinach, and Roasted Red Peppers
- Traditional Italian Sandwich w/ Mortadella, Prosciuttini, Salami, Provolone, Red Onion, Lettuce, Tomato
- Fresh Mozzarella Salad with Tomato and Basil on Greens
- Beverage choice: coke diet coke sprite bottled water
- I will bring my own lunch

YES! I will join Mimi for dinner at Tony Cheng's Saturday night at 6:00 p.m. (Bring cash.)

Professional:

- \$50 + lunches (Saturday and Sunday workshops and master classes)
- \$30 + lunch (One day only. Indicate day you plan to attend: Saturday Sunday)

Student:

- \$25 + lunches (Saturday and Sunday workshops and master classes)
- \$15 + lunch (One day only. Indicate day you plan to attend: Saturday Sunday)

Registration fee: \$ _____
Lunches (\$7.95 each): \$ _____
Total: \$ _____

Please enclose check with application.

Make checks payable to:
ASTA with NSOA, MD/DC Chapter
Mail application and check to:

Melissa Hullman
3811 Canterbury Road #307
Baltimore, MD 21218

Please feel free to photocopy this form.

No Time Like the Present

by Phyllis Freeman

One of the many keys to quality teaching is the ability to hold two opposing notions in your mind simultaneously. Dualism manifests itself constantly in music. As performers and teachers, we have to balance technical proficiency with musical expression, practicing with performing, solo work with ensemble playing, etudes and scales with repertoire, and so on. We also have to leap across time and space to see our students (and ourselves) for whom they are *right now in this moment* and who they *will become next week*, a year from now, and even ten years from now. Very few teachers have the luxury in their students' lives of creating and working on long-term goals. Most students go through a cycle of new teachers every September. This gives them a fresh start every year, but does not put any educator in charge of their growth over a long period of time. Few academic teachers get to see the results of the seeds they plant in 5- or 6-year-olds come to full growth in 16- or 17-year-olds. As a private teacher, I see this as both our greatest blessing and potentially our greatest curse. On the one hand, we have to make a realistic assessment of our students' current abilities and simultaneously chart a course for how they will play in the future. Reality versus the ideal. Our job is to narrow the gap between the two.

This is not as easy as it would seem. I think this may be especially difficult for teachers trained in the Suzuki method. We are indoctrinated with philosophical idealism. All children can learn. Nurture them with love. This is a critical foundation for teaching. Within my lifetime, I have witnessed a revolution in the education of children. It is easy to get carried away, close our eyes and imagine that we have "arrived." Suzuki created a method far superior to my own musical education. It would be comforting to think that all I had to do was go through the motions he prescribed and let the method take care of the rest. Suzuki was, above all else, an innovator and experimenter. To stop doing so ourselves would be a great disservice to his memory. Just as we plant seeds of knowledge in our students that may take many years to bear fruit, so too did Suzuki only begin to see the results of his gardening. Suzuki gave us a strong root system, which, as with a bonsai tree, determined the

shape and structure of talent education. In order for a bonsai tree to continue to flourish, it must be pruned, watered, and cared for. We must remain vigilant against getting lost in our idealism when it comes to maintaining a healthy system for our students.

The problem arises when we are unable to untangle the optimistic outlook from the sometimes-disheartening reality. We have seen the result of the Suzuki method by now. The level of violin playing around the world has risen dramatically in the last twenty years thanks to Dr. Suzuki. More students than ever before are playing the violin (and other instruments) with greater proficiency. Certainly, if we just follow the method and do what the teacher trainers have instructed, then the outcome will take care of itself. Unfortunately, this is just not the case. Often, teachers turn their heads away from the weaknesses of their students, stroll down the path to Book 6 or 7, and ignore the problems of today. Somehow, they have been lulled into a false sense of security and optimism, and choose to believe that by the time the child reaches the Mozart concerti, many technical problems will have magically worked themselves out by virtue of having "completed" the repertoire.

Let me make this absolutely clear. *The Suzuki method will not solve the fundamental problems inherent in playing the violin.* Gasp! Shock! Dismay! What a scandalous thing to say. Now, before I am excommunicated, let me indulge in further explanation. Many of you may remember the public service announcements of the 1970s with Smokey the Bear. In a deep voice his image would appear on the screen and say, "Only *you* can prevent forest fires." Well, I would like to update it for teachers. "Only *you* can prevent sloppy students." If the ultimate secret to excellent teaching were in the method itself, then everyone who can follow directions would be producing remarkable students. Why then do teachers who have a firm grasp of pedagogical principles not produce students that reflect their knowledge base? I believe it is because they cannot stay with the slow process of building technical foundations upon which a strong future is constructed. They cannot reconcile the slow methodical process of today with hopes and dreams of tomorrow.

