

Privatizing CMP

Cornelia Watkins, Private Music Teacher



The handbook for the 2002 Texas Orchestra Directors Association convention was filled with sessions on conducting, recruiting and technology in the classroom. But as a private cello teacher,

I found none of these topics intriguing. Finally, a session about teaching musicianship grabbed me, though the description sounded almost too good to be true. I'll give this one a chance, I thought – but, wait, it seemed to have a sponsor! What was “CMP” and what were they selling, anyway? Instruments? Method books? Software? Now I just knew this was one of those come-ons — what gizmo could an orchestra director use to lead students into a personal, meaningful discovery of music-making in a classroom setting?

Despite my skepticism, I attended the session, and to my amazement and delight, Randy Swiggum wasn't selling anything, just offering lots of creative suggestions for teaching real music-making from the inside out. I was so drawn to the work Randy was doing that the following summer I traveled all the way to Wisconsin to

attend the Comprehensive Musicianship through Performance (CMP) workshop, where I got an even better picture of the wonderful way CMP was supporting and strengthening Wisconsin school music teachers and their programs. But why was this only being offered to school music teachers? Shouldn't *every* music teacher be leading students to the “heart” of music? What about sharing this approach with private teachers? The wheels began to turn, and a private teacher track for CMP was in the making!

Is There a Trained Private Teacher in the House?

While music education majors spend quite a lot of time training to be teachers, performance majors seldom even hear the word “pedagogy” mentioned in music school —yet most will give private lessons at least sometime during their careers. And unless they have a position at a college, private instructors tend to teach “on the side” of their performing schedule. While this is not necessarily a bad thing, in many instances very little thought is given to how to teach a student well. So more often than not, traditional private instrumental teachers simply teach the way *they* were taught — for better or worse.

There are some ways private teachers can develop their teaching skills, but often that entails submitting to a lengthy teacher training and certification program, or trying to take on someone else's teaching method and make it one's own. The beauty of CMP training is that rather than dictating exactly how and what teachers should teach, it offers a creative ways for private teachers to broaden their vision, and to help organize and develop their teaching within their own innate style of working with students. Point by point, here are the ways CMP will support private teachers:

Music Selection – By examining the materials we currently use—scale and exercise books, studies, and literature—and deciding the relative strengths and weaknesses of those materials, private teachers can then seek out new materials to support and revitalize their teaching.

Analysis – While the path of least resistance in private lessons is to teach students the technique they need to play a piece, helping students understand the piece as a whole is often neglected. By exploring information about the composer, period, stylistic elements, harmonies, counterpoint and sharing our own personal insights and experience of the music,



UWM Double Reed Faculty

Stephen Colburn, Oboe
Principal Oboe
Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra

Beth Giacobassi, Bassoon
Acting Assistant Principal
Bassoon/Contrabassoon
Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra

Martin Woltman, Oboe
Assistant Principal Oboe & English Horn
Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra

Ted Soluri, Bassoon
Principal Bassoon
Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra

PECK SCHOOL OF
THE ARTS

Join us for the
4TH ANNUAL
UWM DOUBLE REED DAY

January 29, 2005

- Exhibitors include Nielsen's, Fox and more!
- Workshops
- Reedmaking
- Recitals
- Double reed ensemble (all students perform!)

For information:
UWM Bands
414.229.5641
uwmbands@uwm.edu
arts.uwm.edu/bands



UWM offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in music performance and education. Graduate assistantships available.

arts.uwm.edu

comprehensive musicianship through performance

private teachers can offer their students a more thorough and intimate connection with the music.

Strategies – Possibly the most significant role of the private teacher is helping students develop their playing skills. By exploring ideas and materials from private teachers at the top of their profession, we will study the best strategies for teaching the hard-to-teach techniques, as well as ways approach technique from the needs of the music. We will also examine the often-neglected areas of how to teach students to practice and prepare for performance.

Outcomes – Teachers and students both benefit from a clear vision about what a student needs to learn and what growth will come of it. We will examine and clarify “the big picture” for our students, so that the goals along the way have a logical direction, and the components of musicianship, technical development, maturity and musical independence will be better integrated.

Assessment – With no standards or requirements by which to evaluate how well the teacher is teaching or how much the student is learning, this is the most neglected aspect of the CMP model in the private lesson world. By developing internal auditing systems for private teaching, we can begin to assess areas of strength and weakness and make improvements that will benefit both students and teachers.

No one is expecting private teachers to start writing lesson plans and creating written assignments for students – this training will be adapted by private teachers who understand what it is to be a private teacher. But the process of organizing and assessing these areas of teaching and learning can and will have a powerful effect on private teachers and their students. I am excited by the prospects, for my own teaching as well as for the private teachers who will participate in the future. The next year and a half will be devoted to developing the program, and by the summer of 2006, the CMP Private Teacher Track will be up and running. I’m looking forward to seeing you there – I can hardly wait!

Cornelia Watkins plays cello professionally and teaches privately in Houston, TX. She gives workshops at music teacher gatherings around the country, including ASTA and Texas Music Educators Conventions, and most recently at the William Harris Lee Violin Shop in Chicago with

Mimi Zweig. She is on the board of TexASTA as their private teacher consultant, has written articles and reviews for American String Teacher Journal, and is the author of her own string teaching newsletter “rosindust.”

Wisconsin Foundation for School Music

2005 Board of Trustees

www.wsmafoundation.org

President

Vincent P. Lyles, First Vice President, Robert W. Baird & Co., Milwaukee

President-Elect

R. Scott Pierce, Superintendent, Kenosha School District, Kenosha

Past-President

Jun Lee, President, SRI Design, Inc., Madison

Treasurer

Roger White, White House of Music, Inc., Waukesha

Board Members

Linda Bergren, Financial Advisor, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, Madison

Gregg Butler, Deputy Superintendent, Eau Claire Area Schools, Eau Claire

Jayne Dawicki, Freelance Musician, Miss Wisconsin 2002, West Allis

Robert Hanson, Superintendent, Lac du Flambeau Schools,
Lac du Flambeau

Marian Holton-Manuel, Imaging Specialist, UW Hospital &
Clinics, Madison

Sarah Jerome, Superintendent, Kettle Moraine School District, Wales

Gerald Kember, Superintendent, La Crosse School District, La Crosse

Carl Templer, Communications Consultant, TC&C Inc., Milwaukee

Ted Witt, Business Consultant, State Collection Service, Inc., Madison

Richard W. Wolf, Emeritus Professor of Music, University of
Wisconsin, Madison

Staff

Eric Runestad, Executive Director erunestad@wsmamusic.org

Michael George, Director of Development mgeorge@wmea.com

Andrea Mauch, Development Associate amauch@tds.net