

CON BRIO

Oregon Music Teachers' Association, Inc.
Eugene District

Affiliated with the Music Teachers' National Association, Inc.



Opus 215

November 2010

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Harmony in the November Meeting!

We look forward to our meeting on Monday, November 8th when **David Servias**, one of Eugene District's members, will give a presentation on *The Importance of Harmony in Musical Performances*. David says that his presentation will explore ways in which music teachers can encourage students to become more aware of harmony in the music they perform.

David holds a B.M. from the University of Idaho, a M. A. from Washington State University and a Doctorate in Piano performance. In Seattle he was an accompanist and had a large piano studio before moving to Eugene so his wife could pursue a master degree. In Eugene he is continuing his career as both a piano teacher and accompanist.

We will assemble at 9:00 AM at the lovely home of **Mary Ellen Yost** to greet colleagues and enjoy refreshments provided by Mary Ellen Yost and **Lucy Clevenger**. **Carolyn McHan** will preside over the business meeting prior to David's presentation.

Mary Ellen's residence/studio is at 84544 Hideaway hills South, Eugene. Directions to her home follow.

Delores Tiktin

OMTA Eugene District Vice-President

Directions to the residence/studio of Mary Ellen Yost

84544 Hideaway Hills South, Eugene (541) 345-7330

Coming from I-5 South (from Creswell or Cottage Grove)

1. **Exit #186** - Goshen
2. **Left at the stop sign** right off the freeway. Go over I-5, then left at the stop sign. You will be traveling on Hwy. 99 South.
3. **Right on Dillard Road**. You will cross RR tracks and drive about 1.4 miles on Dillard.
4. **Left on Hideaway Hills South**. Our house and studio is about one mile up this road.
5. The road makes a right turn. You will pass a row of mailboxes and a road to the left—**DO NOT TAKE THIS ROAD!**
Proceed up the hill. Our house is the last house on the paved road on the **right**. It is a two-story, off-white house with brown trim. We are in a small forest. There are houses past ours, but they are on a forked gravel road.

Coming from I-5 North (from Eugene, Springfield, etc.)

1. **Exit #188** (also listed as 188A on one sign) into Goshen.
2. **Right at the stop sign** at the bottom of the exit.
3. **Left at the stop sign onto Hwy. 99 South**.
4. **Continue on 99S. to Dillard Road**.
5. **Follow directions #4 and #5 above**.

Coming from Eugene over Dillard Road

Take East Amazon to Dillard, then **RIGHT** on Hideaway hills South. Follow directions in #5 above.

December Holiday Potluck

Monday, December 13, 2010, 7:00 PM
Home of Carolyn McHan
34324 Deerwood Drive, Eugene

Annual potluck with entertainment by members.

District Holiday Recitals

Sunday, December 19, 2010
Recitals on the hour. Recital times TBA

United Lutheran Church
2230 Washington St., Eugene

Entry fee: \$7 per student

Deadline for entry forms and master list:
Friday, December 3, 2010.

Students of Syllabus level II and above may perform all styles of music, solo and ensemble.

Please send entry forms to:
Wyatt L. Burger
P. O. Box 307
Cheshire, OR 97419-0307

Wyatt Burger

OMTA Eugene District Recitals Chair

The deadline for submitting articles and announcements for the December 2010 issue of *Con Brio* is Saturday, December 4, 2010.

Con Brio needs your short articles, teaching ideas, studio news, and any items of interest!

Send your news and announcements to district members between regular issues of Con Brio!

Simply submit the news item or announcement as usual, indicating you would like it sent immediately. It will be formatted and sent via email to all members.



Con Brio

November 2010

Con Brio is the newsletter of the Eugene Chapter of OMTA, published and distributed monthly, except July and August.

President: Carolyn McHan Corresponding Sec: David Cragun
Vice-President: Delores Tiktin Recording Sec: Neil Patton
Treasurer: Wyatt Burger Past President: Claire Wachter

Con Brio founder and first publisher: Lea Mirabella

All materials for publication are due on the Saturday preceding the first Monday of each month.

Con Brio is posted on the Eugene District website on the Wednesday prior to the monthly meeting.

Wyatt L. Burger, editor

The only reason I always try to meet and know the parents better is because it helps me to forgive the children.