I became aware of this dichotomy between reality and idealism, present and future over the past several years. I have had much contact with teachers and have had numerous conversations about pedagogy. I often came away impressed with the information about and the understanding of pedagogical principles that were conveyed by my colleagues in those informal gatherings. Then I would judge competitions or have a chance to observe students in other venues and I would come away often confused by what I saw. How could teachers who seemed to have such a grasp of teaching produce students who did not reflect what the teachers obviously knew? At first, I just wrote it off to the occasional student that everyone has who does not represent the best of our work. After a few years, however, I could discern trends. I would also hear teachers tell me how proficient and gifted a student was and then later have the chance to hear the same student and I would be surprised by the discrepancy between what had been described and what I was hearing. These were caring and compassionate teachers who seemed to be unable to see their students for whom they really were. After a while, I started to see a pattern. Often, it was the most caring and compassionate teachers who seemed to often miss the mark on the assessments of their own students. They looked at their students with their hearts and were only able to see what they might become in the future. The reality of now was lost. What they were seeing was future potential.

The inability to see our students for whom they really are now in this moment is a costly mistake. It actually *robs* them of who they could be. In a sense, we are blinded by our own love. We look in the water and see our own reflection of who we want our students to be. We care so deeply that we want them to be something they are not. We are worshipping at the altar of narcissism. We have to be willing to see the whole child, complete with strengths and weaknesses. This can be very painful and require faith in our own ability to grow and change because, in truth, the student *does* reflect our teaching abilities. If we can't see them in all their complexity, then how will we ever help them to grow in an understanding of themselves? If we don't address their immediate problems, then their future potential will never be realized.

Of course, we have to have a vision for each student. We only want the best for them. How else could we effectively guide them if we ourselves do not know

where they are headed? But we cannot truly help them if we shield them from their problems. We have to constantly be vigilant about our own motives. Do we move a student ahead in repertoire because they are really ready or because we want them to go to the next level? Are they really playing in tune? Have they really mastered concepts concerning the bow for this piece? *Have they narrowed the gap between reality and the ideal at the end of each piece?* The Suzuki method will not work unless we hold to a high standard for every student at every moment during a lesson. This means making judgements about their abilities, progress, and emotional and cognitive conceptualizations.

It is neither loving nor kind to move students ahead through repertoire, before musical and technical skills have been sufficiently mastered at each level. Problems with a student's playing will not be solved magically in the future. A teacher has to judge whether or not mastery has been attained. If they do not play well in Book One, then they will not play well in Book Four. In fact, they will often play worse and drop out of playing the violin altogether. Each moment must be built upon the success of the previous moment. It doesn't matter how long it takes students to move through Suzuki Book One, if along the way they are creating a beautiful product. We have a responsibility to help a student develop a sense of aesthetics. We have to guide them with our own judgements about what is beautiful, good, and true, until they develop the clarity and wisdom to do it for themselves.

Now that I have identified the problem, let me offer some solutions. I think one way to combat a blurred or incomplete vision of a student is to *establish clear expectations for each piece and each book*. Know exactly which skills Suzuki was introducing with each piece. Each time you teach the same piece to a new student, make a commitment to get an even higher level of playing than you achieved with the last student. How you do it doesn't matter as much as just doing it. It doesn't really matter which teacher trainer's ideas you utilize as long as those ideas have been proven to produce results. In fact, take the same levels many times with many different trainers throughout your teaching career. In the same way that practicing a passage many different ways brings a student greater understanding and facility, so too working with a variety of teacher trainers will give you a deeper perspective about each piece. Also, by

clearly communicating to each student what skills need to be refined at each level, you open the door for them to build self-confidence through achievement. Not only have they learned a new piece, but they have also developed a new skill. They learn to focus on quality and not so much on quantity.

