

# M<sup>TNA</sup>e-journal

November 2014



Michael Carter 2014

# From the Editorial Committee

## Beyond The Degree

When I began my teaching career nearly two decades ago, I thought I knew a lot about the art of teaching. I had an amazing collegiate pedagogy program in which to study and hone my skills, had worked with wonderful piano faculty, and was entering into a community of independent teachers who were accomplished, inspiring and professional. I was ready to enter the pedagogical world! But even under these idyllic circumstances, I quickly learned that my education was not to end with my degree but, in fact, was far from over. Not only did I



Andrea J. McAlister, NCTM

have the challenges of day-to-day teaching—sifting through mounds of undiscovered music, preparing lesson plans, finding new ways to motivate my students—but I also needed to keep current on new trends, new materials and new technology. I quickly learned that being a successful pedagogue meant wearing many different hats and doing so efficiently and gracefully.

Now that I am the piano pedagogy professor, I know it's important to give my students a solid foundation in the hows, whats and whys of teaching. But the 21st century has presented us with greater challenges. Our students are being pushed and pulled in many directions—academically, socially and technologically—and it is our duty as pedagogues to keep up with current trends and find new ways of motivating our students. While our pedagogy students are preparing for graduation, we need to prepare them for the many hats they will be wearing once they enter the real world of teaching.

The 2014 Group Piano and Piano Pedagogy Symposium at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music looked beyond the degree and asked pedagogy professors and students to enter into the real world of music education. We looked to our past so as not to forget our pedagogical roots but also looked to our future so we can lead the next generation of teachers in skills they may not know they need yet. A panel of successful business owners gave us insight into the challenges of starting an independent studio or academy; pedagogical leaders discussed effective classroom and online teaching strategies; participants learned how others are implementing technology in their studios and classrooms. We even looked outside our musical box to the world of sports coaches and visual practitioners to see how educators from other fields are creating, motivating and educating. This truly unique and exhilarating symposium captured the challenges, possibilities and excitement of teaching in the 21st century and reinforced one fact that I have always known: even after two decades of teaching, I'm constantly and pleasantly surprised to learn that I still have a lot to learn.

—Andrea J. McAlister, NCTM  
GP3 Executive Committee

### Artwork In This Issue By Peter Durand.

**Peter Durand**, founder and CEO of Alphachimp, explores the intersection of visual facilitation, brain-based learning and digital tools. He creates illustrations and animations to help people understand complex systems and decide what to do next.



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The *MTNA e-Journal* [ISSN 2152-7210] is a peer-reviewed online periodical published by Music Teachers National Association, Inc., four times during the academic year: September, November, February and April. Annual subscription is included with MTNA membership dues. Nonmember subscription \$16/1 year; \$28/2 years; \$40/3 years; single issue \$4.50.

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# Portraits Of Successful Music Schools

Presented by Amy Immerman, NCTM; Judith Jain; Rachel Kramer, NCTM; and Kenneth Thompson

## Their Stories

Judith Jain started, owns and runs New Tampa Piano Lessons from her home. Jain told how she started her studio and why she chose a career in independent music teaching rather than academia. Jain emphasized that when you start your business you embody all parts of that business: You are public relations, you are the accountant, you are the cleaning lady, and you are the receptionist. Extensive research was an important part of her beginnings, and she explained that one must understand the various aspects of running a private music studio, including coming up with a business plan and figuring out how to grow the business. She suggested knowing all aspects of your business before hiring anyone.

Jain explained that it takes a different personality to be successful in academia than it does to operate your own music studio. As a private teacher and business owner, she sets the schedule and makes the rules. Benefits of this include schedule flexibility, the ability to choose the clients and endless curriculum possibilities. Jain considers curriculum flexibility and experimentation in a private studio a big perk. Lastly, Jain emphasized the importance of being able to choose how much you work and having the flexibility to balance teaching with performing and other musical activities.

Amy Immerman and two colleagues started the Cincinnati Music Academy (CMA) in 1997. She was teaching 65 students in her home when a colleague approached her about opening a music studio. They began by looking at office buildings and strip malls, but found nobody wanted a business that makes noise. They looked at a lot of “dumps,” but eventually found the perfect space (or as she said, “the perfect dump”). The space had four studios, a kitchen and one bathroom at \$1,200 a month. Immerman told how she convinced the Steinway dealer to provide pianos for CMA by offering the “opportunity” to provide pianos for them and promised to recommend only that dealership to piano students. After 13 years in the space and expanding with the addition of teachers and students, CMA moved into its current 7,000-square-foot space with 22 studios and a recital hall. They now own their instruments outright.

All CMA teachers are independent contractors and each have independent studios, meaning they operate their own businesses and rent a teaching space. Teachers are asked to sign an annual agreement to ensure they represent and maintain CMA’s high standards. She bragged about CMA’s high teacher compensation and low teacher turnover, which is a product of this infrastructure.





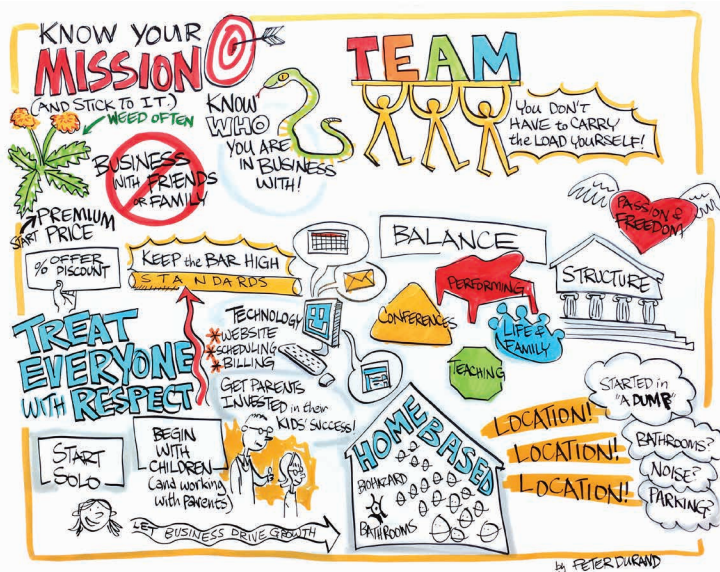
Rachel Kramer is the president and owner of the Baldwin Music Education Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, teaching almost exclusively in a group setting. In 1988, Kramer graduated from the University of Michigan and was awarded the Baldwin Fellowship. She came to Cincinnati to work for the Baldwin Music Education program and was immersed in the daily tasks of running satellite operations, marketing and lesson planning for her own classes. Due to Baldwin's restructuring in the mid-1990s, she was able to take over the Baldwin Music Education Center and became the company president. She attributed her success since taking over to the help of great mentors, including her father, who is a business owner.

Kramer believes success comes from knowing the mission of your business and sticking to it. She spoke about her goal of being unique, but not all over the map. She strives for professionalism, emphasizing

customer service. She teaches a wide variety of ages, levels and ethnic backgrounds, serving 91 students spread among 13 group piano classes. Kramer added that her collaboration with other businesses has been the best way to learn and is key to maintaining the entrepreneurial spirit.

Kenneth Thompson, executive director and founder of the Musical Arts Center of San Antonio, Inc., took almost seven years to plan and open the school. During that time, he worked seven days a week for six years and saved more than \$100,000. He wanted to build a space from the ground up to ensure proper soundproofing. Using his teacher/parent connections, Thompson found and convinced a landlord to build and lease a building for him.

Prior to opening the school, Thompson developed a list of teachers to join him, but invited them only four months before the opening of the school. Thompson used the



independent contractor model with every teacher setting their rates and policies, but eventually switched to an employee model. His ultimate goal was to be a continuing education experience for teachers, where they would offer teacher training and opportunities for teachers to grow. Musical Arts Center of San Antonio now has two locations and serves 1,100 students with 44 faculty and staff members. Thompson also wanted to make his school a place where teachers could build their careers and offers benefits such as health insurance, a 401(k) plan and nine tuition levels teachers can work through as they become more experienced. He offered a word of warning in his closing statement saying, “Be aware that the meanest in the music world are nothing like the meanest people in the business world. Be careful!” He advised that one should always be vigilant.

**Q & A**

**How do you deal with sound proofing in a space with several studios?**

Immerman said it’s difficult to soundproof, but CMA’s new space added extra sound damping in the walls and ceiling tiles. Kramer rents space in the lower level of a church and really does not have many problems since she teaches mostly in groups. Thompson explained that the price of sound proofing

every room could easily cost \$45,000 a room and is probably not worthwhile. He took a sound damping approach, wherein he had the walls built to the roof deck to prevent sound from traveling through ceiling tiles. Jain has converted a one-car garage into a studio, which is completely isolated from the rest of the house.

**In your experience with your business and hiring young teachers, what do pedagogy students really need when they enter the real world?**

Immerman described the need for business experience, such as setting up billing, coordinating schedules and preparing tax returns. Having the right personality is important she said, asking, “If someone owes you money, are you capable of telling them they owe you money?” She emphasized that you can’t be timid going into business. Young teachers, according to Kramer, need to understand the actual reality of teaching. She wants student teachers to see real people and know the reality of dealing with parents and students. Thompson explained the need for interpersonal skills, insisting that developing relationships is essential to motivating students and parents. Jain encourages students to take business courses if they are available. She talked about how young teachers must be adaptable to gain real experiences and real knowledge.