—Louis Johannot, teacher

Junior Bach Festival

Sunday, February 6, 2011

Recitals to begin at 1:30 PM. Student entry forms (available on the State OMTA website), master list (available on the District website) and entry fees due Monday, January 11, 2011.

Repertoire for all recitals may now include all Baroque composers. Encourage your students to experience the joy of the Baroque period. Students may enter either competitive or non-competitive recitals; all students will receive written comments from our adjudicators.

What a delightful way to chase the winter blues away with the beauty and grace of Baroque music. I hope all teachers will have students who wish to participate. See you all on February 6!

Carol White

OMTA Eugene District Bach Festival Chair

Festival of Popular Music

Impressive performances marked the start of the 2010 OMTA Season

On Sunday, October 24, beautiful music could be heard from 1:00-3:00 at the United Lutheran Church in Eugene as 46 students participated in the 2010 Festival of Popular Music. Students were well-prepared and showcased a broad range of music from favorites like Linus and Lucy to George Gershwin's Prelude No. 2. Thirteen teachers were represented all reflecting excellent preparation and musicality. Both recitals were a testament to the high standards held by OMTA teachers and the hard work of their piano students as well as the importance of holding a recital dedicated to genres outside the Classical idiom. The audience could easily see how much these students enjoyed their pieces.

I am pleased to report that participation was up from the eight teachers and 36 students represented in 2009. As several teachers have noted, the key to success with this Festival is to begin pieces in the Spring. One of the issues that I will discuss at the next meeting is to recommend that we broaden the scope of the Festival to include Level 1 students with certain restrictions including that it not be their first performance. This could be an exciting way to motivate early elementary students to begin participating in OMTA events.

I wasn't to thank all the teachers for making this year's Festival a success! A special thanks to Wyatt for producing the programs. Thank you Janie for all your work in purchasing the new OMTA banner—what a professional appearance that gives to our events. Finally, my heartfelt thanks to our wonderful President, Carolyn, for all her encouraging words and support during my recital preparation. What a fabulous group and event to be part of!

Sincerely,

Soria Phillips-Meadow

Festival of Popular Music Chair

Announcing the second annual Beverly Soule Award Competition

Eugene District OMTA

This competition, to be held in May 2011, is open to high school seniors studying with Eugene District members. Its aim is "to encourage and reward deserving high school students...whether or not the applicant intends to continue his music studies after graduation." (Beverly Soule)

Contestants are to play three memorized pieces, each representing a different style period, for an adjudicator who will provide written comments on their performances. One winner will be named to receive the award of \$250. The winner will be invited to play his/her entire program at the June OMTA meeting. Any honorable mentions named will be invited to play one selection from their program.

The deadline for entries is April 10, 2011. It will be of help in scheduling if you can let me know in advance how many of your students are likely to participate. Date and time will be announced in early May.

Ellen McQuilkin

Competition Chair

The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.

—William Arthur Ward

Piano Duets

Piano duets are an excellent way to increase students' sensitivity to music and ensemble. Piano duets are the only ensemble I can think of where two players share the same instrument. The physical closeness required can spark a degree of creativity and spontaneity we rarely see in other ensembles. Students need to be aware of the physical presence of their partner; movements of the hands, arms, wrists, and even breathing. Students must listen more acutely for balance and control of dynamics and tone color.

Matching students for duet playing requires they be of near equal ability and temperament, and also have the extra time for rehearsal. This is an excellent opportunity to schedule "back-to back" lessons. The longer two students work together, the better will be their ensemble. I have students exchange places on a regular basis so they gain equal experience with both primo and secondo parts.

There are a few specific problems that may need to be addressed in piano duet playing:

