

BUSMEA BUZZ



Back Row - Left to Right
Jarrett Fuller, Anna Jardine, Leandra Williams, Roberta Matheson, Jennifer Shead
Front Row - Left to Right
Robert Hodgins, Chloe Plamondon, Stephanie Dzubinski, Carly Swain

Hello Music Educators!

I hope that the school year has started off great for everyone! September is always an exciting time to start fresh, crack new books, take on new challenges and get ready to face the rest of the school year.

The goal of BUSMEA for the 2009/2010 school year is to implement as many positive, motivating, and inspiring learning experiences as we can for everyone with the shared interest in succeeding in music education. We plan to accomplish this goal by using our most valuable resource – YOU and YOUR interests, concerns, ideas and thoughts! BUSMEA is very welcoming and encourages productive feedback, comments, and suggestions from anyone. You can contact BUSMEA by e-mail (busmea@brandonu.ca) or by talking with any of our council members.

This year's BUSMEA executive council is comprised of students who represent many different interests and streams of music education, and who are all in different stages of their degree program at BU. I would like to introduce to you each of the executive members of the 2009/2010 BUSMEA Council:

Halloween Bake Sale BU School of Music Thursday and Friday, October 29 - 30

If you are interested in baking or working during the sale, contact Carly Swain at busmea@brandonu.ca.

Thank you to everyone for supporting our first BUSMEA Bake Sale on Friday, September 18. Special thanks go out to the bakers and volunteers who worked at the table. BUSMEA raised over \$200 to support our organization's professional development activities.

Let us know about your next great fundraising idea!

Carly Swain
BUSMEA Fundraising
Chair

Leandra Williams is Vice President of the council, and was involved with the 2008/2009 council as a student representative. She is in her third year of the five-year concurrent program, instrumental stream. Leandra, a flautist, is also involved with the BUSU council.

Stephanie Dzubinski is the Corresponding Secretary. This is her third year serving on the BUSMEA Council. She is in her fifth year of the music education concurrent program and is looking forward to graduating this spring. Stephanie is in the instrumental stream and is a percussion concentration.

Anna Jardine is the Secretary/Treasurer of the council for the second year in a row and previously held the position of student representative. Anna is also in her fifth year of a music education concurrent program, instrumental stream. She is an extremely talented musician who is both a pianist and saxophonist.

Carly Swain, third year instrumental music education student, holds the position of Fundraising Chair. Carly is new to the council this year. If you are looking for a fun way to be more involved with BUSMEA, email Carly (busmea@brandonu.ca) about joining her Fundraising Committee! Along with being a fantastic educator, Carly is also an extremely talented saxophone player.

Roberta Matheson is new to the council this year, and holds the position of Student Representative. We are so grateful to have Roberta on council this year, because she represents the choral stream in music education.

Jennifer Shead is another new member to the executive council this year. You can see her philosophy of teaching featured in the January

2009 issue of the BUZZ! Jennifer is a third year music education student, instrumental stream, and the flute is her major instrument. She holds the position of Events Coordinator.

Robert Hodgins, student representative, will be graduating this year from the concurrent program, instrumental stream. His major instrument is the trombone. Rob has submitted many interesting articles to past issues of the buzz.

Lastly, my name is *Chloé Plamondon* and this is my second year serving as President of the BUSMEA council, and fourth year as an executive member. I am in my fifth and final year of the concurrent music education program. With only seven classes left to complete, I have learned so much not only from classes, but from personal experiences, relationships and all of the extra workshops, presentations, and events that BUSMEA has brought to the school. So far, my time at Brandon University has been extremely rich because of all of these events.

I speak on behalf of the entire council when I say that we are looking forward to seeing you at BUSMEA events and to you giving us feedback and suggestions as to how BUSMEA can serve you and your learning needs as best as we can!

Until Next Time,



Chloé Plamondon

BUSMEA President

Introducing...an Opportunity to Add Valuable Material to Your Teaching Portfolio

WRITE FOR THE BUSMEA BUZZ!!!!

Have you ever read a really great music education article that you would like others to know about?

Have you ever met an extremely inspirational person in the field?

Have you ever had an extraordinary musical or educational experience that you would like to share?

Do you listen to unique original music that you would like to hear?

Have you ever received useful advice that you would like to share with colleagues and peers?

Do you have any questions about music education you would like to see answered... perhaps something about typical interview questions, tips for curriculum planning, building a successful program...etc??

Is there something on your mind, and you just can't keep quiet any longer??

Well, then the BUSMEA BUZZ needs YOU!!

We are looking for new and thoughtful articles to appear in the BUSMEA BUZZ and would love to see what YOU have to say!

If you are interested in writing for the BUSMEA BUZZ, or have any ideas or suggestions about what you would like to see in our next issue please contact Chloé Plamondon via email @ BUSMEA@brandonu.ca

WAYNE'S WORD - professional vocabulary decoded by Dr. Wayne D. Bowman

"leadership"

"Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things." - Peter F. Drucker

AN INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR ERIC PLATZ BY ROBERT HODGINS

Robert Hodgins: Where are you from? Where did you grow up? We'll start with that.

