

# National Association for Music Education

Florida Collegiate Chapter:  
University of Miami  
Frost School of Music

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Edited by Loren Tanksley

# From Our President

*Sierra Farquhar*

The University of Miami's collegiate NAFME chapter is rooted in professional development, service, outreach, and education. It is with great pride that I lead this outstanding group of individuals who are wholeheartedly invested in the future of music in our nation's schools. This semester our chapter awarded two grants to Hialeah-Miami Lakes Senior High School and Key Gates Charter High School. We are proud to present these two hardworking programs with the funding to continue their progress. This organization publishes a biannual newsletter to share our experiences in professional development, ideas for the future, and insight into our noble profession. Inside you will find reviews of campus programs, teaching tools, and much more. I would like to thank our advisor, Sarah Bowman, as well as my executive board: Loren Tanksley, Julia Klingner, and Jasmin Vilca. This has been a fantastic spring semester with this chapter, and I look forward to continuing my presidency along side these talented musicians and educators in the fall.

Your President,

Sierra Farquhar

# Composition in the Classroom

*By Joey Franco*

In the realm of music, I stand between two passions: teaching and composing. Wherever life may take me, these passions will follow. For the longest time I've juggled the two, never quite settling on one or the other, but soon a realization came to me: why not do both? Who says a music teacher can't compose too? There is much to gain from incorporating composition into the curriculum, and it can be an enriching activity for student and teacher alike.

The idea of composing intimidates many people, regardless of their degree of musicianship, if only because they lack confidence in their abilities. These people often place too much worry on the academia of composition, the *ars gratia artis* ("Art for the sake of art") stigma that somehow places composition in the domain of the gifted and brilliant minds. The truth is that none of that matters—unless you want it to. A short etude made by a hard-working band director with the intent of teaching his students specific musical skills has just as much merit and artistic integrity as any symphony, sonata, or opera.

There is a lot to be said about a music teacher that composes for his students. You don't have to be Mozart to educate and inspire your students; they will surely appreciate and enjoy the extra mile you go by creating music for them to study. Parents and principals will take notice to your efforts as well. Above all else, it adds a more personal affect to instruction and provides a refreshing degree of relevancy. While the forefathers of composition are always worth studying, students could also benefit from looking at music from a more modern perspective.

As a student, I like to think that I don't speak for my peers when I say that I love whenever a composition project is assigned. No other type of assignment fills me with such joy, but I am well aware that that is because I *love* to compose. For many students, though, composition projects instill those aforementioned fears with the added fear of getting a bad grade, and suddenly all joy is drained from the assignment. This is precisely why composition needs to be approached very carefully in the classroom. It isn't something concrete and absolute like math, so teachers who approach it from a stance of "this is what it should be" instead of "this is what it could be" may find a stack of uninspired, by-the-numbers projects on their desks.

This is by no means an affront to grading, however. On the contrary, feedback is essential to a student's development as a composer. When utilizing composition as a teaching tool, it's important to avoid letting rubrics and restrictions stifle creativity and fun and instead allow them to focus and refine creativity. At its core, the compositional process is about exploration, trial and error, and learning by doing. If you allow these things to happen as a teacher, the experience could be a very powerful one for students. Give them enough time and support and they will inevitably achieve success. And there is no greater feeling of success than from fully realizing a piece of music, especially one of which you could feel proud.

## **What Every Musician Needs to Know About the Body: The Practical Application of Body Mapping to Music Making**

## ***By Nicole Fasco***

*What Every Musician Needs to Know About the Body: The Practical Application of Body Mapping to Music Making* by Barbra Conable and illustrated by Benjamin Conable is based off the Alexander Technique and Body Mapping. The Alexander Method was created by Fredrick Matthias Alexander to improve the movement, as well as helping people release unnecessary tension in the body. Body Mapping is referred to as “one’s self-representation in one’s own brain” (pg. 5), therefore it is how a person views how their body functions. These two ideas are incorporated in this book to assist musicians in understanding basic principles about the body to improve their movements and to prevent injuries while playing an instrument.

*What Every Musician Needs to Know About the Body* is divided into several sections. These sections include: “Head and Neck”, “The Spine”, “The Torso”, “The Legs”, “The Brain and Movement”, “Body Mapping”, “The Arms”, “The Hands”, “Supporting the Instrument”, “Breathing”, “The Head”, and “Primary Control”. Each section goes into detail about how to properly use certain sections of the body to prevent injury while playing. Most of the sections are designed to help the reader release unwanted tension and allow the body to move freely. The book is divided into these sections to help the reader find any area that they might want to learn about quickly instead of having to read the entire book.

As a method to help the reader visualize how their body functions this book also contains many visual aids, such as images of the bone structure of the body. This, therefore, gives the reader a visual representation of the body and its structure. These aids are used to help the reader understand not only the body’s structure but also how it functions.

*What Every Musician Needs to Know About the Body: The Practical Application of Body Mapping to Music Making* is a beneficial book for musicians that want to understand how their bodies function or that suffer from chronic tension and want to find methods to relieve these issues.

# **Reaching Out Through Music: Frost MusicReach**

## ***By Silvana Ferrarin***

Are you a current Frost School of Music student who wants to give back to others through the gift of music? Even if you are not planning on becoming a music teacher in the future, becoming a mentor in the Frost MusicReach community outreach program is one of the perfect opportunities for those who want to have the experience of teaching music to young beginners, and in turn, inspire them to do well in all of their studies and in life.

