

# THE VAULT



The official newsletter of  
MSOE (Middle School Outreach Ensembles)  
2022



Maddy Cort leads MSOE staff through their first funtivity!

## WELCOME TO MSOE!

### DR. ERIK JOHNSON, MSOE DIRECTOR

Dear MSOE 2022 Teaching Artists and Master-Teacher Community,

Welcome to the 9<sup>th</sup> year of MSOE at Colorado State University! As we are busy making plans to ensure that the first night on February 2<sup>nd</sup> goes smoothly, I would like for you to take a moment to consider what MSOE means to you and what it has and can mean for so many other people.

First, after a very successful year of Online MSOE in 2021, we are back to an in-person experience. While adhering strictly to our pandemic safety protocols in order to keep us all safe, there is no substitute for making music in-person. I would like to thank Dr. Dan Goble the Director of the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance as well as the many SMTD Staff and Faculty for their support of the MSOE program. Through their support we have been able to serve nearly 4000 MSOE & Trying-on-Teaching participants over the past decade.

Second, *Music LIVES!* Our social justice theme of “Music Lives!” for this season will allow us to create a space for collaboration where members of our community – *from middle schoolers, high schoolers, preservice teachers, master teachers, and retired teachers* – can share experiences and interests from their own musical lives to inspire and uplift all in our community. While a play on words, in an important way, MSOE 2022 is also a beacon for how music lives on in times of challenge. As I continue to say, bring your best to what you do and the others you collaborate with because you never know when you have the opportunity inspire someone else who has yet to find confidence in their own voice and to discover what they have to offer.



Third, MSOE is a place where people who love music come together to grow, learn, and improve. As you consider what MSOE 2022 can mean for you I would encourage you to adopt a few ways of thinking that may help you to be successful: 1) be bold in your risk-taking and embrace challenges as opportunities; 2) build new connections with new people; 3) be a model for the people around you; and 4) allow yourself to be inspired by the small things and turn that inspiration into gratitude by seeing the best in the people with which you are collaborating.

I could not be prouder of the strong MSOE 2022 team we have assembled. As a community of passionate music educators, I cannot wait to see what we can accomplish, together, to invest in the future of our young participants one positive experience at a time.

As you read the inspired words in this edition of *The Vault*, I will leave you with a quote from a speech given by President John F. Kennedy in 1962 when he opened the National Cultural Center (now known as *The Kennedy Center*):

“Behind the storm of daily conflict and crisis, the dramatic confrontations, the tumult of political struggle, the poet, the artist, the musician, continue the quiet work of centuries, building bridges of experience between peoples, reminding us of the universality of our feelings and desires, and despairs, and reminding us that the forces that unite are deeper than those that divide.” — John F. Kennedy.

GO MSOE!!  
Sincerely,  
Dr. Johnson

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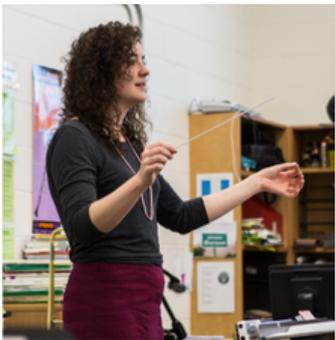


MSOE staff learn the core values of MSOE at their first meeting!

## MUSIC LIVES IN MSOE!

**MADDY CORT, MSOE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR**

I am just so thrilled to be a part of MSOE 2022! We have so much talent, creativity, and passion present in our team of teaching artists this year that I am convinced this will be one of our best seasons yet. We are eager to learn, connect, and perform with our students, fellow teachers, and mentors as this season begins. I'm especially excited about our Social Justice theme this year: Music Lives. We have a unique opportunity to take the time to explore our musical lives and what that means beyond teaching and learning notes and rhythms. Music has impacted all of us - that's probably why most of us decided to commit our lives to sharing music with others through education. Though we may have an understanding of music's role in our own lives, we have much to learn from the musical lives of our students. Each of their unique stories will be worth knowing and sharing through our work on the Social Justice theme.



Anything is possible with our MSOE team and there is so much to look forward to this season. The Feedback team is already well underway reading lesson plans and helping their peers deliver the best possible instruction.

Our high school Trying-on-Teaching students are connecting with their mentors and getting ready to plan and execute their very first lessons; they have so much to share with us from their own musical experiences and ideas! Our carnival team is already planning ahead for a fantastic carnival of learning, exploration, and fun. And finally, each of our conductors and teaching artists has been diligently studying the music and developing their lessons in order to give our students the best experience possible. All this work behind the scenes and in front of students will culminate in a final performance on April 16 where we will finally get to share our work with the public. What a great season of MSOE this will be!