Eric Platz: Sure. When I grew up my family moved around a lot. I was born in Cumberland, Maryland, which is a small town in the western part of the state in the mountains. My dad moved around quite a bit with his job so we went to Delaware, which is a small city just south of Philadelphia. When I was three we moved to Atlanta, Georgia where I think of as having my childhood. We moved back to Delaware when I was ten and that's where I really got interested in music. Basically, I started midway through the year while all the other kids had gone to elementary school together, so I was kind of the odd bird out. All the friends that I met were playing in the school band. They had a really good school band program in that particular area so when I went to the band director to tell him that I wanted to be in the band, he asked if I could play trombone, because they really needed trombones. What I really wanted to do was play the trumpet. Actually, the first instrument I wanted to play was violin, then I found out that violin wasn't in the band. It was in the Suzuki program. I wanted to be in the band as a trumpet player but there were too many trumpet players, so I was told to play trombone. I went home to my parents and they said, "Oh you're just a little kid your arms are too short for trombone." The band director disagreed but didn't want to argue with my parents so he gave me the choice between the sousaphone or the drums, so I was like "Play the drums," and that's kind of where it started.

RH: What year was this? Was it fourth grade, seventh grade or...?

EP: This would have been fourth grade. You guys still have the same sort of grade designations here, right?

RH: Yeah, we have kindergarten to grade 12, but

we usually start band in grade 7, or sometimes 6. Grade four is pretty early.

EP: Yeah, I think that was earlier than a lot of the schools in the area too. They just had a really established band program. We were playing "Hot Cross Buns" and really simple beginning band songs. I started to show some talent. The band director gave all the private lessons on every instrument, as he could play every instrument in a rudimentary fashion. He literally taught every instrument but he was limited. He was a clarinetist by training so he knew the basics of the snare drum playing and he knew the basics of all the instruments. The guy was very impressive. He could play at generally a more advanced level than any of the students on any of those instruments, but it got to the point where he said, "Well, I think you need to study with somebody else besides me for the drums." He asked a musician in the Philadelphia Orchestra who also taught at the University of Delaware if he would take on a ten year old student and he said, "Okay have him come over." So, I went over to his house and he took me on as a student. I studied with him. I started off as a classical percussionist. It was great because he had me subbing in with the Philadelphia Orchestra when I was in the seventh grade.

When I was in high school my family moved to Brussels, Belgium. Over there they didn't really have the music program in the school I went to. It was an international high school and the program was very rudimentary. I think in the band there were maybe 5 people. It was a small school to begin with. If you wanted to play at a high level at that age in Belgium they put you into a national conservatory program where music was the focus. With music, you'd have to enrol in that kind of school and it was all French-speaking, and it wasn't on a track to go back to a U.S. college. In Europe they kind of segregate you at a young age in terms of: are you going to a college track where you're going to study some subject, or are you going on to more

of a trade? Music would fall into the trade thing. You went to a fine arts or a conservatory kind of high school and you'd take some math and English classes and stuff, but your main focus was on music. It'd almost be like you're going to the school of music here but in high school and you'd start earlier over there.

RH: So it's music theory and music history and all that kind of stuff except in high school?

EP: Except in high school, yeah, but here it's also a little bit more integrated than with a high school curriculum. So, that wasn't a viable option. I started getting in to the high school music program and they actually had a decent small jazz band, which was probably the first experience I got playing jazz. I also started going to a jazz club in Brussels called Travers. I went down there one night and sat in with the band. They asked me to be the house drummer, so I asked my parents if I could stay out late on, I think it was, Monday nights. It was a bunch of Belgian guys. It was a well known jazz club with just a little local session they had, so my parents said, "Okay, as long as you get your homework done." I started doing that and there would be people coming through Brussels that would come to the jam session. I didn't know who any of these people. People like Sonny Rollins came in.

RH: You played with Sonny Rollins?

EP: Yeah, and I didn't know who these people were. Sonny Rollins came in, a flugel-horn player named Art Farmer came in and a number of other guys. Those are two of the most memorable people. I remember sitting and playing drums, and I really didn't know what I was doing. I was thinking I had good time, had good technique and a certain sense of musicality. I remember when Sonny Rollins came in and he played like, two tunes, and his band was there. I remember I was talking to one of the people I knew and I was like "That guy sounds really

good," and he said, "That's Sonny Rollins." I didn't even know who Sonny Rollins was. I said, "Who? Who is that?" He said, "Oh he's a famous jazz musician." I thought, "Okay, oh well, sounds good."

Then, I went back to go to College in the states. I played in the university big band, started connecting with professional musicians and moved up to Boston to study with some people. I then went to the New England Conservatory for my Master's. I just lived in Boston for a number of years after that, and that's kind of where the trajectory of things went.

RH: Wow that's pretty amazing. That's quite a story.

EP: It wasn't really a clear path. Some of it was just by chance, too - being in Boston, being in New England in general and going to school in Providence; just being located in that area. I'd go down to New York all the time. This would allow me to have access to these cities in a really easy way, where you're constantly finding new things to explore and phenomenal musicians. So, it was a good environment to be in.

RH: Wow, that's awesome. Let's move on to another question here: something simple, like what kinds of courses do you teach here? What kinds of responsibilities do you have here as a faculty member?

EP: Well, right now I'm teaching private students, jazz drummers in their applied lessons and I'm co-teaching a jazz pedagogy class with Greg [Gatien, BU professor] this semester. I have three small ensembles that are right now doing kind of thematic things. One of them is focusing on afro-Cuban jazz and rhythms. Another one is focusing on the music of Thelonius Monk and Charles Mingus. The last one is kind of just what I like to call an "eclectic ensemble," which is music I like, things I've been hearing and what I've just been wanting to have a group play. It's either what I've been checking out recently, or what I

think is something that would be interesting for students to get exposure to. We're doing some tunes by John Zorn and free-improvisational kinds of things in there, and also doing some really straight ahead types of tunes. It's kind of all over the map. I'm also co-directing one of the big bands with Greg, and in the spring I'm going to be teaching a topics class for two of the grad students in jazz.

RH: How is the atmosphere at BU similar to, or different from, other Universities or schools that you might have went, like New England or others?

