



THE VAULT

The official newsletter of CSU's Middle School Outreach Ensembles (MSOE) 2023



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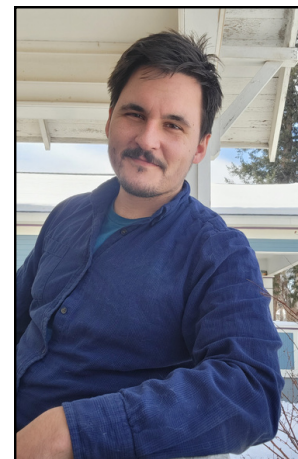
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Liftoff!

Brian Tremper, Associate Director

MSOE 2024 began in earnest last Wednesday, with dozens of both new and old faces coming together to make music and foster community. February 7th, 2024 has been on our calendars and in our minds since late September of last year. After three training sessions (two in November and one in January) and a “dry run” of our first night without students, finally getting to work with students, play instruments, and make music together was a long-awaited culmination of months of work.



MSOE 2024 looks a little different than previous years. Our usual rehearsal space, CSU's Instrumental Rehearsal Hall, is under renovation, putting us in the equally excellent (but slightly smaller) Runyan Hall. Our curriculum is broader, focused on creating understanding through playing by assessing students based on a variety of benchmarks. Our Social Justice theme is based around concrete teaching practices for the integration of Dispositions of Democracy. We are joined by the “MSOE All-Stars”- Middle School students who will get the opportunity to develop their teaching skills and style with the help of High School Trying-on-Teaching mentors and Undergraduate Teaching Artists. And, like every year, we have new teachers among the old, new students among the returning, new repertoire, and new ideas for how MSOE will work.

However, despite some changes, MSOE is the same as it has always been at its core. We are focused both on providing a fulfilling musical experience for the students as well as a consistent venue for aspiring teachers to hone their craft. The structure of MSOE benefits individuals at all levels of the organization, from the Middle School performers all the way up to the Graduate Student and Faculty Senior Administrative Team.

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Liftoff! (continued)



A glimpse into the MSOE “after party”, where strengths and weaknesses of the program are discussed, incorporating a diverse array of perspectives from middle schoolers all the way to senior admin.

The Middle School students find a place outside of their school to make music and develop both their musical chops and musical community. Being able to consistently play with other students from different schools and backgrounds helps them to broaden their musical horizons, find their musical voice, make new friends, and hone in on the universality of music making. The High School Trying-on-Teaching students have the opportunity to test out their teaching chops by leading warmups and lessons—an invaluable early opportunity for aspiring music educators. These “ToTs” (as they are affectionately called) also learn from their Undergraduate mentors, gaining valuable feedback and techniques for bettering their instruction.

The Undergraduate teaching artists get the chance to put the concepts they’ve learned in class into action in a real, tangible way. MSOE provides a space for these teaching artists to experiment with different teaching styles, learn their strengths, address their weaknesses, and collaborate with their peers in order to become confident educators. Teaching Artists are given

feedback from their peers every week on their lesson plans and actual instruction, and continually grow in their confidence and skill. Undergraduates also have the opportunity to work in various leadership roles, including being members of the Feedback team (where they give positive and constructive feedback to their peers based on lesson plans and teaching videos), serving on the Social Justice team (where they develop the Social Justice Curriculum), or standing on the podium as conductors (where they learn rehearsal strategies and conducting techniques). Undergraduate teaching artists can also mentor High School Trying-on-Teaching Artists, or use their knowledge and skill to help lead recruitment, curriculum planning, nightly logistics, or concert planning as Undergraduate Program Directors. Finally, CSU’s MusicEducation Graduate Students (like myself and Mr. Haarala), are given the opportunity to develop the MSOE curriculum, lead trainings, mentor Undergraduates, and develop administrative skills.

“Play A to Start”

Mateo Novoa

Teaching Artist, Low Brass

Beethoven, Dvorak, Ticheli, and many other standard composers are commonplace in repertoire played by middle and high school students. I enjoyed playing these pieces, but when I got home, the things I would practice on my horn or listen to would be different. I really fell in love with video game music. There was something special about playing lines from the games I loved. As music educators, I believe it is important to incorporate many kinds of instrumental music in our ensemble repertoire. This is a simple but effective way to bring interest from students who might not consider joining an ensemble.

Koji Kondo is one of my favorite video game composers for two reasons. One reason being he was the composer for some of the more iconic Zelda games, such as the Legend of Zelda, A Link to the Past, Majora's Mask, and the Wind Waker (He has also composed for other Nintendo properties). The second reason is that he created such beautiful, intense, and memorable pieces when facing the limitations of the hardware of whatever console the game was on. One example of such limitation is that the NES (1985) and SNES (1991) consoles could only play 3 to 8 notes at the same time. In 1998’s Ocarina of Time, released on the Nintendo 64, the technology at the time had surpassed the struggles of its predecessors.