**How do you use technology to help with the business side? Do you use online registration? Do you use Swipe with iPad? What kinds of tools are you using that help you?**

Thompson said they have online registration as well as an office manager with excellent technology skills. Kramer explained she uses an accountant and has only online payments. All 91 students are auto paying every month, so there’s no follow up. Immerman said CMA’s website is their main technology and biggest expense. An events calendar is an important technological tool and all forms are online. They use VirtualMerchant for credit card payments, but do not have online registration. Jain talked



about how she uses her laptop for planning and providing lesson notes for students. She explained that having a website is the most typical way people find her, and it is by far the most worthwhile technology.

**Talk about successful recruiting strategies and how you keep enough students to make all of your monthly bills.**

Kramer's pre-school program is a great feeder for her group piano program. She also offered a keyboard camp this past summer, which helped recruit 20 or more new piano students. Siblings are usually part of her recruitment strategy. Kramer does direct mail and print advertisements and tries to have a presence at every school and educational center in the area. Immerman explained that CMA's website is their main recruitment tool as well as word of mouth. She also teaches RMM classes and has a "bring a friend to class day," which also helps. They encourage teachers to be out in the community performing and teaching to stir up excitement and enthusiasm. Jain said she tried advertising, but it did not pay off. Yard signs were her big success. She emphasized that when someone calls there needs to be an immediate response because that is when prospects are excited. She mentioned having a relationship with other teachers to take on transfer students. Thompson said their primary recruitment happens through word of mouth, but they use a number of other outlets such as print advertising, a website and also pay a company to keep up their rankings in search engines. He talked about spending money at certain times of the year for print ads, which mostly helps with recruiting students for newer teachers. The school has a print presence at grocery stores and other places in the community.

**What other courses or post-college experiences did you have that helped you with building your studios?**

Thompson emphasized getting teaching experience is first and foremost, as well as creating long-term lesson plans. He also mentioned seeking out conferences and



seminars. Kramer cited collaborating with local teachers and developing relationships in the community. She also explained that young teachers have to do their time and pointed out that she worked many jobs many days a week for no money. She had to establish herself and sit on the shoulders of others for her training. Immerman talked about her experience in corporate America for seven years and how she learned much from this experience. She recommended getting good health insurance, building conferences into your yearly schedule and annualizing your income. Jain talked about her mentors as having the largest influence on her, as well as the outside training she received through the New School and the Suzuki method.



**Zachary Lopes** is an assistant professor of piano at Western Kentucky University, where he teaches applied piano and music theory. He is an active performer and has presented at GP3 and MTNA National Conferences.



# Group Piano

## Making It New With Practical Teaching Tips

Presented by Tom Pearsall, NCTM

Tom Pearsall offered some useful ideas for making group piano teaching more fun and effective. He began by sharing a quick overview of his keyboard lab, which includes a SMART Podium (a touchscreen interactive pen display similar to a SMART Board), computer, document camera and wall-mounted speakers. Pearsall then demonstrated the benefits of using *SMART Notebook* collaborative learning software and Timewarp Technologies' *Classroom Maestro* software in group piano teaching.

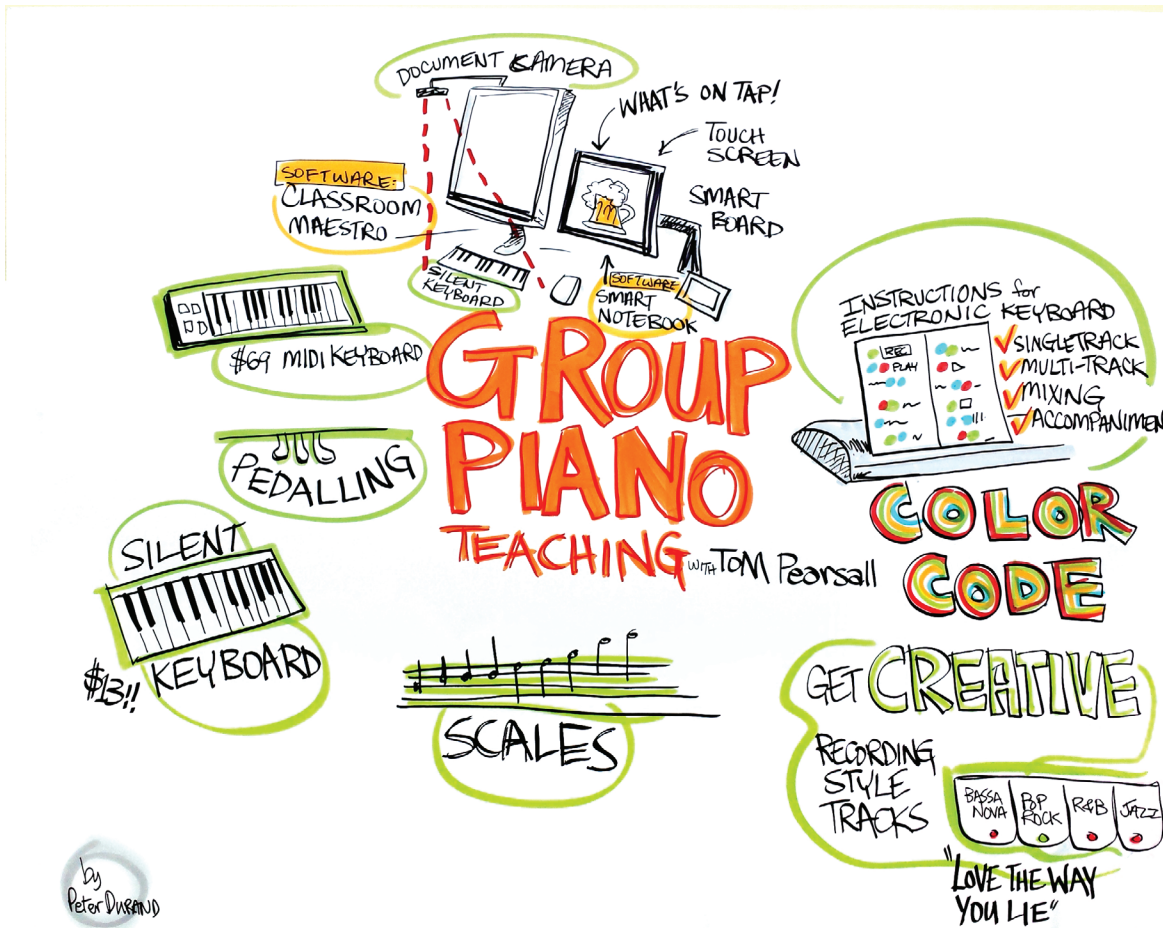
Next, Pearsall shared how he uses a two-octave silent keyboard (ordered from [musicmotion.com](http://musicmotion.com)) in conjunction with a document camera to model hand positions, concepts, and technique issues for his piano classes. Video clips provided helpful examples of how he does this.

Pearsall then showed a set of instructional guides he created and taped to the music racks of his student keyboards to illustrate how to use the various features of the keyboards. These guides provide easy-to-follow directions for single-track recording,

multi-track recording, practicing with accompaniments, additional practice options and some tips for completing creative projects outside of class. These would be very useful for students! He also showed a color-coded Yamaha MLC-100 teacher control unit and offered to share the templates for the instructional guides and color codes via the [GP3 Cloud Sharing Project](#) or through an [e-mail request](#). Pearsall also showed how he assists beginning students with locating the correct keys for landmark notes by adding colored dots below these keys.

To conclude, Pearsall discussed various multi-track recording projects he assigns his students and demonstrated one in detail. He shared four pop song titles, each of which students can download the first page of without cost from [musicnotes.com](http://musicnotes.com). A video (available [here](#)) concisely demonstrated the steps for multi-tracking, using one of his projects as an example. Two very different versions of that project, completed by his students, demonstrated their creativity, rhythmic and harmonization skills, and facility at the keyboard.






Pearsall's passion for group piano instruction has resulted in a new and useful publication: *Keyboard Fundamentals Illustrated: Pentachords, Chords, Cadences and Scales/ Arpeggios*. Though primarily designed to serve as a supplemental reference text for college group piano classes, it is also suitable for use with individuals in a one-on-one lesson format and would be a valuable resource for many students—especially visual learners.

In conclusion, Pearsall provided the participants with a useful list of products that contribute to efficient and effective instruction, along with some innovative ideas and strategies to engage and motivate students.

**Thomas Swenson**, NCTM, is the president of the North Carolina Music Teachers Association. He serves as chair of the Piano Department and directs The Accelerated Program at the Music Academy of North Carolina.



# Group Piano Teaching Blunders

Presented by Michelle Conda

**M**ichelle Conda presented an engaging and interactive session on teaching techniques in the group piano classroom. Conda demonstrated and discussed 10 of the most common mistakes made by group piano instructors and offered strategies and advice for avoiding these mistakes.

## Dress Appropriately

The first mistake concerned the choice of clothing worn by the classroom instructor. Dressed in a t-shirt, spandex leggings and Crocs sandals, Conda intentionally exhibited inappropriate attire for the group piano instructor and said her clothing conveyed neither a sense of professionalism nor authority. She remarked that group piano instructors (especially graduate teaching assistants) should aim to dress like professionals rather than students. She also recommended that women should avoid wearing short skirts, while men could wear jeans if accompanied by a jacket and tie.