EP: I would say that I'm impressed with how engaged the students are in their work in classes. I find that the students in the States often have an attitude of, for better or for worse from the student side of things, "What can you do for me, or how are you going to serve me?" Let's say you're trying to work with students in a private lesson kind of scenario. You might require, or set out, something for the student to do, and often times the student would say, "Oh I just don't feel like working on that, so can we do something that's more interesting?" There wouldn't necessarily be that sense of "I'm giving you this for a purpose. I'm not necessarily throwing this out at random for you to pick and choose what you feel like working on just because something is more interesting than the other." That would actually happen a fair amount.

RH: Why do you think that is?

EP: I don't know exactly. I think it's a larger cultural thing. I think that in some ways, I have to admit I'm a little bit guilty of this myself because I was a student, too. I don't know if it's a certain type of arrogance, or feeling like your education is you know, you're paying for this, so you're entitled to have control of your education in a certain way. I think it might be the combination of part arrogance and part

entitlement. I think the cost of an education in the U.S. is incredibly expensive. It's on a different level than Canada. People are paying, not including room and board, twenty, thirty-thousand dollars or more a year to go to school and coming out with a tremendous amount of debt. So, now people think because the cost is so high, they're investing in a certain kind of thing and really need to feel like they're getting something out of it. There's also that sense of "Well, ok. If I'm paying so much, I want to be getting exactly what I need." So, there might be that sense of "How is what you're presenting to me going to serve my needs?" Some people might not trust that their teacher is the best qualified to assess their needs as a student. I think that was an issue. I feel like, here, students tend to generally come well prepared to their lessons each week, and they've worked on things that I've said they should work on. Also, students in the ensemble have checked out the music. People in the jazz pedagogy class have put some thought into some of the ideas that have been presented. You can really build off those things. I find, as a teacher, that it's very nice. It's easier to get into a healthy and productive dialogue with the students here. In the States, I often felt that you first have to sell yourself to the students to gain a certain level of trust and credibility, and you'd go through a period of that first to somehow justify that what your doing is worthwhile to the student. So, you'd have to go through that process first. Once you justified, in the student's eyes, that what you say and what you do is valid and worthwhile for their education, then it became a productive thing. But, you'd still have to go through that selling process. Sometimes, I find myself still in that same mode, at times over explaining the worth and value of doing something, as opposed to, getting right into it under the assumption that, of course it's valuable, because why would I be having you do this, or why would I be talking about it if it wasn't valuable? So, I would say that that's the major difference in environment between my experiences in the U.S. and Canada.

RH: So, Canada is more receptive, and in the US you have to sell yourself to them, basically.

EP: Yes, I would say that. I would say that the students up here are immediately more receptive to ideas. There's a certain acceptance that what's going to be presented has some value and that there's a purpose and method, as opposed to as an instructor saying, "Let me take a chunk of time and try to explain to you why this is important, and hopefully I can convince you that this is important before we really begin." That's a fairly significant difference that I've experienced.

RH: There are lots of good things that we've talked about. Is there anything else you would like to say in closing?

EP: I would say that in some ways I kind of look at my musical background as being almost backwards. I wouldn't necessarily recommend it. I got a lot of playing experience at a fairly high level at a young age. Even coming into jazz, I started playing a lot but I didn't really know that much information about it, and I was just engaged in doing it and playing the drums. I'd learn certain things by ear. I could read music, but I never looked at a fake book ever. People would just say, "Okay it's *this* tune. I would remember the shape of that and sort of have an idea of where the harmonic motion was going, but I couldn't tell you what any of those chords were. I just knew the way it sounded. I learned things that way because I didn't do music as an undergraduate degree. I actually did engineering. I did four years of something called Material Science, but I played all the time because the college I went to didn't have any specific required courses outside of your major. Anything could be an elective. Everything else I did was music-related. I never really took theory until much later down the road.

RH: You're lucky.

EP: A lot has been self-taught; pieced together.

RH: I noticed that Bartok piano piece over there. Is that yours?

EP: Well, I'm trying to get my piano skills together. I need to be able to demonstrate things better, and, because I play the drums, I never really came up with a lot of piano skills. I'm trying to learn bass and piano, because



Eric Platz

if I can play bass and piano on a functional level, I can express my ideas much more clearly to people. As opposed to explaining something, I can just go to the piano and demonstrate it. Right now, I just don't have the facility on the piano to go up and run through a set of changes very fluidly the way I'm hearing them in my head. I'm going through trying to get my piano skills together by playing *Microkosmos* and learning tunes by ear. On the bass I'm just trying to get skills together. I didn't even really start listening to jazz in a thorough way. I came into jazz through Chick Corea's electric band and then eventually started making my way backwards to the sources...

RH: Well, I think we've covered a lot of ground and can probably call it a day. Thanks a lot and welcome to B.U..

EP: No problem, this will be great.

THE BRANDON UNIVERSITY SYMPHONIC BAND TOURS ATLANTIC CANADA

BY CHLOÉ PLAMONDON AND ANNA JARDINE

From April 25 to May 2, 2009, The Brandon University Symphonic Band, Wendy McCallum, conductor, traveled to Atlantic Canada to rehearse, play concerts, share our music, and learn. The band included 49 diverse students and professors from Brandon University and the Westman Area. We were invited to perform as the featured ensemble at the Atlantic Band Festival that took place at Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax. As well as performing two concerts at the Atlantic Band Festival, the ensemble also performed three other concerts in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island as well as in Windsor and Halifax, Nova Scotia. One of the most rewarding experiences from the trip was the honour to provide accompaniment for featured soloists Dr. Catherine Wood on clarinet, and Manon Lafrance, Yamaha Guest Artist, on trumpet. The repertoire we were privileged to play was diverse, exciting, and challenging from a technical standpoint, as well as musical and expressive standpoints.