Next, focus on the smallest detail. In each piece, make students look at some aspect of their technique under a microscope. This increases their ability to focus and sharpens their listening skills. No detail is too insignificant. In fact, it doesn't really even matter which detail you choose to highlight. The value is in the process of examination. From the smallest level, proceed directly to the highest level. Children need to be shown how the small is an integral part of the whole. I think many children in our society today are little lost souls. They do not see themselves as part of a greater whole. I strive to help my students understand that they are an important part of something much larger than themselves. Playing a C# in tune in Lightly Row actually matters a great deal in the scheme of things. That little C# balances and harmonizes the relationship between A and E and that is a moment of great beauty. A child brings that moment of exquisite beauty into the world. Through the creation of something beautiful, they have made a difference in a world that is often ugly and discordant. Through that little C#, they have a gateway into a more spiritual concept of the world. Of course, I don't use this exact explanation with a 5-year-old. But I do hold that belief for them until, as

adolescents, they can articulate it for themselves. In other words, even within the tiniest detail is an entire universe.

In order to achieve the goals that Suzuki set with each piece, be willing to move outside the Suzuki repertoire. I know this sounds in some ways like a contradiction. I am not advocating an abandonment of the principles, but a sideways move in order to make your point. Children need a certain amount of stimulation to stay motivated. If a student has not mastered a point in the repertoire, but has developed a certain "ennui," I will move them sideways to another piece outside the repertoire that emphasizes the same concepts that Suzuki was trying to communicate. *Not all pieces speak to all students in the same way.* Occasionally, another piece will capture a student's imagination in a way that the piece from the Suzuki repertoire did not.

Lastly, have the courage to stand your ground. Strive to find your own "edge." How much can you challenge them? How stubborn can you be on their behalf? Help your students to go truly deeply within for the source of their strength. Help them find their centers, find themselves. Help them to know the joy of accomplishment. Don't underestimate the amazing capacity of children to learn. From the first moment they pick up the violin, they are capable of creating something beautiful. Be demanding. In the everyday moments of struggle, frustration, and hard work, lies the key to unlocking future potential. 



National Chamber Orchestra

2000–2001 Calendar Listings

Orchestra Series

Piotr Gajewski, Conductor

Friday and Saturday, December 15 and 16, 2000,
8:00 p.m. F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre

CANTATE CHAMBER SINGERS

Gisele Becker, Director

Amanda Balestrieri, Soprano

Barbara Hollinshead, Alto

George Ingram III, Tenor

Stephen Combs, Bass

Handel: Water Music Suite No. 2

Vivaldi: Gloria

Friday and Saturday, January 5 and 6, 2001,
8:00 p.m. F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre

JODY GATWOOD, Violin

Foote: Suite

Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 3

Suk: Serenade

Friday and Saturday, February 2 and 3, 2001,
8:00 p.m. F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre

JON MANASSE, Clarinet

Copland: Appalachian Spring

Copland: Clarinet Concerto

Strauss: Metamorphosen

Friday and Saturday, April 20 and 21, 2001,
8:00 p.m. F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre

JULIETTE KANG, Violin

Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Haydn

Shostakovich: Violin Concerto No. 2

Schubert: Symphony No. 4 (“Tragic”)

Single ticket prices for the Orchestra Series: \$33,
\$25, \$17

Piano Recital Series

Saturday, March 10, 2001,
8:00 p.m. F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre

THOMAS PANDOLFI, Piano

Ravel: Forlane

Brahms: Sonata in F Minor, Op. 5

Moussorgsky: Impromptu Passioné

Prokofiev: Sonata in A Minor, Op. 28, No. 3

Tchaikovsky/Pabst: Paraphrase de Concert
sur l’opéra “Eugene Oneguine,” Op. 81

Saturday, June 2, 2001,
8:00 p.m. F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre

YULIYA GORENMAN, Piano

Tchaikovsky: The Seasons

Scriabin: Sonata No. 2

Mazurka, Op. 3

Nocturne for the Left Hand, Op. 9

Rachmaninoff: Variations on a Theme of
Corelli

Single ticket prices for the Piano Recital Series:
\$19, \$14, \$9

For tickets and information, call the National
Chamber Orchestra office: 301-762-8580

Major Grant to ASTA WITH NSOA's National String Project Consortium

*Press release by Dr. Robert Jesselson
ASTA WITH NSOA National President*

The American String Teachers Association with National School Orchestra Association (ASTA WITH NSOA) has received a major grant from the US Department of Education (FIPSE) to address the string teacher shortage around the country. The grant for the project, as of October 29, 2000, is \$973,802 over three years, to fund the National String Project Consortium, with the money being used to attract string players to the teaching profession by awarding work assistantships to undergraduate music education majors. Each school in the National String Project Consortium will receive \$10,000 per year to be matched by the institution. The initial ten sites in the Consortium which will receive funding are:

University of Arizona
Brooklyn College (CUNY)
University of Kentucky
Lawrence University
University of Memphis
University of Nebraska
University of North Texas
Rutgers-State University of New Jersey
SUNY at Potsdam
University of Wyoming

Three additional sites have been added since the initial ten, with ten more to be chosen as part of the next grant proposal. This program and the FIPSE grant have the potential to dramatically increase the number of string teachers being prepared to teach in schools in America. Within ten years, 250 student teachers and 3500 children will be enrolled in the sites every year. This will put a major dent into the problem of the shortage of string teachers.