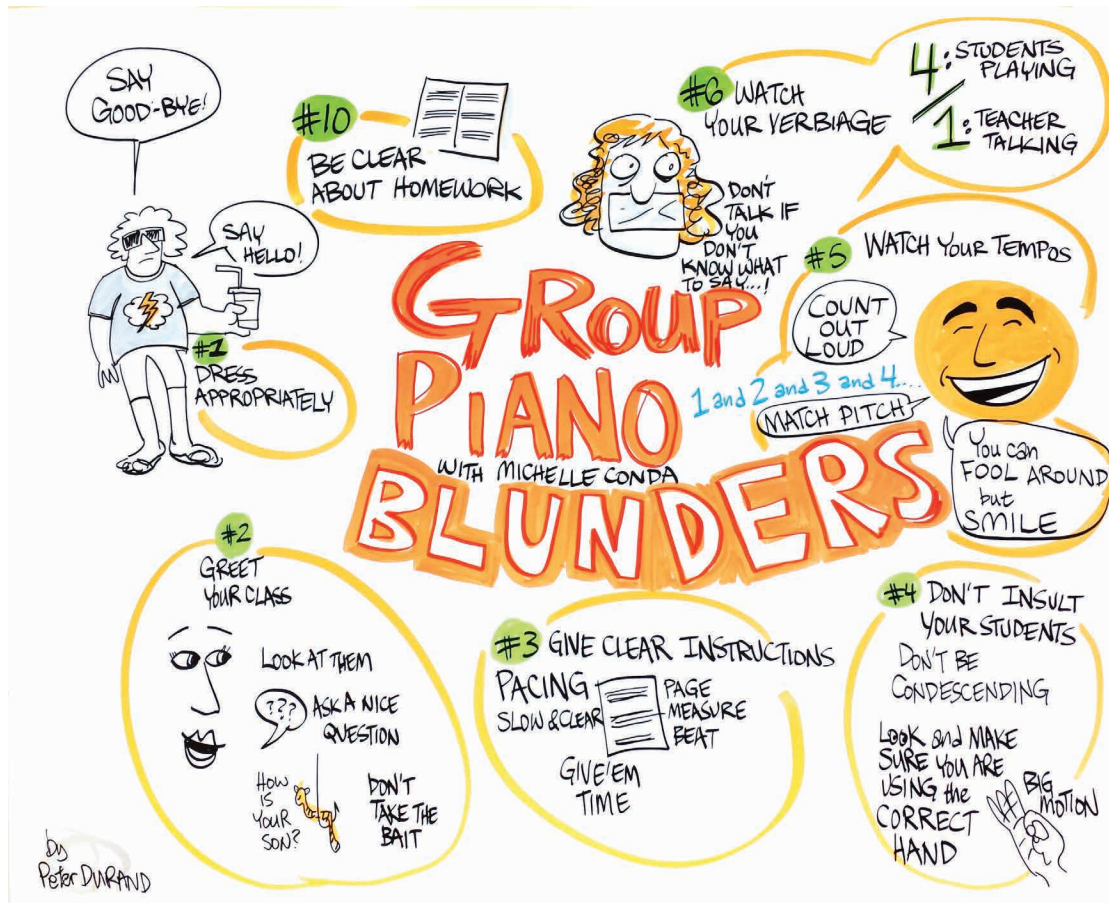
## Greet Your Class

Conda highlighted the importance of greeting students with kindness at the

beginning of class to set the right tone. She advised that instructors should look up from their teaching stations, make eye contact with their students and engage them with an inviting question and warm smile. She made the point, however, that instructors must be careful not to fall prey to what she called the “distract the teacher” problem. This occurs when students deliberately try to waste class time by distracting the teacher with questions and conversation unrelated to the class or subject matter.

## Give Clear Instructions

Conda demonstrated how class time is wasted when teachers do not give instructions clearly. To assist in more effective and efficient use of class time, she provided the following sequence when beginning at a specific spot in a piece of music: first provide the page number, followed by the measure number and lastly set the tempo. She also recommended that teachers wait for students to have their books out, ready and open to the requested page, before offering further instructions. She emphasized the importance of giving directions slowly and clearly while using eye contact, and that only one instruction should be given at a time.



### Don't Be Condescending

Conda demonstrated a condescending tone of voice and made the point that a positive learning environment is more conducive to effective learning than one in which students are nervous and fearful of the instructor. During this segment, she also provided valuable group teaching tips and advice. She mentioned the importance of mirroring as an effective technique to ensure students play with the correct hand, and she reminded teachers to keep checking to see that students are using the correctly assigned hand for all hands-separate activities. Conda added that teachers should not expect their beginning-level class students to be able to sight-read with both hands together, and she reminded everyone to keep scanning their class to continually monitor their students' behavior.

### Watch Your Tempos

Conda emphasized the importance of choosing appropriate tempi for group activities. She advised setting a tempo that challenges the students without overwhelming them. To support her point, she demonstrated a C-major, five-finger scale: first she played it at a tempo that was unrealistically too fast for a group of beginners, and next she played it insultingly too slow. She remarked that neither was an effective tempo for the planned activity or level of students. She stressed that teachers should count out loud at the desired performance tempo and demonstrated both an effective and ineffective count-off. In addition, she showed how singing and conducting might better enable all of the students to start playing together in time. She

cautioned against allowing students to speed each other up and demonstrated how the teacher might verbalize subdivisions of the beat, and employ a kinesthetic activity to help keep tempi steady during group activities.

### Watch Your Verbiage

Conda demonstrated poor group teaching by imitating an instructor who provides too much information to students. She advised group piano teachers to talk less and use fewer words when teaching. She suggested a mantra of “tell-do” whereby the teacher gives a short explanation or directive followed by a longer period in which students get to play. She asserted that a more effective learning environment occurs when students spend the majority of class time playing the piano rather than listening to the instructor speak.

### Don't Overwhelm

To avoid overwhelming students, Conda recommended utilizing short teaching segments in class, rather than spending long periods of time on a single activity. She also remarked that students were less likely to be overwhelmed if the teacher were to have them first tap out the rhythm of a piece away from the keyboard before trying to play it. Similarly, asking students to find similarities and patterns in the music can be a helpful analytical tool and a way to make seemingly complex passages of music less intimidating

and easier to understand. Conda also urged teachers to let their students “do more” rather than try to explain so much, and allow students to make mistakes.

### Ask Questions Carefully

Rather than asking open-ended questions, Conda asserted that pointed or directed questions make for more effective and efficient learning in the classroom. She also reminded instructors about the importance of eye contact when asking questions. She noted that while correct answers should always be praised, teachers should remain encouraging and avoid making negative comments when a student provides an incorrect or incomplete answer.

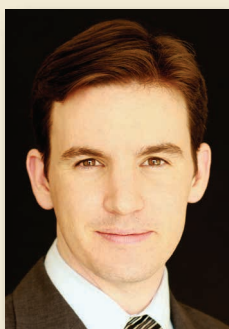
### Count Your “Alrights” And “Ums”

Conda pointed out that all teachers need to monitor their use of verbal tics such as “alright,” “good,” “ok,” “um,” “ah” and the like. She described these as ineffective placeholders for better and more varied word choices. Conda said all teachers benefit from thinking more before speaking.

### Be Clear About Your Homework

Conda stressed the importance of assigning a reasonable and appropriate amount of homework. To make certain students understand each assignment, she recommended asking students about what work was assigned. She also suggested writing the homework on the chalk or white board, putting assignments on Blackboard (an online learning management system, utilized by most institutions) or e-mailing homework to students, so students have access to the assigned homework outside of class. Lastly, she reminded instructors to always say goodbye to their students at the end of class.

**Stephen Pierce** is assistant professor of keyboard pedagogy at the University of Southern California. He has presented at GP3 and published articles and reviews in *AMT*, *Clavier Companion*, *The South African Music Teacher* and *Music Research Forum*.





# Online! My Experiment Teaching Group Piano

## How I Did It, What I Learned, And Why I “Will/Will Not” Do It Again

Presented by Susanna Garcia, NCTM

In the presentation “Online! My Experiment Teaching Group Piano—How I Did It, What I Learned, And Why I “Will/Will Not” Do It Again,” Susanna Garcia shared her experience teaching her first fully online piano class for non-music majors in the spring semester of 2014.

### Part 1—The Current Situation: Why The Big Push For Online Courses?

Institutions are committed to online learning as part of long-term growth strategies. Garcia contextualized the increasing demand for online learning in higher education in the past 10 years. Institutions are demonstrating their commitment to online learning through memberships in consortia such as the Quality Matters Program and the Online Learning Consortium, Inc., and by providing financial and technical support for online learning. Quality Matters is a program that sets national benchmarks for online course design and the Online Learning Consortium, Inc., is an organization that provides training and resources for online learning. There

were many incentives for Garcia to develop her online course at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. Through the university's Office of Distance Learning, she received generous funding for equipment, travel and training in instructional course design and digital media, partly because the school was interested in offering an applied art elective for its online degree programs.

Garcia noted the following benefits for universities and music schools that offer online courses:

- ▶ They provide outreach to students with complicated schedules or who live in remote areas.
- ▶ Online music courses offer support for online degree programs that require arts electives.
- ▶ An online course can provide a model course structure for a course that is taught by different instructors, offering consistency in the delivery of course content.
- ▶ Offering online courses can help a university's recruitment and retention efforts. For example, a university might

collaborate with area high schools and community colleges to cross-enroll students as a pipeline into its four-year degree programs.

- ▶▶ Offering online music courses in the summer might serve as a way for incoming freshman music majors to gain basic skills before starting college.