During our time in Atlantic Canada, we were given opportunity to rehearse in many diverse locations, such as junior high school band classrooms in Prince Edward Island, on campus at Prince Edward Island University, at the Confederation

Center, as well as in Seton Hall at Mount St. Vincent University. Another fantastic addition to the trip was the opportunity to teach lessons and clinics with concert band and jazz band members at the different schools where we were invited to perform. The "jazzier" students from our ensemble even took part in a jazz band rehearsal at a high school in PEI! I am sure we can speak on behalf of the entire ensemble that we felt extremely welcome and at home in Atlantic Canada. We performed for

"It magnified to me where the importance of teaching truly lies - in the students"

nearly 3000 junior high and high school students, band teachers, jazz and classical musicians from all over Canada. The festival itself gave us opportunity to see and hear other bands (junior high, high school, university, and professional) rehearse, perform, and be adjudicated. This was a rich experience as well.

Chloé: One of the strongest memories that stands out to me as a music educator and soon-to-be teacher, was the opportunity to perform the piece *American Elegy* to an audience of high school and junior high school students. The

piece was "composed in memory of those who lost their lives at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999, and to honor the survivors" (Ticheli, Frank. (2000). *An American Elegy*, Brooklyn, NY: Manhattan Beach Music.) As an advanced conducting student at the time, I had an opportunity, before the ensemble even started rehearsing the piece, to score study and learn the piece well enough to conduct it. As a part of the conducting class I was also given the opportunity to conduct this piece in front of the Symphonic Band during rehearsal time. It was a very empowering, yet humbling experience at the same time. The piece means so much in terms of high school students' experiences, troubles, thoughts, loneliness, and insecurities. These are the students that I will be teaching one day. Studying, playing, conducting, and performing this piece really touched my heart in a profound way. It magnified to me where the importance of teaching truly lies - in the students, and in the fact that we are teaching people with thoughts, feelings, personal struggles, failures and successes. Teaching music goes far beyond the music itself, but into real lives, and this is something I learned through the process of studying this piece that we performed three times during our time in Atlantic Canada.

Anna: We had many fun times on the trip that didn't have to do with music at all. We had a lot of opportunities to explore Atlantic Canada and experience some East Coast culture. We had the opportunity to have a lobster dinner at the Shore Club in Hubbard, Nova Scotia with live Celtic music provided by Drumlin, a local music group. We also had time to just explore Halifax and visit the sites such as Theodore Tugboat and Pier 21, where I found the historical record of my first relative to come to Canada in 1885. Finding this artefact was very special for me, and I was able to bring home a copy for my family. My very favourite part of the entire trip was rehearsing and performing with the ensemble. We had minimal rehearsal time with Manon Lafrance, and it was just so amazing how our ensemble evolved as the trip progressed and how much we were able to do in a short amount of time. We had some really great performances and it was an honour to play with such talented musicians and wonderful friends.



Pictures from the tour, clockwise from above: the symphonic band preparing for a performance at a high school in Halifax; the flute section in their finest; the symphonic band warming up on the main stage at Mount St. Vincent University



BUSMEA BUZZ
 Volume 2, Edition 1
 This edition of the BUSMEA BUZZ was edited by Dr. Wendy McCallum, formatted by Stephanie Dzubinski.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL DA CAPO CONFERENCE FOR STUDENT MUSIC EDUCATORS

Saturday, January 23, 2010

Better than ever before!

The Brandon University Student Music Educators Association (BUSMEA) is pleased to announce its fourth annual Da Capo Conference. The Da Capo conference is a one day professional development event that includes workshops and seminars designed to enrich the learning of music educators. Proposed topics covered will include Beginning Conducting, School Musicals, Choral Rehearsal Techniques, Using Composition in the Classroom, Junior and Senior High Instrumental Rehearsal Techniques, Choosing and Studying Repertoire, Preparing for Interviews, Yearly Planning, Using Technology, Jazz Styles, Jazz Improvisation, Elementary Music Techniques, a New Teacher Round Table, and much more!

The *Da Capo* conference will be held on **Saturday January 23rd, 2010** at the Brandon University Queen Elizabeth II Music Building in Brandon, Manitoba. Da Capo will include sessions with BU faculty, Dr. Wendy McCallum, Professor Greg Gatien, Dr. Sheelagh Chadwick, Professor Eric Platz, and possibly more, still to be confirmed. BUSMEA Alumni will be presenting and participating in a New Teacher Round Table. Also joining us are guest speakers Kevin Doell and Taylor Schmidt from Oakbank Junior High, Jacqueline Dawson with principal Rick Martin from Vincent Massey High School in Winnipeg, musical theatre specialist/choral director Carolyn Gwyer from Brandon, MB, Graham Dion, music director at Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute and Graydon Cramer with his junior high jazz students, from Brandon, MB.

Registration is open to all those interested, including music educators, music education students, and education students. For more information on accommodation or registration please contact Chloé Plamondon by way of email, BUSMEA@brandonu.ca or by phone at (204)-727-9631.

We received positive feedback from attendees at the conference which included students from Brandon University and the University of Manitoba as well music educators from across the province:

- Another great conference! Very informative and effective! Also the variety of workshops was excellent! I will definitely attend again next year!
- Such a professional conference! Very valuable, great work!
- I thought the entire day ran very smoothly, was well organized and very on-time. There was a very good variety with the sessions and presenters; everything I attended today was relevant, helpful and interesting.
- Thank you and congratulations on a highly successful day. It warms my heart to see how far Da Capo has come, and where it is going!
- Thank you for planning this event!
- Fantastic job this year BUSMEA!