FIPSE

FIPSE is the "Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education." It is part of the US Department of Education and was established in 1972 to test innovative reforms in teaching and learning. FIPSE grants are considered prestigious and competed for by more than half of the US institutions of higher education annually. ASTA WITH NSOA applied, along with 2000 other applicants in the initial round of the Comprehensive Program in February 2000. The ASTA WITH NSOA grant is one of about 125 grants that were awarded this year.

In August 1999, ASTA WITH NSOA put out a call for applications by colleges to participate in the Consortium. We received 119 requests for applications from higher education schools, and 34 complete applications were submitted by the December deadline.

National String Project Consortium

The National String Project Consortium (NSPC) is a loose association of String Projects that are funded by this and other grants. Chosen competitively, they will interact, exchange ideas, and learn from each other, but each String Project functions independently with each institution responsible for its own program. The NSPC will:

- Help to alleviate the string teacher shortage
- Encourage young string players to become string teachers
- Provide financial incentives by offering work-assistantships to undergraduate string education majors

- Offer supervised teaching experience for college students
- Provide the opportunity for children to study stringed instruments
- Stimulate the growth of new public school orchestra programs around the country.

This program builds on the experience and success of the USC String Project at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina, which in turn is based on the UT String Project at the University of Texas at Austin. In a city with few cultural opportunities and no history of string playing, the USC program began 26 years ago. Currently, the program boasts 358 children learning to play stringed instruments and 30 undergraduate student teachers who will eventually enter the profession with four years of

teaching experience. The USC String Project has had a major impact on a city with no previous tradition for orchestral music in the schools. As a result of this program, all five school districts in the city now have large and active string and orchestra programs and there are six regional youth orchestras.

The next steps

ASTA WITH NSOA invites other colleges and universities to apply to be part of the next group of sites to receive String Project funding. Another round of applications to join the NSPC will be due by December 11, 2000. Information and Application Packets can be obtained by calling 803-777-5412, e-mailing ASTA@Mozart.sc.edu, or go to the web site www.astaweb.com. 



MSMTA Spring Festival for Strings

Tentative date: April 29, 2001

Place: University of Maryland College Park, in the new building!

For more information, call Dianna Souder, 301-417-0709

**West Virginia University
College of Creative Arts
Division of Music**

**The West Virginia University
2001 High School String Honor Orchestra
Friday, January 12, and Saturday, January 13, 2001**

Lawrence Christianson, Conductor

Location:

**Creative Arts Center
West Virginia University
Morgantown, West Virginia**

Anticipated repertoire:

**W. A. Mozart - Symphony No. 29, 1st Mvt.
Aaron Copland - Hoe Down (Orchestral Version)
Gustav Holst - St. Paul Suite
Chris Allen - Beat Suite**

For further information, please contact: **Jodie Lewis at 304-293-5511, ext. 3196;**
e-mail: jmlewis@wvu.edu or write: WVU String Honor Orchestra, P.O. Box 611,
Division of Music, Creative Arts Center, West Virginia University, Morgantown,
WV 26506-6111

ASTA WITH NSOA Announces the State “Chapter-Get-A-Member” Campaign

The National Office of ASTA WITH NSOA is sponsoring this campaign to help state chapters increase their membership and expand their member activities.

Chapters who recruit the most members during the duration of the campaign from July 1, 2000 to May 31, 2001 will receive cash prizes.

State chapters are divided into three categories, based on chapter member size, with each division competing for a first prize of \$450 and a second prize of \$200. Winners will use the prize money to fund professional development events or projects that will benefit the state chapter as a whole, such as workshops, master classes or publishing the state chapter newsletter.

To provide support for the CGM Campaign, the National Office is offering assistance, resources, and supplies to the state chapters. The National Office will provide free-of-charge membership brochures, photocopying, postage and mailing services, back issues of the *American String Teacher*, sample recruitment letters, telemarketing scripts, letterhead and envelopes to state chapters conducting membership campaigns.