“Play A to Start” (continued)

However, Nintendo wanted to incorporate an ocarina that Link would play to make something trigger in game. This meant that Konji Kondo had to create 12 songs that were completely different in mood for different characters with different stories and personalities with only five notes, since that was the number of buttons on the controller. This game came out before I was born, yet the music of this game made such an impact on the gaming world that I heard so much of it as a kid and now I have nostalgia for the music. *Song of Storms* is a personal favorite of mine. When teaching composition, it isn't wise to have a beginner be loaded with all the possibilities in the world when starting a piece. I think this is a fun story to show that even when faced with limitations, one can create something beautiful.

Mario Galaxy is another game that made an impact in the gaming world. Mario Galaxy was one of the first video games to have a full symphony orchestra recorded for the soundtrack of the game. If you haven't heard Gusty Garden Galaxy, I would highly encourage you to take a listen. Gusty Garden is one of the first Galaxies you get to experience in the game and I don't think the music could be any better for a start of a journey. The composer of the piece, the aforementioned Koji Kondo, does such an amazing job using the capacity of a symphony orchestra to make you feel excited and curious to explore all these fun and wonky looking new Galaxies. People liked the soundtrack of this game so much it continued to stay for many Nintendo games, with another favorite of mine being the soundtrack to *Skyward Sword*.

Nintendo of course isn't the only gaming company to have great music, it just happens to be my favorite. There are so many great pieces out there from video games. Sliding one into your repertoire can be such an easy way to get current students excited to play and maybe even get some new students in the ensemble. There are so many great pieces in these games, and I am not the only one who thinks that. In the 2020 Olympics, Japan had the music played for the parade of nations be entirely pieces from video games such as *Final Fantasy*, *Kingdom Hearts*, *Soulcaliber*, and even *Sonic*.



First MSOE string orchestra rehearsal of “Where the River Shannon Flows” by Brian Balmages to be conducted by Curriculum UPD, Riley Busch.



Teaching artist Kathryn Carlos leading the violins of the MSOE orchestra.





Meet Our Master Teachers!



Katrina Hedrick is passionate about helping students cultivate their personal artistry to live an active musical life. Her approach integrates responsive and sustaining practices with Elemental pedagogies, trauma informed practices, National Core Arts Standards, Modern Band, and mixed-ensemble rehearsal strategies for small, underserved, secondary music programs. Katrina's 13 years of teaching experience includes building 6-12 grade vocal, instrumental and general music programs in small rural and urban Colorado public schools; and in music teacher education for pre-service and practicing educators. Katrina's career began with 5 years teaching at her alma mater on the land of the Southern Ute Tribe in Ignacio, Colorado. After earning her masters at CSU, she spent 5 years cultivating a 6-12 music program at Bruce Randolph Schools in central Denver. She now serves as the Director of Education for Colorado Music Bridge and an Adjunct Professor of Music Education and Program Director of the Spur Music Lab at Colorado State University. She also works as a Supervising University Instructor of Student Teachers for Metro State University, and runs a studio for private music lessons for all ages.

Katrina has earned degrees in Music Education from Fort Lewis College (Bachelors of Arts, 2010), Colorado State University, (Masters of Music, 2018), and American Orff Schulwerk (AOSA) Teaching Certifications at UNLV-Las Vegas (2014), San Francisco Orff Institute (2019), and Metro State University in Denver (2021). She is an actively performing multi-instrumentalist in the Denver Area, and a clinician for regional, state, and national music education conferences, chapters, and collegiate programs. Katrina is a co-founder and former vice-president of the AOSA- Four Corners Chapter, and currently serves on the board for AOSA - Rocky Mountain Chapter. Most importantly, she is an active participant in social justice projects that serve to dismantle systemic racism at local and national levels through music. Please connect with her at katrina.hedrick@colostate.edu.



Mr. Joshua Greiner is a cellist and music educator currently in his fourth year of teaching at Preston Middle School. He has served as the Orchestra Director for four years and is in his second year as the Director of Bands. He received his Undergraduate degree from Colorado State University in Music Education, Cello Performance, and Cello Pedagogy in December 2019. Mr. Greiner has experience teaching students across Northern Colorado from beginners to advanced and experience with state and nationally recognized ensembles.

Mr. Greiner is also a co-director of the Northern Colorado Youth Orchestra where he works with all three levels and teaches students from elementary school and up to the age of 21. In March of 2022, Mr. Greiner traveled with NoCoYO to Atlanta and placed third at the National Orchestra Festival and will head with NoCoYO to Carnegie Hall in June of 2024. Mr. Greiner's orchestras at Preston have received excellent and superior ratings at ASTA festivals during his tenure since 2020.

Joshua Greiner is also currently earning his Master of Music with an emphasis in Conducting/Music Education at CSU.

Note from the Editor

Paul Haarala, Associate Director

Tonight is our first night with master teachers (see their bios below). This is an exciting opportunity for our undergraduate students to receive direct feedback from experienced and qualified teachers in the area.

Sometimes, the work done in a music education degree can easily feel overly theoretical to undergraduate students. Incorporating master teachers is one of many ways that MSOE provides the opportunity for pre-service teachers to connect their coursework to practical application. We are grateful for the teachers that continue to donate their time to ensure the next generation of teachers are prepared for the field!