## MSOE: A REASON TO CELEBRATE

**BY KATHRYN KENNEDY, UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

MSOE looked different last year, like just about everything else. Once a week, MSOE students and teachers would gather in front of screens to not only create music, but build a community. Musicians from across the state were able to work and learn together during a time when we felt very far apart. As a MSOE teacher, I was so impressed every week with students' involvement, passion, and motivation to work beyond their difficult situation. Although meeting online had its challenges, we were able to create and share music in new ways. Students sent in recordings, created music with technology, and reflected on what it means to keep music alive. Last year, our Social Justice theme was "Keeping Music Alive." Students created playlists, wrote thank you letters to people who support them as musicians, and learned about communities of people who have kept music alive during difficult times. Throughout our last MSOE season, students expanded their scope from how they personally keep music alive, to who in their own community supports the creation of music, and finally to a broad spectrum of musicians around the world who constantly face and overcome challenges. This learning experience, combined with our longing to create music again in person, has definitely energized the MSOE community to reunite and really enjoy our time together this spring.

Through our new theme of "Music Lives", students will reflect on how music has been a part of their life experience and the experience of others. We are so excited to explore how music impacts the world around us and why it is so significant to us. Our three big questions for this year are: What does music mean to me? What does music mean to others? and How does music change our world? A few activities to look forward to include sharing meaningful music with others, engaging in restorative justice practices, and learning about how music has been used in protest and social movements throughout history. This year, we will be dedicating time towards creating and performing together. Students will have opportunities to create in rehearsals, sectionals, carnival sessions, and more at MSOE. Most of us have had limited large performance experiences in the last two years. While we were able to perform for our small groups virtually last year, MSOE teachers and students are thrilled that we will have the opportunity to perform for our whole community this season. Many members of the MSOE team, including myself, are looking forward to experiencing our very first in person MSOE concert in April!

This season of MSOE feels like a reunion. It feels like a celebration. We are finally able to reunite in person at the UCA! As musicians, the last two years have given us an even greater appreciation for simply making music in the same place, at the same time. Playing together really is special. So much creativity can happen in the moment when we are working together to make something amazing. I cannot wait to see where MSOE 2022 takes us.



MSOE Teaching Artists communicate abstract designs during their first meeting.





## MEET OUR MASTER TEACHER: BAND

MR. PHUONG NGUYEN

Phuong Nguyen received his Bachelor of Music Education degree from Colorado State University and learned from such greats as Dr. Charles Lawson, Dr. William Runyan, and Dr. J. Steven Moore. He also received his Masters of Music in Conducting at Colorado State University, studying with Peter Sommer, Wes Kenney, and Dr. J. Steven Moore.

While at CSU, Phuong was awarded the David Paul Knight Scholarship for Jazz, the Award of Highest Distinction at the CSU Research and Creativity Symposium, and was a Senior Honors Recital recipient. Phuong currently plays saxophone and performs with the Fort Collins Wind Symphony, Twelve Cents for Marvin, Choice City Seven, the Fort Collins Jazz Friends as well as a slew of side projects. With more than 20 years of experience performing in Colorado rock/jazz/ska/reggae bands, he has performed with famous rock bands, Vietnamese pop stars, and has even starred in a few short films!

Aside from teaching at Boltz Middle School (the best middle school in the world!), Mr. Nguyen also teaches private lessons and coaches students in the Youth Music Collective, a group of high school rock musicians from all over Fort Collins. Phuong currently lives in Fort Collins, Colorado, with his beautiful wife Nicole Wilshusen and two lovely daughters, Claire and Ella. He likes to hike, ride motorcycles, snowboard, play basketball, and watch cheesy action movies. Oh, and he's a huge Star Wars nerd.



## MEET OUR MASTER TEACHER: ORCHESTRA

MRS. MELISSA CLAEYS

Melissa Claeys has been teaching for 18 years, and has been the Orchestra Director at Boltz Middle School since 2014. Prior to this position, her career has spanned all three levels of instrumental music. She has directed groups at the elementary, middle school and high school level. At all levels, her groups have a history of receiving Superior ratings at festivals and achieving prestigious honors and championship awards at both the State and National level. Mrs. Claeys received her Bachelor of Music Education and Performance degrees from Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO in 2003. She graduated Summa Cum Laude and also received the Educator of the Year Award in Music. In 2008 she received a Master's Degree in Integrated Arts Education from the University of Montana. Earning this degree allowed her to become more educated in other passions of hers as a performing arts educator which includes dance, drama and music collectively.

Not only is Mrs. Claeys a music teacher, but she is a dance instructor as well, currently teaching the only middle school dance program in Poudre School District at Boltz Middle School. Outside of the orchestra classroom she has also coached Winter Guard and her groups have medaled several times at the State level and have won a State Championship. Currently, she is also the choreographer for the Boltz Middle School Musical Theater program. Aside from teaching music, Melissa Claeys' other passions revolve around being a wife to her husband Jason, and mom to her three children Emmalene, Annaliese and Remington. As a family, they enjoy spending time outside on their boat up at Horsetooth Reservoir, scuba diving and just living life to the fullest— together.

## Letter from the Editor

Hello, Readers! My name is Kristen Falls and I am a first year Graduate Teaching Assistant for the CSU Music Education Program! I am also one of the Assistant Directors for MSOE 2022. I have already seen our Teaching Artists and our Administration Team do amazing things, and I am looking forward to see what this year's program can accomplish. I am also excited to be a part of this wonderful process and to work with young students for the first time since March 2020. My goal for The Vault this year is for you, Readers, to get a glimpse into this amazing world: to be inspired, to watch our team grow, and to experience some of the magic that happens during this program.