SEMESTER ONE BUSMEA EVENTS

*All workshops and clinics are free of charge to BUSMEA Members. \$5 for Student Non-members, or \$20 for non-students

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Student Teaching Debriefing Night 7:00pm – Student Lounge

All past and present student teachers are invited to gather in the Student Lounge at 7:00pm, to take part in an informal discussion with their peers about individual student teaching experiences. Topics such as: most frustrating moments, funny stories, what you learned about yourself, what you applied from your classes, what you learned from the students and many more will be brought up and discussed in both small and large group settings.

Thursday, October 8, 2009

Percussion Workshops 1:30 – 3:30pm – Percussion Studio

with **Robert Breithaupt** *Professor of Music and Department Chair of Jazz Studies/Music Industry at Capital University in Columbus Ohio*

1:30-2:30 PM “Percussion Teaching: Techniques and Methods”

2:40-3:30 PM “Exploring the ROLL of the Jazz Percussionist”

Friday, October 16, 2009

BUSMEA Buzz Release Party 11:45 am – Student Lounge

Come to pick up your copy of the BUSMEA BUZZ, celebrate the contributors, and get information on how YOU can submit to the next edition!

Professional Writing Workshop 12:00pm – 1:30pm – Student Lounge

with **Joanne Villeneuve** – *Reporter from the Brandon Sun*

After receiving your copy of the BUSMEA BUZZ, join us with Joanne in the Student Lounge to learn about writing articles, reviews, conducting interviews, and much more! This session will allow you to increase the quality of your writing, and give you the confidence to submit to the next edition of the BUZZ. The session will also be beneficial in terms of discovering the differences between writing articles as opposed to writing pieces such as essays, which you are mainly asked to write in university.

Friday, October 23, 2009

BUS ME to TEMPO!

FREE transportation into Winnipeg for this event is available to all BUSMEA Members. Sign up for a spot in our carpool as either a driver or a passenger. A full listing of events is available online at <http://members.shaw.ca/mmctempo/>

Saturday, November 21, 2009

Technology in the Music Classroom - Workshops

Presenters: **Janet Yochim** from Virden, MB & **Tom Dowden** from Brandon, MB

10:00am – 11:30am – “Using the Smart Board in the Music Classroom” with Janet Yochim

1:00pm – 2:30 – “Introduction to use Garage Band and Band in a Box in your classroom” with Tom Dowden



Friday, October 23, 2009
 Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute
 180 Riverton Ave.
 Winnipeg, Manitoba

Join BUSMEA on a road trip to Winnipeg for the TEMPO – Manitoba Music Conference

All BUSMEA members are entitled to *FREE*** transportation to and from Winnipeg on the day of the conference**

A few of the sessions to be included this year are:

- Guitar Class: Music for Everyone, *presented by Guy Michaud*
- How dynamic is your groups dynamic?, *presented by Richard Blatti*
- Musical Theatre and Comedy LIVE!, *presented by Stan Lesk*
- Teaching: The Big Picture, *presented by Connie Turner*
- A Taste of Taiko: Rhythm, Movement and Drums, *presented by Hinode Taiko*
- Music Education Philosophy after the Demise of “Aesthetic Education”, *presented by Dr. Wayne Bowman*

A complete schedule of events is available online at: members.shaw.ca/mmctempo/

REVIEW AVENUE BY JENNIFER SHEAD

THE CREATIVE DIRECTOR: CONDUCTOR, TEACHER, LEADER BY EDWARD S. LISK

Edward S. Lisk is an experienced, internationally renowned music educator and author. He has published many books supporting the professional growth of instrumental music educators and their changing needs as the field and its demands change. *The Creative Director: Conductor, Teacher, Leader* is one of these books. I think of this book as a kind of “self-help” guide for music educators, as it is full of concrete ideas, challenging concepts, and practical solutions to common problems experienced by instrumental music educators, as witnessed and/or experienced by Lisk himself. Many of the ideas presented in this book have appeared in Lisk’s previous publications, sometimes multiple times. These are known as Alternative Rehearsal Techniques, or A.R.T. (Lisk 2007, 16). For example, Lisk presents techniques for using the circle of fourths to help students become fluent in all keys, techniques for helping students learn to establish a steady internal pulse, and techniques for teaching different rhythms to students using the “Ruler of Time” (Lisk 2007, 20-53). These concepts are not new to readers of Lisk, but sometimes they have been modified slightly based on new research done by the author based on conversations he has had and workshops he has conducted with music educators since his last publication.

This book is separated into three distinct sections, namely “Conductor”, “Teacher”, and “Leader”. The first section of the book, “Conductor”, focuses on presenting techniques to help music educators improve their conducting. As I have only taken a few weeks’ worth of conducting classes so far, the techniques Lisk presents are a little beyond me. They are geared towards more experienced conductors who aim to work on and improve

specific aspects of their conducting. Lisk breaks down different approaches to conducting and points out the musical components conductors should prioritize, such as sonority, harmonic and melodic content, and expression (Lisk 2007, 5-10). While the concepts presented may make little sense to inexperienced conductors such as myself now, surely when we are more experienced conductors they will help us continue to improve our conducting skills.