### **Part 2—The Pedagogy Of Online Teaching: How Are Online Courses Different?**

Online classes are typically offered in two formats: “blended” or “online.” Courses in a “blended” format combine traditional face-to-face class time with online learning activities, whereas courses in a totally “online” format use only online learning activities with little to no face-to-face interaction. An online class can meet synchronously, meaning a class meets remotely via a web conferencing interface (such as Blackboard Collaborate, Adobe Connect, Skype, or Google+) at a specific time. A class can also meet asynchronously, in which case students login to the course Learning Management System (LMS) such as Blackboard or Moodle at their convenience. There are many online resources for a piano class. Instructional materials for a class that meets asynchronously are archived and available online.

An instructor could use a media enhanced text through websites, videos, MIDI files, e-books or an online, multimedia curriculum such as eNovativePiano.com and supplement it, as needed, with YouTube and other web resources. To replicate face-to-face lectures and demonstrations, an instructor can create teaching videos that are available online to students.

Garcia continued by outlining how she taught and graded her class. She stressed the importance of providing effective student interactions with the content, teacher, and among peers. Her course content, with

text, website links, instructional video/audio, assignments and communication (forums/blogs) was posted on Moodle, giving her students convenient access to the course content. She provided feedback and communicated with her students via video conferencing, live meetings, blog/forum postings, e-mail and assessments. To capitalize on the benefits of group learning, she employed peer-learning activities such as collaborative projects, sharing of recorded student performances on Facebook, blogging on social media, student critiques and peer assessments. Garcia said she could not assess all her students’ assignments when she taught in a traditional face-to-face class, but she could with online teaching. She used automated quizzes, rubrics, peer evaluations and teacher-graded video performances to assess her students’ progress.

### **Part 3—A Course Design For Group Piano: MUS 323—Class Piano For Non-Music Majors**

In the last part of her presentation, Garcia focused on the structure of her online group piano course. Since it was her first online course, she capped class enrollment at eight upon the advice of her university’s Office of Distance Learning. Eight students initially registered for the course, but one dropped before the class began because of a schedule conflict. The seven remaining students completed the course, which, according to Garcia is an excellent and unusual completion rate for an online course. She chose an “online” format with three 30-minute, face-to-face meetings for each student, and the class met asynchronously through the LMS-Moodle. Garcia explained that she included face-to-face meetings because it was her first online course and with only seven students, the immediate feedback from her students allowed her flexibility to adjust her teaching plans. Garcia stated that future classes would not include face-to-face meetings, especially with bigger classes.



Garcia used several resources for her class. She used eNovativePiano that she co-authored with Chan Kiat Lim as the course text. Her students paid a subscription for this online and multimedia curriculum text. She supplemented the eNovativePiano materials with teaching videos that she made and posted on YouTube. Although it was time-consuming to make her instructional videos, these videos were necessary to effectively deliver step-by-step instructions and demonstrations to the students. She also used MusicTheory.net, a free instructional website for music theory that allows teachers

to create customized quizzes with reporting capability. In addition, Garcia created a private Facebook course page for her students to post video assignments and comment on videos of their peers.

Garcia organized her course structure based on Bloom's Taxonomy. Bloom's six levels of "cognitive domain," in increasing complexity, are remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating. Garcia divided each unit in her course text into three modules on Moodle: Learn, Practice and Perform. In the Learn Module students remembered and understood the

## Online! Teaching Group Piano

content. They watched instructional videos and took automated quizzes. In the Practice Module students applied and analyzed what they learned. They watched more videos and practiced aural, technical and reading drills. They played for their peers and did peer assessments using rubrics. Completed peer assessment rubrics were sent to Garcia. In the Perform Module, students learned to create and evaluate what they learn. They learned, performed and video-recorded their repertoire, lead sheets and improvisations.

Recorded performances were posted on Facebook and students commented on their peers' performances. Garcia graded these recorded performances using rubrics. Using Bloom's Taxonomy allowed students to know exactly where they were in their learning process

Garcia concluded that her first online group piano course was a success. Every student in her class played well after one semester of piano. She learned to be clearer in her course design and more organized. She learned about Bloom's Taxonomy from the Quality Matters course that she took when preparing to teach an online course and was able to design her course using this effective structure. Her students knew where they were in their learning process, and it was easy for her to keep track of her students' progress. She liked the efficiency of online teaching that allowed her to function more as a facilitator and let her students learn more independently.



**Siok Lian Tan**, NCTM, is associate professor of piano at Miami University, Ohio, where she teaches piano, piano pedagogy and coordinates the class piano program. She holds a DMA degree from the University of Cincinnati.





# Online! Pedagogy Teaching

Presented by Richard Shuster

**R**ichard Shuster presented a session titled “Online! Pedagogy Teaching.” His pedagogy class, which he developed in collaboration with an instructional designer, is a hybrid course with several online components. However, during this session he focused mainly on the practicum component, which is fully online. The course uses a number of common web resources including YouTube, Google Docs, Google Calendar, Wikis, Blackboard, and Turnitin’s *PeerMark* and *GradeMark*.

When creating this course, Shuster considered that faculty often feel pressured to create online courses because of the increased revenue generated by larger student enrollment, and not because technology would necessarily improve the course. Rather than feeling that technology was forced upon him, Shuster wanted to use technology to actually improve his course.

Shuster’s hybrid pedagogy course utilizes peer- and self-assessment, and improves upon and solves some of the problems associated with the traditional model of practicum supervision whereby the professor observes the pedagogy intern’s teaching in person. The problems solved are:

- ▶ Logistical—Observing many lessons can be time consuming and tedious for the professor. Peer- and self-assessments allow interns to participate in this task.
- ▶ Scheduling problems—Shuster teaches a rather large class, and piano pedagogy is just one duty in addition to many others. The online format conveniently allows interns to record and assess each other’s teaching at any time, so it eliminates scheduling problems.
- ▶ “Observer expectancy effect”—The presence of a professor in the room during a practicum lesson can interfere with natural teaching flow. Shuster learned from a colleague that this is similar to “observer expectancy effect,” a psychological term describing the unintended effects of researchers on participants in psychological experiments. The online format allows the professor to observe and give feedback to the intern without the child feeling pressured.



**Assignment Details**

Shuster outlined five steps his interns complete: lesson plans, video recordings, video uploads, self-assessments and peer-assessments.

**Lesson Plan**

Students upload their lessons plans to Turnitin, an online tool that scans for plagiarism, synchronizes well with Blackboard and enables the instructor to comment on student work. He provides lesson plans for the first couple of lessons and emphasizes the importance of preparation and planning.

**Video Recording And Uploading Video**

Shuster provides instructions to students on how to record video and create their own YouTube account. He explained that Google absorbed YouTube, so interns should go to

their Google account to access YouTube. Interns record all lessons. A video camera is available, but students tend to prefer using their iPhones or smartphones to record and upload videos. Google/YouTube accounts provide double protection for privacy with password protection. The settings for URLs are also private and can be seen only by those with permission. Parents sign waivers whereby they agree that the videos become the property of the university. Videos also become course content and are used to illustrate pedagogical topics and stimulate class discussion.

**Self-Assessment**

Interns watch their own videos, answer questions about their teaching and upload their self-assessments containing the video links via Turnitin. Shuster grades the

assessments and videos. He mentioned that in the future he would use a pass/fail grade rather than a percentage grade. He is strict about self-assessment deadlines because *PeerMark* automatically redistributes self-assessments on a preset date.

### Peer-Assessment

*PeerMark*, an online tool included in the Turnitin suite, shuffles and automatically redistributes videos to class members, allowing students to assess each other's videos using *PeerMark*. Shuster provides more assessment questions that promote further critical analysis. He commented that students really care about what their peers think and so he uses that dynamic for better learning outcomes. Shuster also discovered that students give each other quality feedback, an unexpected benefit of the online peer assessment.

### Useful Technological Facts

- ▶▶ Google Docs can be embedded into Blackboard.
- ▶▶ Shuster uses Google Calendar with color-coding so he and his interns can easily view timelines for practicum deadlines, assignment due dates, course topics and readings.
- ▶▶ Turnitin organizes all student work and syncs with Blackboard's *Gradebook* feature.

### Summary

- ▶▶ Shuster believed his "20-something" students were often one step ahead of him, and the technology was quite comfortable and easy for them to use.
- ▶▶ He felt the technology allowed him to "get out of the way and let the teaching happen."

- ▶▶ He thought the course lost nothing by going online and students gained a lot from the peer assessment.
- ▶▶ His instructional designer was always willing to "put pedagogy first" and encouraged him to use technology to enhance his pedagogy.

### Question And Answer Session

Shuster provided the following information during the Q and A session:

- ▶▶ Only one semester of undergraduate pedagogy is offered at his university.
- ▶▶ Students receive grades for the lesson plans, self-assessments and peer assessments. Shuster usually does not grade the content of the videos; rather, he believes his roles as "observer" and "mentor" are effective for student learning.
- ▶▶ He gives a lot of feedback on practicum teaching in the beginning and less feedback toward the end of the semester.
- ▶▶ Practicum lessons are offered free of charge at TWU. Parents must pay for lessons after practicum activities are completed.



**Carol Gingerich** is an associate professor of piano at the University of West Georgia where she teaches applied, collaborative and class piano, pedagogy and keyboard literature. She has given recitals and presentations in Europe and the United States.



# Perform

## A Journey For Athletes, Musicians, Coaches And Teachers

Presented by Paul Alexander

Paul Alexander is a [conductor and pianist](#). He is also the [offensive line coach for the Cincinnati Bengals](#). Alexander made connections between these fields using his knowledge and experience with both, in "Perform: A Journey For Athletes, Musicians, Coaches And Teachers." (Alexander is also the author of a [book](#) with the same title.) Using humorous anecdotes and insightful videos, Alexander focused on five broad topics: genius, comparisons, physical skills, teaching and performance.