Increasing the ASTA WITH NSOA membership base is beneficial for both state chapters and the national organization. As membership grows, state chapters can become more active, with increased participation, diversity and perspective. More members also increase the amount of the quarterly rebate checks to the state chapters. The national organization benefits from increased member participation because it is able to develop and fund new member benefits and services such as the advocacy brochure, *Why Strings?*, upgrade the web site, produce new publications, and offer more national programs and conferences.

In order to participate in the CGM Campaign, state chapters must send new member applications to the National Office on an official CGM membership application. If an official CGM application is unavailable, a regular ASTA WITH NSOA membership application marked with “CGM” on the bottom will be acceptable.

To further help our membership campaign, the National Office is placing a CGM application in all membership renewal invoices sent to current ASTA WITH NSOA members and encouraging members to pass that application to a friend.♪

ASTA with NSOA MD/DC Chapter Certificate Program for Strings

Lya Stern, Certificate Program Chair, has announced that the next Certificate Program evaluation exams will be held on Saturday and Sunday, June 9 and 10, 2001 at the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Catholic University, Washington, DC.

Teachers who have not yet participated in this program and who would like to send students for evaluation should call Lya at 301-320-5618 for further information.

Mary Graham Lasley Scholarship Competition 2001

Sunday, March 18, 2001

Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus – Tyler Building
3001 North Beauregard Street, Alexandria, VA

SPONSORS: The Alexandria Symphony Orchestra and the Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria. The competition is for strings, winds, piano, and percussion. Each contestant must perform a significant movement of a concerto or work of equal difficulty composed for solo instrument and orchestral accompaniment. A fifteen minute maximum time will be given to each contestant.

PURPOSE: To encourage and foster the development of student performing artists in the Commonwealth of Virginia, District of Columbia, and State of Maryland.

AWARDS: First prize \$1250, second prize \$1000, and third prize \$750 may be awarded. Judges will have the option of naming one, two, or three winners.

FEES: Entry fee of \$20 (nonrefundable), payable to “SOLA” (Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria) must accompany application form.

ELIGIBILITY: Current full-time graduate and undergraduate students of music (1) at any college, university, or conservatory in the Commonwealth of Virginia, District of Columbia, or State of Maryland, or (2) Virginia, D.C., and Maryland residents currently studying elsewhere. Previous competitors except past cash winners are eligible. Students whose résumé does not reflect sufficient performing experience may not be accepted for the competition. Contestants may be no more than 26 years of age as of March 18, 2001.

RULES: Composition must be performed from memory. Applicant must provide music for solo part for judges (3 copies). Name of competitor, teacher, or school must not appear on copies. Contestant must provide his/her own accompanist. Rehearsal rooms will be available prior to performing time. Application must be post-marked no later than February 19, 2001.

APPLICATIONS AND INFORMATION:

Gay Lamb Pasley
411 Jackson Place
Alexandria, VA 22302
703-683-4346

Application also available at: www.alexsym.org



George Perlman Dies at 103

George Perlman, violin teacher for 74 years and three times president of the Illinois chapter of ASTA, died June 18, 2000. After a few lessons with Auer, he taught at a preparatory school from the age of 16, but only started to make a living from the violin after graduating from law school. He established a studio in the Fine Arts Building in Chicago in 1926 and continued to teach there until last April, aged 103.

Perlman wrote many compositions for his students, including the favorite encore piece *Indian Summer*. His works are published by Boosey and Hawkes, Theodore Presser and Carl Fischer, where he worked as a freelance editor for many years. Carl Fischer also publishes his violin instruction manuals, which include *Fun With A Fiddle* and *Let Us Have Music For Violin*. Friendship with luminaries of the violin such as Szigeti and Galamian honed his teaching style, which one pupil said was based on “a method of love and encouragement.” 🎵

By introducing the young to great literature, drama, music, and the excitement of great science, we open the possibilities that lie within the human spirit and enable them to see visions and dream dreams.

—Eric Anderson

Thoughts on Teaching...

Some Words From the Wise

On Bowing and Tone:

This may be an unusual approach to developing tone, but I find it works. Have the student play harmonics with the whole bow at a forte level. The bow has to go straight and engage the string solidly or else it will produce a cipher or a glassy sound. Students like the sound of a good harmonic tone. At the forte level they need to have good bow control. Show the student how to move it evenly and have a feeling of weight in the arm. While continuing to play with the same feel in the bow, the student should depress a finger to the string, then alternate back and forth between the harmonic and the stopped note. To do this well, good bowing is critical.