From community centers to public schools, over 450 students ranging from elementary to high school are able to experience what Frost MusicReach offers. With 12 different programs, Frost MusicReach provides Frost School of Music majors a variety of opportunities to mentor students through the gift of music. Various locations where the programs are offered in Miami-Dade County include Frederick Douglass Elementary, The Barnyard and Virrick Park, Mays Conservatory, and several others.

There are a variety of music classes that Frost MusicReach mentors can teach. Several mentors teach bi-weekly after school hours in community centers and Miami Dade public schools. In this case, mentors are placed in a beginning music class setting where students are taught how to play various instruments such as strings, flute, clarinet, trumpet, and more. On another end of the spectrum, undergraduate Frost School of Music students on a specific scholarship mentor as part of the “2-1” mentoring program. In this case, one Frost School of Music student mentor is paired with two younger student mentees who receive instruction every Sunday on the University of Miami Coral Gables campus. This more intensive program is a partnership between the Frost MusicReach organization and the Greater Miami Youth Symphony. In many cases, the students stay with their mentor throughout all four years of the mentor’s undergraduate career. This further highlights the impact Frost MusicReach has been able to make on young musicians.

“Being a part of the Frost MusicReach organization has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my early college career. I have had the opportunity to give back to the community in a positive way while also doing something that I love, which is playing music,” says Colin Lee, a current freshman violist at Frost who mentors through the “2-1” program.

Young students who participate in Frost MusicReach are also rewarded for doing well in their respective programs. Their reward is attending select Frost School of Music performances with their families—the type of concert they attend depends on the program (e.g., a string program might attend a Frost Symphony Orchestra concert). The students are sometimes even able to meet the performing musicians before or after the concert. Students are often inspired by these performances since they provide opportunities to see musicians in a real-world setting. Older mentees on occasion are also able to play with Frost School of Music ensembles in side-by-side rehearsals. Furthermore, Frost MusicReach students can also watch community performances in which distinguished ensembles (such as the Stamps ensembles) often perform.

However, the Frost MusicReach students are not the only ones that receive learning benefits. Undergraduate Frost School of Music students working in large classes are sometimes paired with experienced graduate students, who mentor the undergraduates in terms of teaching. Graduate students are also able to take on executive positions and assist in further developing the programs.

Being a student and a teacher can sometimes be challenging for Frost School of Music students. Mentors have to work with their busy schedules, coursework, rehearsals, etc. to be able to devote time to Frost MusicReach. Luckily, the benefits outweigh the costs, and mentors are able to make the sacrifices that music educators must make in order to help their students every day.

“Frost MusicReach has taught me humility. In my time there, I have learned that even my skills as a player did not solely qualify me as a teacher,” says freshman Tom Zhang, a cellist who mentors in “2-1” program.

In summary, Frost MusicReach offers multiple opportunities for Frost School of Music students to develop their skills in teaching and mentoring others through the language we all speak in the end—music! Mentees of the 12 programs are able to receive beginning instruction from exceptional musicians and attend performances that can show the spectacular results of the hard work and passion that goes into learning music. Even though some of students being mentored may not decide to continue music studies in the future, being able to make an impact through music during this time of a young person’s development can be one of the most rewarding aspects of this organization.

\*For readers who are interested in becoming a part of the Frost MusicReach Program, there are multiple ways to find out more and get in contact with the program. More information can be found on the University of Miami website under “Frost School of Music.” ([www.music.miami.edu](http://www.music.miami.edu)) There is also a Facebook page of the same name (Frost MusicReach), which provides more insight into the program as well as contact information.

# **The Importance of Marching Band**

*By Kieran Harrison*

In the recent years, many communities in America have been deciding to cut funding to their music programs in schools. Often these cuts have seriously weakened programs that have existed for years. US secretary of Education Arne Duncan has referred to these budget issues as the “new normal.” The people in these communities clearly do not see the importance of music in their public schools. Therefore these programs are often the first to go. For this reason it has become more important than ever for these programs to reach out to the communities to prove they are worth keeping. Maybe one of the best ways of accomplishing this is to perform and spread music to the public and show them just what it is they are doing.

When I was growing up in my high school I would often play in my school's wind ensemble or sing in my school's chorus. The issue, however, was that the only people at these performances were the parents of the students in the groups. While it was easy for our parents to see how important music was to all of us, the rest of the people living in my town never had the opportunity to share in those moments with one exception. The one group that so many of the people in my community could see was the marching band. While many wouldn't attend our concerts, everyone came to see our football games and everyone watched as we marched in the Memorial Day parade. It was the marching band that represented our program to our town. Furthermore the marching band lifted the spirits of everyone who would see us, whether it was rainy or sunny or whether we were winning or losing. The role of a marching band in a community and school is vital. It is a symbol of a school's spirit and unity.

In addition to representing a school's music to the public, marching band provides valuable lessons and experience that students will carry with them for the rest of their lives. It teaches discipline and cooperation. Jerry Bilik, a well known composer, believes that "marching band is part of the process in the education of students who have not yet become mature musicians." In order to properly organize a successful marching band it is vital that all members are focused and attentive at all times. Without this, it would not be possible to prepare what can sometimes be hundreds of students for a show, especially when the show is being seen by the entire community. The need for student leadership within the band teaches lessons that can't be taught in the classroom alone.

Marching band is one of the most important parts of any music program in our schools. It provides a way of representing the importance of music in schools to the community. Furthermore it provides an outlet for students to learn lessons that they will carry with them for a lifetime. The importance of marching band cannot be overlooked as we look to strengthen the influence of music in our schools in the near future.