Defining genius as "simple solutions to complex problems," Alexander marveled at such innovations as the [57 on the Heinz ketchup bottle](#), the [tripod](#) that keeps the pizza box away from the cheese and his piano teacher's suggestion to understand rhythm through spoken words. While ingenious solutions may be simple, they aren't always quick. Thomas Edison once said, "I have not failed...I've just found 10,000 ways that don't work"—an apt sentiment that rang true for Alexander as a father of three daughters as well.

Alexander then compared the experiences of an athletic coach seeking the perfect feedback for a player to similar situations for

music teachers. Both professions employ short, aphoristic statements such as "let it flow" and "don't exaggerate." Alexander's efforts to become a better coach have led him on a journey to find additional links between his work and other fields. He informed the audience that this is nothing new—General Patton wrote poetry and Winston Churchill was a painter. Perhaps this is that last piece of motivation you need to take up, say, football?

Precise physical skills are vital for athletes and musicians. Slow work and overemphasized motions are two methods both groups can employ to acquire these abilities. However, this work may not be interesting. Even Wanda Toscanini Horowitz found Vladimir's practicing mundane: "He keeps playing the same measure over and over again."

Alexander discussed ideas on how music and sports both teach, as well as ways to potentially teach them. He introduced the concepts of photo cognition and audio cognition. Photo cognition is similar to an internal short-term video recorder. For instance, it might help a coach identify who made the tackle on the previous play by allowing slow motion and reverse playback





features in addition to the usual real-time replay. It might also be a helpful metaphor to investigate when working to strengthen memorization skills. Audio cognition works in much the same way, but in an aural sense. Inspired by Super Bowl-winning coach Bill Parcells, Alexander noted that great teachers—regardless of their field—push their best students and players the most. If your best student has the best technique and the best attitude, others are more likely to strive for that as well.

Performing—whether in an athletic or musical venue—is certainly a complex task fraught with potential anxiety. One way to combat the difficulties is by focusing on one thought, just as the golfer focuses on just one of the tips his pro has given him. Returning to the earlier concept of ingenuity, Alexander related the story of how one of his linemen successfully protected the quarterback from a talented defensive player simply by never looking at the guy's face. Another idea for improved performance is to make the aforementioned thought a complete one. This could mean envisioning the performance from the morning before until the final walk from stage, or simply

imagining a pass protection as a path, rather than footsteps. To lessen the jitters that often accompany the beginning of a sports play or music performance, Alexander recommended pretending that you've already played 10 plays (or 10 measures, in the musician's case). To address the psychological aspects that affect performance, replace harmful and negative emotions with helpful and positive ones. Alexander closed the presentation with a clip from the [Snowboard Cross event at the 2006 Winter Olympics](#), using this to remind the audience to perform your best until the very end.



**Cole Burger** teaches and coordinates class piano and piano pedagogy at Bowling Green State University. He also teaches applied piano, chamber music, theory and composition at Lutheran Summer Music and Camp Encore/Coda.



# Where Have We Been, And Where Are We Going?

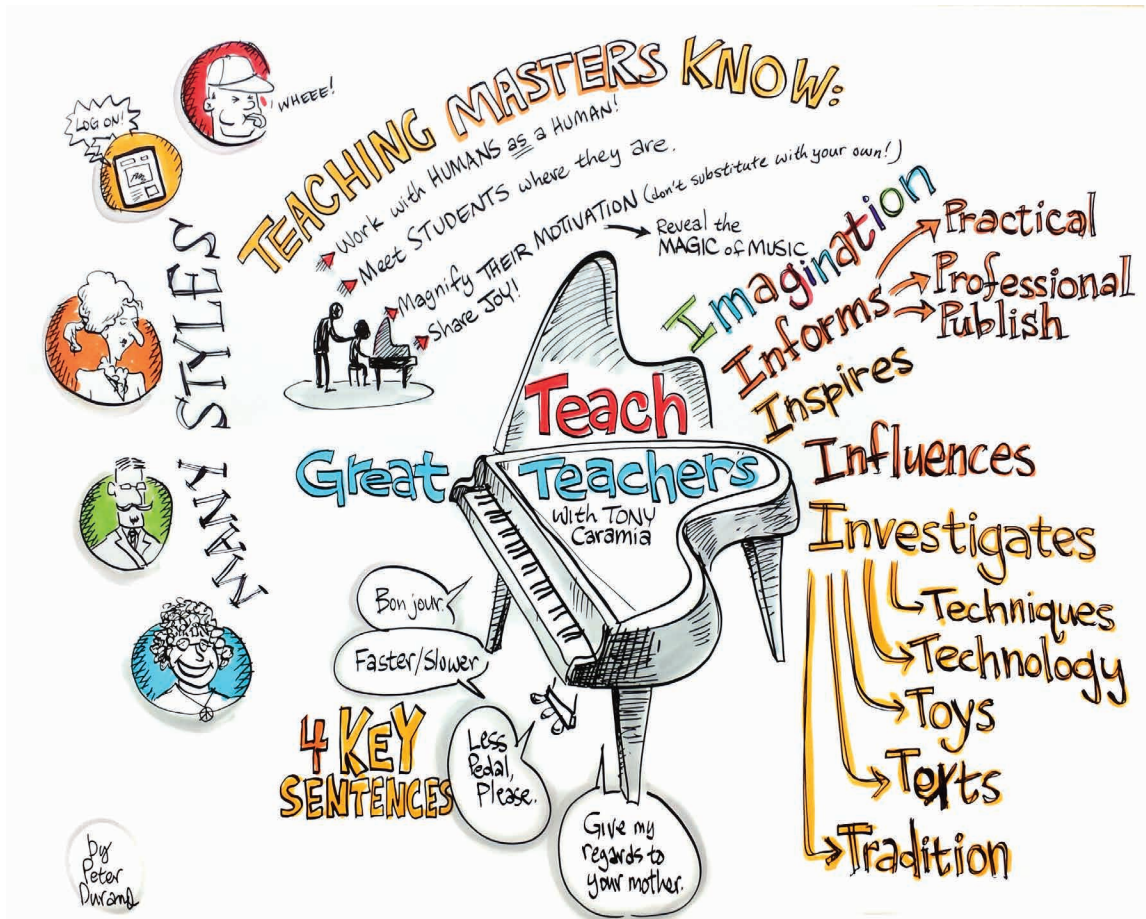
Presented by Tony Caramia

**T**ony Caramia presented a moving and informative history of piano pedagogy and his vision of the field for the next generation. He began his presentation, which he called a “Magical Mystery Generation Tour,” by introducing some of his piano students and teachers with pictures. He wanted to draw connections and define influences from pioneer piano teachers to current teachers and to the program. Caramia quoted teaching pioneers from the first half of the 20th century and shared with the audience a [website](#) containing many inspiring quotes for musicians.

Caramia then discussed important figures of the 20th century whose influences are evident today: William Arthur Ward, Brad Henry, John Steinbeck, Henry Adams, Lily Tomlin, Guy Duckworth and Suzanne Guy. He also quoted several others who are important to the field, including the following:

- ▶▶ Denes Agay, 1912–2007, author of *The Art of Teaching Piano*
- ▶▶ Frances Clark, 1905–1998, co-founder of The New School For Music
- ▶▶ Louise Bianchi, co-author (with Lynn Freeman Olson and Marvin Blickenstaff) of *Music Pathways*

- ▶▶ Willard Palmer, 1917–1996, originator of the *Alfred Masterworks Edition* and co-author of the piano method *Alfred’s Basic Piano Library*
- ▶▶ Louise Goss, 1926–2014, co-founder of The New School For Music and founder of the Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy
- ▶▶ Sam Holland, executive director of the Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy and publisher of *Clavier Companion* magazine
- ▶▶ Marvin Blickenstaff, born 1935, co-author of the *Handbook for Teachers Celebration Series*, and *Music Pathways*
- ▶▶ Robert Pace, born 1924, author of the Robert Pace series of piano methods
- ▶▶ Leon Fleisher, born 1928, leading American pianist and conductor
- ▶▶ Richard Chronister, 1930–1999, founder, editor and publisher of *Keyboard Companion* magazine from 1990–1999
- ▶▶ Stewart Gordon, born 1930, leading American music educator
- ▶▶ Maurice Hinson, born 1930, one of America’s most respected authorities on piano literature



- ▶ Claudette Sorel, 1932–1999, former head of the piano area at the Fredonia School of Music
- ▶ Paul Sheftel, current faculty of the Julliard School
- ▶ Jim Lyke, author of *Keyboard Musicianship, Books One and Two* and *Keyboard Fundamentals*, and co-editor (with Richard Chronister) of the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy from 1979 to 1995
- ▶ James Bastien, 1935–2006, author of the *Bastien Piano Basics* series
- ▶ Paul Pollei, 1936–2013, founder of the Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition

Then, Caramia named several women pedagogues and highlighted their contributions:

- ▶ Elvina Pearce, composer of the piano pieces *Solo Flight* and *Pictures in Sound*,

one of the founders of the Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy, and editor-in-chief of *Keyboard Companion* magazine from 1990–2009

- ▶ Marienne Uszler, editor of *Piano & Keyboard* magazine, co-author of *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher*, former professor of keyboard studies and director of undergraduate studies at the University of Southern California School of Music, where she established the piano pedagogy program
- ▶ Joan Reist, president of Music Teachers National Association from 1999–2001 and recipient of the MTNA Distinguished Service Award in 2007
- ▶ Frances Larimer, professor emerita of piano performance and pedagogy at Northwestern University