The second section of the book, “Teacher”, is the largest section of the book. Lisk covers a wide variety of topics in this section, but some of the material he covers that I find most interesting includes techniques I had previously thought too complicated to try out with a junior high or high school band. One of the best examples I can think of is overtone tuning (Lisk 2007, 77-78). While the process would probably take a lot of practice and time to be successful, Lisk points out that the

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 the hard work”

reward of greatly improved ensemble intonation is worth the hard work. This is one of the techniques I am most eager to try out with my students. Many of the techniques covered in this section are the “repeats” from Lisk’s earlier books. For readers who have not read any of Lisk’s other books, however, this is a good section to start

with as it contains very specific activities with detailed, step-by-step instructions on how to include these activities in your teaching.

“Leader” is the final section of the book, and is devoted to advocacy. Lisk lays out his detailed “Leading the Way” program to present to parents and community members to show them the value of an instrumental music program. This chapter comes complete with five different

instructional modules to present at a “Leading the Way” session, as well as detailed forms to keep track of enrolment, instrument use and purchases, and budget to show administrators. I like this section because it is extremely linear and logical. I think the “Leading the Way” program is a good place to start when advocating for a music program, because it gives detailed instructions and pre-made forms that are ready to copy and use.

I would recommend this book to any music education student who is interested in picking up new tricks and techniques for conducting or for the classroom. The advocacy section is also particularly useful for teachers who may not know how to begin advocating for their program. While this book bears some similarity to Lisk’s previous books, I think it is still worth reading as the techniques that are bearing the test of time keep re-appearing in improved forms.

Both oboe and bassoon reeds come in polymer (plastic) versions. Although the sound can be less mellow than cane reeds, polymer reeds are much more reliable. Commercial cane reeds may have serious flaws that impede a student’s early progress; polymer reeds, on the other hand, *always* work. These reeds do not need soaking and are not susceptible to mold or mildew, which destroys cane. They are sturdier than cane reeds (although they can be broken and still need to be handled with care.) I began my bassoon studies on a polymer reed, and only switched to cane once I had the basics down and was ready to move on to making a better sound. The Fox Company, who makes fine and very reliable bassoons, also sells good student polymer reeds. A couple of these polymer reeds for oboe and bassoon should be a mainstay of the arsenal of any music teacher.

When your student has learned the basics and is ready to try out a cane reed, you will want to make sure that you don’t waste your (or their) money on reeds that are impossible to play. Unfortunately the reeds available in most music stores are just not worth the price; they cost too much and do not work. It is worth the time and effort to find a good reed supplier and use them faithfully. As I have not ever ordered reeds before this year (I’ve always ordered the cane and made my own reeds) I am going to pass on the recommendations from another of my bassoon teachers. Jesse Read (bassoon professor at the University of Vancouver) buys all his student reeds from Forrest’s Music in California. This company specializes in all things related to double reeds. Until further notice I will order both oboe and bassoon reeds from that company, and I will keep you double reed fans at BUSMEA informed on my success with them.

I would always suggest ordering just a couple of reeds from any supplier first as a sort of test drive. If you can’t play them, your students probably can’t either. Check the bassoon reeds for sagging on E-natural (third space bass clef.) If this note sags, you will not want to buy more reeds from this

THAT OLD BLACK MAGIC: DOUBLE REEDS

BY HEATHER CARRUTHERS

My Czech bassoon teacher turned to me one day and said, as we worked on bassoon reeds: “we scrape a little here and we scrape a little there, but in the end, it’s all black magic!” If you can imagine this in a heavy Czechoslovakian accent you have an idea of what I hear every time I cannot get a reed to work!

As a music teacher, you will always have to deal with the issue of bassoon and oboe reeds, and the smaller the place you live in, the more challenging your situation will be. However, there are some simple tips to make sure you always have a reed on hand to help out those students whose hearts are set on entering the glamorous world of double reed playing.

Double reeds are simply two pieces of thin cane (the same cane that is used for clarinet reeds, sax reeds, and fishing rods, not in any particular order) tied together at one end. The free blades vibrate together to create the unique bassoon or oboe sound. Unfortunately, double reeds are expensive and fragile, and paying a lot of money for a reed does not ensure that it will work. Here are a few guidelines to reduce the chance of wasting your money on double reeds.

supplier. I inherited a collection of Charles' bassoon reeds when I starting teaching the woodwind techniques class this fall at Brandon University. The Charles company is well respected in the double reed community; all my personal reed equipment came from them. Yet every single one of their reeds had problems with sagging E-naturals. I solved the problem by cutting back the tips, but I will not re-order reeds from that company.

Your best friend in the oboe or bassoon world (vis-à-vis reeds, that is!) is a professional or advanced player. Be nice to oboists and bassoonists, make friends with them, and be ready to ask them for reed advice. These people will

often have a large supply of used reeds that they may be willing to sell to you at much lower prices than you would pay for commercial reeds. Some double reed players also make reeds to sell (just so you know, I am not one of them!) Japanese orchestras have a really fabulous hierarchy in their double reed sections: the second chair player has to supply all the first chair's reeds, the third chair the second's, and so on until the unfortunate player at the bottom of the heap has to make reeds for him or herself *and* the player above her!

Once you have a reed that works, there are a few tricks to preserve its life. Let your cane reeds dry out thoroughly between playing. A damp reed in an air-tight case is susceptible to mold and mildew, both of which ruin cane. Encourage your students to let reeds air-dry if at all possible after playing. Make sure their reed cases have holes in them to allow the reeds to dry. Reeds can be cleaned once a week; just drop them into a glass of hydrogen peroxide to bubble the build-up away. You can also scrape the inside of the blades of a bassoon reed very, very carefully with the side of a needle (an old Czechoslovakian trick.)

The cardinal rule for avoiding cracked and broken reeds (besides not jamming them

into your teeth) is this: never even *think* of doing anything with a reed until it has been soaked. Dry cane, and especially partly-dry cane, is extremely fragile. Wet cane, on the other hand, is flexible; that's why the reed works in the first place. Reeds don't need a long soak...two to three minutes will do...but they always must be completely immersed in warm water before playing.