—Doris Gazda

Get-To-Know-You Games:

For 6th graders who have played before and are coming from different elementary schools, make a grid with nine squares in it and in each grid put a statement such as:

- can play more than one instrument
- take private lessons
- get nervous before a concert
- used (xyz) string method book last year
- played all last year without rosinning the bow
- have broken more than one string
- have had the bridge fall down
- feel that I need to hold my bow better
- played (name a favorite song) before
- know who Yo Yo Ma is
- know who Itzhak Perlman is
- have seen pink or blue or green bow hair

Make a copy of the grid for each student. Tell them to each take a pencil and go to as many

different children as they can in the allotted time and ask another person to write his/her name in the grid which applies to him/her. At the end of the time, the student with the largest number of different names and the student who has filled up the most grids each win a free something (i.e., a free practice pass). It will be chaos, so do it at the end of the day when you have spent the earlier part of the class doing those necessary “first-day things.”

—Carol Smith
Lynhaven Middle School
Virginia Beach, VA

On Practice:

How long should a student practice each day? If the student really wants to become proficient, a good thing to keep in mind is this: a person needs to put in about 2,000 hours of work to master the techniques and acquire the skills and the knowledge it takes just to be good enough. Someone who practices faithfully for 30 minutes every day, with no days off, has practiced 182 hours in one year.

Another thing about practice: Taking the instrument out of its case, setting up the music, tuning, playing a favorite song from start to finish—all that is not practice. Practicing means identifying problems and solving them. Practicing means listening to yourself, being critical with yourself, trying to make it better. Practicing means focusing on one thing at a time—the proper bow hold, a beautiful tone, a difficult fingering, vibrato, etc.

—Alexander Starz

On Reading Music:

By the third grade, 99% of our string students are reading books and using computers. They may not know how to deal with math problems in fractions, but all of them know how to add up the money in their pockets. By not providing books for them to look at, we are denying them independence. What should they take home to practice on? One of the reasons some children have difficulty learning music reading is that teachers make a big thing about it. It should be a natural process that is simply a part of learning to play the instrument.

One of the most important items to recognize is that children learn to read a language by reading and *writing*. Few of us take time for music writing in our teaching. This is not music theory. It is really just making it possible for children to learn the written language of music, just as reading and writing together is taught when they learn to read words. I have children write *only* what they are able to play. If they are playing open strings, then they write open strings. They must be able to play what they write. At first they can copy two or four measures and then play it. Once they start to write, they play what they write and take pride in their writing. When they write and play, the reading is easy. You don't even have to talk about reading.

Another thing that I do is to have them take a finger and point to the notes in a line of music while I play it two or three times. One time they might count aloud and the next time say note names. I walk behind them so that I can watch to see if they are following along correctly with their fingers. When I ask them to play it, many know it by ear, but they also know how to follow along reading the notes. Note reading just becomes an automatic result of listening and playing. Those who play the music easily will start to figure out how to read a piece that they have

never heard. Isn't that neat! Isn't that fun! Imagine the excitement when they come to school and tell you that they figured out how to play a piece that has not been introduced in class!

We need to use the existing language of music and teach toward truly understanding the system. Our avoidance of teaching music reading brings to mind another area of music learning that we avoid: intervals. If we use the terminology of intervals from the beginning, our students would not only hear the intervals by ear (which they do automatically,) but also be able to name them. In many, instances, music students have no knowledge of names of intervals until they get to college theory classes. I know this from students who have actually told me so. When tuning, we can use the terms "perfect fifth" or "perfect fourth." When we place the first finger on a string it is a "major second" above the open string. This repeats with the same term for the sound of the relationship between open and first finger on each of the strings. So, instead of saying, "Play the first finger note," we can sometimes say, "Play the note that is a major second above the open string." That way, we are gradually teaching the language of music.

Be sure that students realize that we use the first seven letters of the alphabet over and over again in ascending or descending order. If they know that a certain note is an "A" and they understand the system, they will never have to ask a teacher the name of the note on the line above the "A." For instance, if they memorize the names of lines and spaces, they may learn to read notes as separate, named entities with no relationship to other notes. F-A-C-E followed by Every Good... may get in the way of understanding how to read alphabetically. If they learn the F-A-C-E method, it may be quite a while before they suddenly realize that G is in between F and A.

—Doris Gazda