## Where Have We Been, And Where Are We Going?

- ▶▶ Marguerite Miller, former professor at Wichita State University
  - ▶▶ Jean Barr, professor of accompanying and chamber music at the Eastman School of Music
  - ▶▶ Nelita True, professor of piano at the Eastman School of Music
  - ▶▶ Martha Baker-Jordan, author of *Practical Piano Pedagogy*
  - ▶▶ Brenda Dillon, co-author (with Brian Chung) of *The Recreational Music Making Handbook For Piano Teachers*
  - ▶▶ Martha Hilley, co-author (with Lynn Freeman Olson) of *Piano for the Developing Musician* and professor of group piano and pedagogy at the University of Texas at Austin
  - ▶▶ Barbara Kreader, co-author (with Phillip Keveren and Fred Kern) of the *Hal Leonard Student Piano Library*
  - ▶▶ Ingrid Clarfield, professor of piano and coordinator of the piano department at Westminster Choir College of Rider University
  - ▶▶ Jane Magrath, author of *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching* and Performance Literature and Regents' Professor of Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Oklahoma
  - ▶▶ Michelle Conda, associate editor of *Clavier Companion* magazine and professor of piano and coordinator of secondary piano and piano pedagogy at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music
  - ▶▶ Marcia Bosits, associate professor of piano pedagogy at Northwestern University
  - ▶▶ Nancy Bachus, associate editor for repertoire and performance for *Clavier Companion* magazine, and author of *The Baroque Spirit, The Classical Spirit, The Romantic Spirit* and *Beyond the Romantic Spirit* piano anthologies
  - ▶▶ Rebecca Grooms Johnson, MTNA president-elect, *American Music Teacher* columnist, and affiliate professor of music theory at Ohio Christian University
  - ▶▶ Phyllis Lehrer, professor of piano and director of graduate piano pedagogy at Westminster Choir College of Rider University
- Caramia then acknowledged significant jazz leaders such as:
- ▶▶ Bert Konowitz, author of the *Jazz/Rock* series for Alfred Music Publishing, professor of music at Teachers College, Columbia University, and founder of the Columbia University improvisational arts ensemble
  - ▶▶ Ann Collins, author of *Jazz Works* and Western Illinois University professor emeritus
  - ▶▶ Lee Evans, author of many jazz series and professor of music at Pace University
  - ▶▶ Bradley Sowash, author of *Jazz Piano*
  - ▶▶ Christopher Norton, author of the *Essential Guides*
  - ▶▶ Geoff Haydon, associate professor of piano/jazz piano at Georgia State University
  - ▶▶ Willis Delony, Aloysia Barineau professor of keyboard studies and professor of jazz studies at Louisiana State University
  - ▶▶ Jeremy Siskind, author of *The Jazz Band Pianist* and chair of the piano department at Western Michigan University
- Next, Caramia mentioned colleagues whose mastery of word and thought has been vital to us all:
- ▶▶ Robert Weirich, author of "Winds of Change" in *Clavier Companion* and Jack Strandberg Missouri Endowed Chair in Piano at the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance
  - ▶▶ Sam Holland, author of "Questions & Answers" in *Clavier Companion* and executive director for *Clavier Companion* magazine
  - ▶▶ Bruce Berr, author of "Ad lib" on the last page of *American Music Teacher* magazine and associate editor for *Keyboard Companion* and *Clavier Companion* magazine



- ▶▶ Courtney Crappell, author of "The ABCs of Gen X, Y (P), Z: A Column for Young Professionals" in *American Music Teacher* magazine and associate professor of piano pedagogy at the University of Houston
- ▶▶ William Westney, author of *The Perfect Wrong Note* and Paul Whitfield Horn Professor and Eva Browning Artist-in-Residence at Texas Tech University

He continued with an additional list of more distinguished piano teachers:

- ▶▶ Gayle Kowalchuk, co-author (with E. L. Lancaster) of *Alfred's Basic Piano Library* series
- ▶▶ Barbara Fast, professor of piano and piano area chair at the University of Oklahoma
- ▶▶ E. L. Lancaster, vice president and keyboard editor-in-chief of Alfred Music Publishing
- ▶▶ George Litterst, computer and music technology consultant
- ▶▶ Helen Smith Tarchalski, keyboardist at Londontowne Symphony and associate editor at *Clavier Companion* magazine
- ▶▶ Gail Berenson, professor of piano at Ohio University and MTNA past president
- ▶▶ John Ellis, associate dean for administration and associate professor of piano and piano pedagogy at the University of Michigan
- ▶▶ Scott McBride Smith, Cordelia Brown Murphy Professor of Piano Pedagogy at the University of Kansas
- ▶▶ Christos Tsitsaros, professor of piano pedagogy at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- ▶▶ Scott Price, professor of piano/piano pedagogy and head of the piano area at the University of South Carolina, and president of the Board of the Trustees of the Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy
- ▶▶ Andrew Hisey, adjunct professor at the University of St. Thomas, Minnesota
- ▶▶ Reid Alexander, professor and chair of piano pedagogy at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- ▶▶ Carolyn True, music faculty at Trinity University, Texas
- ▶▶ Pamela Pike, associate professor of piano pedagogy at Louisiana State University
- ▶▶ Mia Kim Hynes, associate professor of piano at the University of Central Missouri
- ▶▶ Andrea McAlister, associate professor of piano pedagogy at Oberlin College
- ▶▶ Lesley Sisterhen McAllister, associate professor of piano at Baylor University
- ▶▶ Lisa Zdechlik, associate professor of piano pedagogy and group piano at the University of Arizona
- ▶▶ Victoria McArthur, program director of piano pedagogy at Florida State University
- ▶▶ Jennifer Snow, former co-chair of keyboard studies at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music
- ▶▶ Wendy Stevens, owner of [ComposeCreate.com](http://ComposeCreate.com)
- ▶▶ Mario Ajero, associate professor of piano pedagogy at Steven F. Austin University

To conclude, Caramia recommended a number of piano pedagogy resources, including textbooks, websites, e-journals and piano-related magazines. He also recognized the recipients of the MTNA Frances Clark Keyboard Pedagogy Award, and some degree and diploma programs in piano pedagogy. Caramia closed by reminding us that the study of piano pedagogy history is important to ensure that we inspire the imagination and creativity of teachers yet to come.



**Eunjung Choi**, a native of Seoul, South Korea, serves as assistant professor of piano and coordinator of keyboard studies at Claflin University. She holds a DMA degree in piano pedagogy from the University of South Carolina.



# Bringing It All Together

**D**iscussion groups are a vital component of each GP3 Forum, and this year's event was no exception. The theme for these discussions was "Are Our Pedagogy Students Ready to Teach?" Participants divided into 10 groups, each of which discussed the same topics. Discussion group leaders then shared brief 5-minute summaries of these in a follow-up session, "Bringing It All Together." Professors, students and independent teachers offered their individual perspectives on the issues. This report presents a compilation of the discussions and concludes with a list of the discussion group leaders.

## Part 1: Curriculum

### How should it change in the Internet age?

Though valued as important, participants expressed concern over the difficulties faced in fitting technology topics into crammed curriculums and agreed that the primary focus must remain on teaching students how to teach. They noted, however, the wealth of information available on the Internet through pedagogical websites and felt these should be explored as part of the curriculum. Several mentioned the value of the [IMSLP Petrucci Music Library](#) (a website for sharing public domain scores and recordings). Teachers also discussed the need for specificity in regards to what are acceptable references for assignments. (Some students are listing only websites for these.) Surprising to many is the lack of experience many college students seem to have with basic computer applications such as *Word* and *Excel*. Participants also touched on the

topic of distance learning with mixed feelings expressed regarding the effectiveness of this growing mode of instruction.

### How do you use technology in your pedagogy curriculum?

Participants agreed on the importance of knowing not just how to use technology, but how to use it effectively and how to keep current with new innovations and applications as they arise. Ideas shared included the submission of teaching videos online, creation of student websites, reviews of theory and method books software, and the use of YouTube videos for constructive criticism. Some teachers now post all materials online and give assignments through Dropbox. Others assign projects that require students to use applications such as *Sibelius*, *Finale* and *GarageBand*. A few discussed their experiences with using Skype for lessons, and at least one uses it to bring guest speakers to class. Others cited their use of Disklaviers and Clavinovas, social media outlets such as Facebook, and video platforms like Panopto to record, stream and share video. Some are using *Prezi* instead of *PowerPoint* for class presentations. One participant discussed the importance of requiring students to list the tools available to meet specific learning objectives and justify the tools used for these. Another emphasized the need for students to acquire practical skills such as how to build a webpage and edit audio and video recordings. Attendees also noted the need for teaching proper "tech etiquette" to confront the issue of students who constantly check text messages during class and teaching situations. A graduate



don't and may tend to correct mistakes with very little encouragement.