There are a few inexpensive tools that you can have on hand to try improve a bassoon reed. Oboists tend to do most of their work with a knife and I am not about to recommend taking a knife to an expensive oboe reed! Bassoonists, however, can do an extraordinary

"Once you have a reed that works, there are a few tricks to preserve its life"

amount of reed work with just some emery paper (black sandpaper that can get wet without shredding), a razor blade, and a guitar pick.

If your reed is not speaking as easily as you would like, or is acting up in any way, often a light sanding with very fine (220 grade) emery paper will do wonders. Always soak the reed first before doing any work on it. Carefully slip the guitar pick between the two blades and give the blades a light sanding over their entire surface. Be careful to work an equal amount on both sides, and do not over-sand any one area; you want to keep the proportions of the reed equal. Another trick, mentioned before, for reviving a sagging reed, is to trim the very tip. Put the reed on a solid surface (a marble cheese board is perfect) and with a razor blade trim a miniscule sliver off the tip of the reed. The trick here is to take very little off and make sure you are cutting in a straight line. This is the technique I used to solve the sagging "E's" on the university reeds. I kept cutting off small pieces of the tip until the "E's" finally stayed up to pitch.

If you're wondering how much you need to budget for your double reeds, here are the present online prices for various reeds:

Cane bassoon reeds: Forrests' bassoon reeds (Forrests student model) cost \$11.95 apiece, or \$10.76 each if you order 3 or more (all prices in U.S. dollars.)

Cane oboe reeds: Oboe reeds are more expensive than bassoon reeds. Forrests' oboe reeds cost \$16.70 each, or \$15.03 if you buy 3 or more.

Polymer bassoon reeds: Forrests does not sell polymer reeds; I recommend Fox for polymer bassoon reeds. At this moment the Fox web store is not online, so I don't have their own price for their reeds, but other online stores list them between \$10 and \$15.

Polymer oboe reeds: I do not have a specific recommendation for a maker of polymer oboe reeds yet, although I plan to try out the Chartier company this year.

As a final note: there is a promising company in Ottawa who now sells highly regarded single polymer reeds to professional clarinet and sax players around the world. The company is trying to develop reliable high-quality double reeds, but has not yet succeeded to their own standards. As they say on their website:

“Double reeds made with Légère's propriety polymer formulation are not yet available. We have tested some very promising prototypes, but it may be some time before these reeds are commercially available. (For those of you that have been waiting and watched these announcements before, we should point out that it is a lot harder than we originally thought it would be!)”

This will be a hugely important development for all double reed players; I would certainly buy any double reed they offered after reading the tributes from single reed players. Check out their website at <http://www.legere.com>.

And finally, never be above whispering an incantation or two to the Double Reed Gods. You never know what will work!

Would you like to become a member of BUSMEA?

Email us @ BUSMEA@brandonu.ca

The process is simple:

You first choose to join one of the four professional organizations:

MBA – Manitoba Band Association – (\$20)

MCA – Manitoba Choral Association – (\$25)

MOC – Manitoba Orff Chapter (\$25)

MCGA – Manitoba Classroom Guitar Association (\$20)

And then you fill out the BUSMEA Registration Form

The cost is \$10 for BUSMEA, plus the cost of the association you would like to join. You can write just one check payable to BUSMEA for the total amount.

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join BUSMEA!!

BUILDING BRIDGES: NATIONAL YOUTH BAND OF CANADA BY HOLLY BRYAN

The National Youth Band of Canada is an incredible learning experience that unites young musicians from across Canada. After auditioning for the band, approximately 60 musicians come together from every province to rehearse and perform five concerts in one week. The band is open to any Canadian musicians between the ages of 16 and 21. After participating in the band in 2008 and 2009, I have maintained strong connections with musicians and conductors who are helping me pursue my musical career.

The National Youth Band experience is educational and inspiring and helped me grow exponentially as a young musician. Participating in the bands expanded my knowledge of musicianship, repertoire and musical style over the intensive week of rehearsals and performances. I found the 2009 conductor, Dr. Shelley Jagow, incredibly inspirational as she got to know the band over the course of the week. My experience with the National Youth Band of 2009 was one I will never forget. We played a variety of repertoire with a prairie theme, as it took place in Saskatoon.

The Yamaha featured artist of 2009 was Dean McNeill, an incredible trumpeter and composer from Saskatoon. He is the Head of Music at the University of Saskatchewan. Dean McNeill was featured in three works performed by the National Youth Band, soloing in two and having arranged one. The repertoire

we performed, the exhilaration of performing alongside wonderful musicians and the wonderful friends I made was an experience that touched me in an amazing way.

The National Youth Band of Canada 2010 is taking place in Vancouver, BC under the direction of Dr. Wayne

Jeffrey. The Yamaha soloist is Ian McDougall, a trombonist, composer and teacher from Victoria, BC. The deadline for applications is November 15, 2009, and more details are available at the Canadian Band Association's webpage www.canadianband.ca.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS FROM A NEW TEACHER BY KAREN LUPTAK

The job started when university ended. Looking for a teaching job was a full time job at the start of the summer. I was glad not to have a job for the first half of the summer considering it was not only time consuming to get ready for a school year but it also consumed me. Trying to find a career is really big!

During this time, I worked on my portfolio, found schools to apply to, and completed the all important applications themselves. I applied to over 15 schools and for each school, the application process was different. The following is a list of documents I was asked to submit: cover letter, resume, references, signed permission of each reference to be able to use them as a reference, final reports from all of your student teaching placements, transcripts, and even a high school transcript. It was a time consuming process and quite stressful waiting to hear back from these schools.