- ♪ **Who gets to use the damper pedal?** Traditionally, the secondo is usually responsible for the pedal because it often carries the principle harmonic content of the music, but this is not always true. I have seen music where the primo player is in a better position to handle the damper pedal, and in a few instances, the responsibility of pedaling should be traded between the players. My best suggestion is to let the music decide.
- ♪ **How much rehearsal time?** It can take years for two pianists to reach perfect ensemble and a polished performance. If players want to work toward that goal, they will need to make time for rehearsals. The players will need to rehearse together at least twice a week and more often when preparing for a performance.
- ♪ **Seating considerations.** Ideally, two adjustable artist's benches work best for duet playing. A duet bench is acceptable, as are two regular-size benches. Duet players need adequate room to center themselves to their part, and for movement of arms and hands.
- ♪ **"Choreography"** or the coordination of players movements. Just as a ballroom dance couple must carefully work out their movements so as not to step on each others feet, so must duet players "choreograph" the movements of hands and arms to avoid unwanted collisions. And it seems some composers have written duet repertoire specifically to help bring about such accidents. There are many examples in duet repertoire where the parts come dangerously close to one another. Some music requires the hand of one player to cross over or under the arm of the other player. These movements, as well as page turning, need to carefully worked out during lessons and rehearsals.
- ♪ **Compatibility.** Siblings make convenient duet partners: they live in the same house, practice on the same piano, and are more likely to find time to rehearse together. Some siblings work beautifully together, and others cannot share the same piano bench for five minutes without the risk of damage or injury to one another! A student may work well with a friend, yet others work best with someone they don't know very well. Bottom line: consider personality, temperament, and level of proficiency when matching students, and recognize when a match is not working.
- ♪ **Who leads?** Ideally, duet players form such a perfect ensemble they perform "as one." Both students should be encouraged to contribute their ideas and work together to come up with appropriate solutions. But when a disagreement arises during rehearsals, outside the realm of the teacher's influence and coaching, I allow the primo player to have the last word.
- ♪ **Memorization.** Piano duet ensembles usually use music, but not always. Performing from memory represents a heightened degree of understanding of the score that can lead to a high caliber performance. If both players are comfortable performing without the score, and know their parts thoroughly, then a truly magnificent performance can result.

Some final thoughts...

Piano students can learn much from sight reading duet repertoire. This is an especially useful means of allowing newly matched players a chance to get to know each other and for you to assess how well they work together.

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Both players need to be flexible when first rehearsing together. Each may have learned their own part, but the combination of primo and secondo will likely require adjustments in pedaling, dynamics, balance, tone quality, etc. An individual duet part cannot be mastered until combined and rehearsed with the other part.

Play duets with your students. They will learn the importance of a steady tempo, accurate rhythms and, most of all...*to listen*.

Always include some duets in every recital. Ensemble music adds welcome variety to the program. Pair up as many of your students as you can, and play the secondo or “teacher part” along with your younger, less experienced students. Playing duets will raise the level of excellence of your students, and your entire studio will benefit.

W. B.

OMTA Fundraising Opportunity

We would like to invite you to support this OMTA fundraising opportunity again. Please encourage student parents, family, friends and neighbors to host some wonderful Chinese students.

What: Hosting Chinese middle/high school students participating in the 2011 Winter University of Oregon Choral Camp.

When: February 6 - 14, 2011

Note: Host family provides transportation, meals and hospitality. Students may share a room but must have their own bed. Host families are strongly encouraged to take 2 students. All host families are invited to participate in group activities, student concert and potluck dinner.

Stipend: \$150 per student or \$300 for two students. Stipend will be offered to cover expenses for meals, transportation, and activities. Host families are encouraged to donate part or all of their stipend to OMTA.

Contact: Shelley 541-914-8202 shoffman@gpyinternational.org

For more detailed information, visit www.gpyinternational.org/hostfamily.html

Faculty Artist Recital at U of O

Terry McQuilkin, Composer

Wednesday, November 10, 8:00 PM

Beall Concert Hall

University of Oregon School of Music & Dance

Come and enjoy chamber music by Terry McQuilkin featuring UO faculty and students. Pieces will include, “Legacies: Fantasy Suite on American Folk Songs,” which McQuilkin originally wrote in 2006 for two pianos (commissioned by OMTA), and has now orchestrated for 14 players—woodwinds, brass, percussion, piano and strings; “Celestial Fantasy” for violin and piano; and “Stygian Boat Ride and Dance” for flute and harp. Also on the program are two compositions by faculty harpist Laura Zaerr.

Performers include Laura Zaerr, violinist Fritz Gearhart, pianist Nathalie Fortin, several UO students, and conductor Robert Ponto.

Tickets are \$10 general admission, \$8 for students and senior citizens, available at the door or in advance from the UO Ticket Office, 541-346-4363.