### How do you handle it logistically?

Some feel that in-person observations are essential but most seem to rely on the use of videotaped recordings submitted via flash drives, YouTube, Google Drive or Panopto. Self and teacher assessment are both typically done, with peer assessment also included by some. One person emphasized the need for rubrics that hold student teachers accountable for specific points deemed valuable and established in advance. Others, however, use rubrics with caution because they don't want to hamper creative teaching. One teacher meets with students for 30 minutes and requires three videos over the course of the semester (submitted through Google Drive). Another observes 6–7 lessons per semester and another encourages students to bring in videos that reflect struggles encountered. One teacher has the intern observe as the professor teaches the student who is taught by the intern. Another requires students to edit their videos into two, 10-minute clips. This shortens the time commitment and ensures the students actually watch their own videos before being submitted. One teacher makes use of “butt-in” privileges where suggestions are made via interjections during the observation. (All parties involved are notified of this practice in advance.) Another teaches two semesters of group piano pedagogy and has the interns observe every class. Upon completion of the sequence they become the sole instructor of record for a group class. Attendees cited a variety of forums for presentation of feedback, including *GradeMark*, *PeerMark*, *Blackboard* or other learning management systems, and *Taskstream* (a music-education-based software used to create self-assessment forms, rubrics and online portfolios).

### What kind of feedback do you provide?

Participants noted the need for clear, concise and constructive, yet positive, feedback. Most provide this in both written and verbal formats. Issues typically commented on include interpersonal skills,

spacing, engagement, accuracy, adherence to lesson plan, organization, student engagement, ability to inspire, motivate, assess and solve, flexibility, and avoidance of filler words such as “um” and “uh.” Several noted the value of providing peer assessment.

### Part 3: Intern Teaching Assignments

#### How do you incorporate them into your curriculum?

Attendees discussed at length the issue of finding students to teach. Some connect with nearby schools and music academies or are fortunate to have a prep program to draw from. Others offer lessons to staff and faculty and their children, or require their students to find their own student. At least one posts on Craigslist and another has their students teach an undergraduate beginner for credit. Some allow students who already have students to use one of those for intern teaching, while others set up both private and group teaching situations for their students. Several have their pedagogy students conduct mock teaching sessions with each other, and one graduate program requires group teaching of their students. One professor incorporates intern teaching into each semester of a four-semester curriculum and requires the submission of a teaching portfolio as the final project. This portfolio includes lesson plans, a teaching philosophy statement, assessment of semester objectives and end-of-semester self-evaluation. One participant suggested focusing the curriculum around the internship by teaching topics in a flexible manner that address the needs and issues of the experience as they arise.

#### How do you assess the teaching?

One participant assesses interns on their willingness to be flexible and experiment during the lesson, with extra points awarded for spontaneous experimentation. As for logistics, at least one teacher uses rating sheets published in previous MTNA conference proceedings, while another lists specific objectives and weights for each observation, such as 10 percent for teaching a





scale and 10 percent for teaching an etude. Another has group piano pedagogy interns observe the professor and state why or how the professor was effective or not effective. Several liked the idea of peer assessment discussed by Richard Shuster in his presentation on online pedagogy teaching.

**What qualities of teaching stand out to you?**

Participants cited a number of qualities in response to this question. Among them were the following: creativity, ability to achieve “one moment of musical beauty in the lesson” (an idea attributed to Richard Chronister), positive feedback, ability to motivate and inspire, empathy, patience, adaptability, energy, organization and a love for teaching.

Overall, participants commented favorably on the group discussions. Many thanks go to the group discussion leaders for the valuable role they played in making these successful. They were as follows: Laura

Amoriello (Rider University), Erin Bennett (University of North Florida), Theresa Camilli (University of Northern Iowa), Alejandro Cremaschi (University of Colorado, Boulder), Carol Gingerich (University of West Georgia), Rebekah Jordan-Miller (Shorter University), Zachary Lopes (Western Kentucky University), Brianna Matzke (University of Cincinnati), Diane Helfers Petrella (University of Missouri-Kansas City) and Cindy Tseng (University of Oklahoma).



**Tom Pearsall**, NCTM, is professor of music at Georgia Southern University, where he teaches group piano and piano pedagogy. His book, *Keyboard Fundamentals Illustrated*, is available through Kona Publishing.

# Teaching Tips

## Meet Lightning Talks

**G**P3 2014 included a new type of session featuring 5-minute “Lightning Talks.” Clinicians used video clips, *PowerPoint* presentations and *Prezis* to share useful tips for teaching, practicing and being productive.

### Asking Questions In The Group Piano Class

The first five-minute lightning topic was presented by Laura Amoriello. She began by posing the following: “Why is asking questions important?” Amoriello offered several points:

1. The word “educate” is from Latin, meaning “to draw out.”
2. Asking questions reveals what students know.
3. It highlights needs for learning.
4. It eliminates teacher talk.
5. Asking questions clarifies expectations.
6. Music-making becomes more collaborative.
7. Deeper learning results.

One of the difficulties of teaching group classes is balancing the teacher’s agenda with student interests; Amoriello suggested several ways to question a large group. First, start with “big questions,” such as “Why are piano skills important to my career?” Next, find out what is relevant or interesting to students. Validate all contributions, rather than having one right answer. Finally, create ground rules by establishing an environment where students are not afraid to participate.

Amoriello reminded the audience that practice makes permanent, and she suggested that teachers create sample questions and practice asking them. Recording and observing allows us to make sure we are clear and concise. Amoriello claimed that the “best teachers” do the following:

1. Grab students’ attention with an important question.
2. Emphasize understanding over correct answers.
3. Understand their students’ learning styles and adjust their questions accordingly.
4. Find out what questions are relevant to students.
5. Expect students to rise to independence.
6. Ask themselves questions.

Amoriello concluded with an appropriate quote by Richard Chronister, “Telling is not teaching.”

### Scales Reimagined

Cole Burger began by discussing common struggles students face when playing scales, such as playing correct pitches, using correct fingerings and playing with a steady tempo. His innovative practice method allows students to play with both hands more frequently, confidently and accurately; students play scales while developing musicality, reinforcing what they are learning in other music courses and building their “piano chops.”

1. Students learn to play a scale in one hand and ostinato in the other, a texture that may prepare students for accompaniments and score reductions. It also represents a pianistic challenge that can be overcome quickly. Blocked or broken fifths make excellent ostinatos, and then students can expand to an octave. Either the ostinato or scale can be faster, in 2:1 or 3:1 ratios.
2. Students can vary articulation, such as making the scales staccato. This has the added benefit of developing hand and wrist technique.
3. Students can have fun with sound. For instance, altering the dynamics may develop balance between the hands. Students can also play scales with a “funky beat” or other sound changes.
4. Students can play without looking—eyes closed, lights off or standing up. Music educators may benefit from this exercise.
5. Students can sing the notes while playing, and then switch to solfège.
6. Students should increase speed. Building a tempo demonstrates proficiency at the piano, which allows students to sight-read with greater facility.

Burger suggested the best way to teach these reimagined scales is by demonstration.

### Watch Your Students Practice!

David Cartledge pointed out that making progress in practice can be a problem for all levels of students; he related a common situation of students who claim they practice but never seem to improve. He raised the question: “Have you watched your students practice?” Cartledge clarified that he did not mean observing a video of a practice session but rather sitting and silently watching. While taking notes can be beneficial, it is important to keep quiet and let the students go through their practice sessions—something Cartledge said can be excruciating but revealing of the problem-solving process. By watching the students’ decisions, you can see how they are able to think about music.

The second step is to review what happened during the practice session and ask the students about the choices they made, either by using notes or possibly watching a video. The review of the session should take place with the students immediately after their practice while memories are still fresh. While the observer effect may make students practice how they *think* you want them to play, Cartledge said this response is revealing, too. He claimed that sometimes students will greatly improve while they are being watched, but they often show a passive attitude toward practicing with not enough self-awareness. Cartledge ended by reminding us: “Don’t intervene. Just watch.”

### Pentascle Pairs!

In an unusual format, David Forbat presented his content entirely by demonstration. Instead of using only five tones for a single pentascale, Forbat’s premise is to allow students to explore the whole scale by using pairs of pentascales based in the harmony of a particular key, often the I and V chords. For example, in the key of C major, the left hand plays a pentascale on C and the right hand begins on G, thus covering all tones of the scale and exposing students to aspects of theory.

Forbat began by playing major scales, minor scales, triads, a V7 chord, and then major and minor intervals. Intervals of a second through a fifth are available in one hand, but a sixth through an eighth can be found between the hands. Forbat then used harmonization preparation for examples such as Czerny. He demonstrated several excerpts from his handout, further showing how this technique allows students to play real musical examples by using pentascale pairs and basic theory knowledge. While playing, Forbat indicated that this method also enables more fingering options. Examples of pentascale pairs in minor keys included Burgmuller’s *Arabesque in A Minor, Op. 100, No. 2* and Alex Rowley’s *Study, Op. 13, No. 2*. Forbat questioned, “Why teach in pairs?” and answered that all tones are represented, and it provides a more complete understanding of the primary chords in major and minor.

### Helpful Hints For Teaching Large Sections Of Group Piano

Eunbyol Ko began her presentation by explaining that her group piano sections sometimes contain up to 20 students. Challenges presented by these large classes include little time to work with individual students, little time to evaluate in class and a possible wide range of backgrounds. She presented some tips that may help with these difficulties:

1. "Student Teachers." Ko explained this is not the same as students simply working together, but rather, it involves discussing, comparing and coming up with solutions. Ko suggested that students are sometimes more comfortable asking questions with friends than teachers.
2. "Around the Room." This activity allows each student to play a portion of his or her assignment in a short amount of time. Ko gives certain measures to different students by assigning numbers 1–4. The students then "broadcast" their playing. Ko believes this is goal oriented because students work harder to perform in class. She conducts and gives cues so they are confident and come in at the correct time.
3. "Tall, Grande, Venti." This refers to the variety of levels of students that may be in one section of piano. To combat this problem, Ko gives a minimum assignment but provides additional assignments to the advanced students, such as adding a bass line or focusing on voicing.