I was lucky enough to have an interview out in Saskatchewan which I made, despite the distance. Interviews are much better in person. When I was called for the interview I made sure to ask who would be on the interview panel. It was nice to take as much mystery out of the process as possible. The interviewers were the principals of both schools and the superintendent. I spent some quality time with Google researching the schools, towns, and my interviewers.

I took Dr. McCallum's advice during the interview process and kept in mind that they were not only interviewing me, but I was interviewing them too. I was thinking - is this a school for me? Things really clicked between me and the principals at both schools, and that was probably why they offered me the position and also why I took the job. In my opinion, administrator support is one of the best things you can have, and both principals seemed very supportive.

I was fortunate that I took this job as well because it so happened that out of the 15 applications, I received only two more phone calls for interviews. In hindsight, the BU career fair is really important for interviews. I would love to go back in time and interview with the Winnipeg school divisions. I did not receive one call from a Winnipeg school. If I had taken an interview, at least my name would have made the second interview pile.

Once I had the job, I started my summer job. If I was financially able, I would have definitely taken this time to prepare for the year. I was glad to have done a few things during the summer but I wish I would have included all of the following;

- Photocopied everything from the BU library!
- Set out the years goals
- Wrote the first letter home
- Wrote a band handbook
- Wrote some unit plans
- Familiarized myself with the curriculum
- Planned what will happen in the first week

- Organized the music room the exact way I wanted it
- Cleaned the instrument storage room
- Assigned instruments to students
- Cleaned instruments
- Wrote course outlines

"Things really clicked between me and the principals at both schools, and that was probably why they offered me the position and also why I took the job."

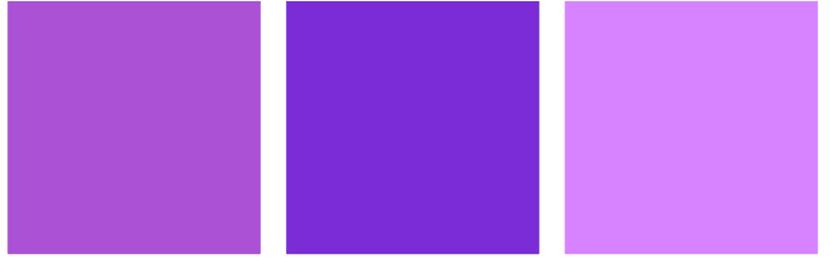
There are some major changes from student teaching to teaching. The first change would be classroom management. When student teaching, you know that after seven weeks you are free from the students. So there is no long term management plans needed. It seems more circumstantial while student teaching, because there are already set routines. Now that I am teaching, reality sets in that these students need strong rules right from the start which need to be enforced daily. Nothing can be left to slide. My brother passed along some really good advice to me from a couple of experienced teachers. He asked these teachers if there was one thing they would change about their first year of teaching. They all said that they wish they had been stricter in their first year. You can always relax rules if you find they are too tough. I have taken this to heart and feel that I am in a much better place because of it. I have made several phone calls home, had interviews with students and the principal, held far too many detentions etc. but my classes are becoming manageable!

Another big change is the logistics. There is a lot of paperwork. It seems there is a form for everything that needs to be filled out. In hindsight, it would have been nice to learn way more about this while student teaching because this has come as the biggest surprise to me.

Another change that I have found is long term planning. I have been asked to turn in a year plan to my principal at the end of this month. The year plan is to include approximate dates of when I will be teaching what and what teaching strategies I will use. While student teaching, I am not sure that I thought more than a day ahead and at most a week. Now I need to be thinking over the span of a year. This is something I wish I would have asked from cooperating teachers.

Communication amongst staff members is also big. Not that I did not communicate with all staff while student teaching, but I did not need to rely on them like I do now. My cooperating teacher had the information I would now ask other staff in the building. I make sure to talk to my caretaker and secretary daily because they really do know everything. I have also talked to my principals about one thing or another daily since I have been teaching. Working with other teachers has also brought me far. Homeroom teachers are amazing. It seems they can tell you anything about a student by the end of the first day of school.

Mostly I have been taking each day at a time. I remember saying to some staff members before the school year started that if I made it to Thanksgiving I was in the clear. Now that Thanksgiving has come and gone and my feet still don't quite feel planted, I am thinking now that there is no mark except for the fact that today I taught someone something, hopefully.



BUSMMEA

BUSMMEA is a professional development association run by a council of music education students.

BUSMMEA council organizes professional development opportunities for its membership to supplement their educational experience at the Brandon University Faculties of Music and Education.

BUSMMEA registration fees include membership into one of these provincial organizations for music educators: Manitoba Band Association, Manitoba Choral Association, Manitoba Orff Chapter, Manitoba Classroom Guitar Association, as well as the Manitoba Music Educators' Association and Manitoba Teachers' Society. Registration fees vary by organization.

For further information about registration or anything else, contact any BUSMMEA Council Member directly, leave a written message in the Music Office or email us: busmea@brandonu.ca

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BUSMMEA professional development opportunities in the upcoming year

- BUSMMEA BUZZ: opportunity to contribute to a professional journal.
- BUSMMEA to Tempo: BUSMMEA coordinated transportation to Tempo Music Educators Conference in Winnipeg.
- Da Capo Conference: annual day-long conference of professional development workshops hosted by BUSMMEA at the Brandon University School of Music, Saturday January 23th, 2010.
- BUSMMEA Recital: annual recital showcasing the musical successes of our membership.
- Free admission into many professional development workshops and clinics all year long.