**Olivia Ellis**, NCTM, teaches piano, pedagogy and music theory at Bryan College in Dayton, Tennessee. A DMA candidate at the University of Oklahoma, she holds a master's degree from the University of Tennessee Knoxville and a bachelor's degree from Carson-Newman University.



### Decisions, Decisions...How Can We Be More Productive? Tips From Neuroscience

Naoko Takao presented the final lightning talk. After reviewing current neuroscience research, Takao asserted that whether for practice efficiency or general sense of productivity and well-being, some self-reflection on our daily moment-to-moment decisions can make a difference if we take into account how our brain works.

Takao made the following points, which may aid in planning:

1. Practicing by exact repetition and variation should result from a purposeful decision. Often, it is better not to practice passages side-by-side.
2. It is possible to have sensory overload from multiple sources.
3. We should be sensitive to biological needs of our bodies and brains. Some needs include nutrition, hydration and exercise.
4. Even good strategies need preparation and rehearsal. For example, deep breathing for stage fright should be practiced before the actual performance day.
5. We should let the subconscious do its work without interfering.
6. Some psychological factors indicate we are "wired" to function better with proactive and optimistic approaches to goal setting and habit modification. Takao indicated that it is important to identify the trigger of a bad habit in order to make the change.
7. Mental rehearsal is a powerful tool. Allowing time to digest new learning, whether between practice repetitions or in pacing activities, requires better strategizing and planning but may result in overall time savings.





# Update!

## Low-Cost And Free Apps For Your Studio

Presented by Courtney Crappell, NCTM, and Andrea J. McAlister, NCTM

Courtney Crappell and Andrea McAlister wrapped-up the GP3 Forum with the concluding session, “Update! Low-Cost And Free Apps For Your Studio.” They introduced relatively inexpensive apps, summarized below, that teachers can easily and readily incorporate into their teaching environment. These pedagogical apps are divided into five categories: aural skills, rhythm skills, theory skills, utilities and sight-reading skills.

### Aural Skills

#### ***Ear Training (thoor software AB; \$6.99)***

This app offers more than 230 beginning-to advanced-level exercises that hone aural skills in intervals, chords and inversions, and scales identification, as well as relative pitch and melody recognition. The presenters demonstrated how users could respond to these drills by “playing” on the virtual keyboard. The playable keyboard and note view features, which accompany each exercise, allow users to understand visually what they hear. To track progress and provide feedback, this app can also generate a progress report.

### Rhythm Skills

#### ***The Most Addicting Sheep Game (Just So; \$0.99)***

This is a fun game to play. The concept of the game is simple—the jumps and rolls of the animated “sheep” must be synchronized to the music by tapping and sliding on the mobile device screen. In doing so, users learn to look ahead and develop good tactile coordination to successfully maneuver the “sheep.” This simple task becomes increasingly challenging as you advance through the five levels: Training, Mild, Tricky, Wicked and Grim.

### Theory Skills

#### ***GarageBand (Apple; \$4.99 to purchase the collection of GarageBand instruments and sounds)***

This popular app houses a collection of Touch Instruments and sounds so users can make and record music using mobile devices. The presenters focused on how the app can aid in the teaching of chord progressions. The bank of various instruments such as guitar, strings and drums, introduces students to different instrumental timbres and encourages students to think in a key. The presenters

further suggested that the applications of *GarageBand* are manifold—it can be used to provide accompaniment for scale drills and accompaniment for improvisation. Users can build chord charts and record on multi tracks, and in doing so, this complex but intuitive app allows users to connect the tactile with the analytical, intellectual and aural components of music learning.

### Utilities

#### *Piano Scales* (Tobias Ogemark; \$0.99)

This app provides fingerings for all diatonic (including harmonic and melodic minor) and chromatic scales, scales in thirds and arpeggios. The scales are presented in the circle of fifths.

### Sight-Reading Skills

#### *Piano Maestro* (JoyTunes; free)

This app features a large collection of songs in which students can play along with full accompaniment on a virtual, electronic or acoustic piano. These songs are grouped in order of difficulty and focus on the specific skill of playing. McAlister and Crappell recommended this app to reinforce rhythm and reading as its features include learning of musical symbols and note names. Furthermore, students have the option to manipulate tempo and choose hands alone or two-handed practice to learn at their own pace. A section within the app called “Method” allows the Alfred’s *Premier*

*Piano Course* and Jennifer Eklund’s *Piano Pronto* method to be integrated though subscription.

The session also featured a Skype interview with Ohio-based piano teacher and blogger Joy Morin who actively maintains a blog and web resource page called [Color In My Piano](#). The site includes free printable handouts and assignment sheets, as well as an annotated list of numerous [apps for music learning](#). Morin shared some of her favorite apps with the audience and spoke about the ways in which she incorporates technology in her teaching studios: she teaches through Skype, schedules her lesson on mobile devices, views PDF scores through apps, and uses *Evernote* to keep clear and detailed notes for each of her students. She encouraged teachers to exploit existing online resources such as YouTube and printable theory worksheets. Though an enthusiastic advocate of apps, she cautioned that some of the “gamey” ones would be more suitable for home use.

In the question and answer session, audience members shared a few of their favorite apps. They included *Flashnote Derby* (Luke Bartolomeo), which hones note recognition; *Theory Lesson* and *Tenuto* (musictheory.net), which are geared toward note identification and music theory learning; and *Ear Worthy* (Ixora Studios Pte Ltd), which is suitable for learning intervals and chords.

As part of the GP3 Cloud Sharing Project, teachers can access a list of mobile apps at [Dropbox/GP3CloudSharingProject/Technology](#). E-mail [Courtney Crappell](#) for an invitation to join this shared folder. Teachers are encouraged to participate and share excellent pedagogical resources. The goal is to create a repository of current resources that are useful in teaching studios.



**Chan Kiat Lim**, NCTM, holds the Steen-Villemez Professorship at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. An active recitalist and co-author of the multimedia resource *eNovativePiano*, Lim’s students have won top prizes at regional, national and international competitions.



# GP3 Forum Presenters

**Paul Alexander** is assistant head coach and offensive line coach for the Cincinnati Bengals. A former music student, Alexander is now a piano student in the preparatory division of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.



**David Cartledge** is assistant professor in piano at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music teaching courses and directing the secondary piano program. He actively performs, gives master classes, serves as a juror and presents at conferences.



**Laura Amoriello**, NCTM, is adjunct assistant professor of piano at Westminster Choir College of Rider University. She holds the doctor of education degree from Teachers College, Columbia University.



**Michelle Conda** is professor of piano and coordinator of secondary piano and piano pedagogy at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. She specializes in adult learning and group teaching. She is also an associate editor for Clavier Companion magazine.



**Cole Burger** teaches class piano and piano pedagogy at Bowling Green State University. He also teaches piano chamber music musicianship and composition at Lutheran Summer Music and Camp Encore/Coda.



**Courtney Crappell**, NCTM, is associate professor of piano pedagogy at the University of Houston, where he coordinates the class piano program and teaches piano and piano pedagogy. He holds a DMA degree from the University of Oklahoma.



**Tony Caramia** is professor of piano at the Eastman School of Music, where he is director of pedagogy studies and coordinator of the class piano program. He received the 2010 Outstanding Achievement Award from SUNY Fredonia.



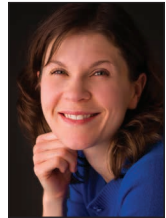
**David Forbat** is an associate professor of piano and piano/keyboard division head at the University of Central Oklahoma. He earned a DMA degree from the Peabody Conservatory of Music.



**Susanna Garcia**, NCTM, is keyboard coordinator at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. She holds the Girard Professorship in Music and has received many honors and awards including UL Distinguished Professor, MTNA FOUNDATION Fellow and LMTA Teacher of the Year.



**Andrea J. McAlister**, NCTM, is associate professor of piano pedagogy at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. McAlister has presented at the International Society for Music Education in Thessaloniki, Greece, and at MTNA Conferences.



**Amy Rose Immerman**, NCTM, is an independent piano teacher, owner of the Cincinnati Music Academy and director of a rapidly growing RMM program. She is a former East Central Division director on the MTNA Board of Directors and Ohio MTA president.



**Tom Pearsall**, NCTM, is professor of music at Georgia Southern University, where he teaches group piano and piano pedagogy. His book, *Keyboard Fundamentals Illustrated: Pentachords, Chords, Cadences and Scales/Arpeggios*, is published by Kona Publishing.



**Judith Jain** holds degrees in piano performance from Indiana University and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and a doctorate degree in piano performance and pedagogy at CCM. Jain owns and operates *New Tampa Piano Lessons*.



**Richard Shuster** is professor of piano at Texas Woman's University. He holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and Indiana University. His recording of *Gabriel Fauré's complete Nocturnes* was recently released on the *Fleur de Son Classics* label.



**Eunbyol Ko** is assistant professor of piano at Morehead State University. She maintains an active international performing career as a pianist and has given numerous master classes and presentations throughout the United States and abroad.



**Naoko Takao** is assistant professor of piano at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, where she teaches applied and group piano and serves as director of secondary keyboard studies.



**Rachel Kramer**, NCTM, holds degrees from Eastern Illinois University and the University of Michigan. She is president of *Music Learning Center, Inc.*, and president and co-founder of *Cincinnati Center for Adult Music Study, Inc.*



**Kenneth Thompson** is founder and executive director of *Musical Arts Centers of San Antonio, Inc.* He holds a bachelor of music degree in piano performance from the Eastman School of Music.







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