

# FALL NEWSLETTER

Presented by the Frost School of Music Collegiate NAFME Chapter

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## A Note from the President

The Florida Collegiate chapter of the National Association for Music Education at the University of Miami has once again proven its relevance and presence at the Frost School of Music. This Fall 2017 semester, we welcomed in one of our largest freshman classes EVER to the Music Education department - and they proved themselves to be an excited and dedicated bunch of future music educators! We are so grateful to have you all as a new part of our chapter.

This semester was filled with exciting fundraising opportunities. Our bake sales were as eventful as ever, bringing in over half of the funds for our \$500 grant to a Miami-Dade school music program. Coupled with that, our members had a blast sitting and bonding at the bake sale table. There was one instance where we had three separate pans of chocolate brownies at a single bake sale... but some creative minds wound up selling them without a problem!

Our main fundraising event of the semester, our 4th annual Benefit Concert, took place on November 2nd. Despite the constant setbacks by Hurricane Irma, our committee heads and their volunteers were able to put together our most successful Benefit Concert to date. Performance Committee, headed by Cat

Papadopoulos, lined up a number of amazing acts comprised of NAFME members and Frost organizations. Public Relations Committee had our concert decorated to the nines with banners, streamers, signs, tablecloths, and beautiful artwork on our posters made by committee volunteers and committee head Mavel Morales. Tech Committee, headed by Katherine Attong-Mendes, helped our concert run smoothly and made our set-up and take-down a breeze. Finally, our Fundraising Committee volunteers and head Sarah Young made up beautiful baskets, went out to local businesses, and got us major prizes (\$100 to The Big Cheese goes a LONG way)! This concert helped us complete our goal for our grant, raising the most money in its history.

Our meetings this semester were sprinkled with discussions of advocacy around Miami-Dade and throughout the state. Last semester's newly formed Advocacy Committee sparked a fire throughout our chapter of advocating for our major and our futures, bringing about major discussions, all while planning events to begin spreading our ideas to the surrounding areas. Our presence at the annual Florida Music Educator's Association Professional Development Conference in January will allow us to meet with our State Executive Board and bring our plans to life.

As always, our chapter has had a busy and rewarding semester. It is my sincere hope for the future of UMFC NAFME that we keep the momentum of fighting for music education, and keep having fun in the process. We are a chapter filled with strong minds and compassionate hearts, and in numbers, we can do so much good for the community.

It has been my sincere pleasure serving as your president for these last two years. Thank you for all of your hard work, and all you do to make our program and school great.

Now executive board: do your work.

Get pumped, and keep going!

Have a happy holiday,

Alexandra Colaizzi, (former) University of Miami NAFME Chapter President



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## *So You Think You Can Band: The Importance of Stepping out of your Comfort Zone*

We've all been told at some point in our lives that if we don't try something new, we'll never know if we like it or not. Usually we might roll our eyes and disregard it, but this cliché has a lot of truth to it. We as people are content with staying where we are and with what we know because it is where we are most comfortable. We often may avoid branching out and trying something new, whether it be a sport, club, or activity, because we're afraid of leaving our little bubble. But by branching out and getting a little outside of your comfort zone, you can learn valuable skills and life lessons that will stick with you for the rest of your life. Stepping out of our comfort zone is the only way that we can truly enable ourselves to grow and become the best version of ourselves that we can be.

My dad gave me this ultimatum in regards to trying out for the Frost Band of the Hour. I thought he was insane. "But I don't know how to play a band instrument," I said. I soon found that I didn't have to know an instrument to join, they would teach me. But I was not fully set on the idea of joining the band. A thousand "what if's" ran through my head. Little seeds of doubt inside me saying that I couldn't do it. "What if I'm terrible at the instrument I choose? What if I don't have enough time for it? What if I just don't like it at all?" The thought of joining, however, never left my mind. I sat with the idea for a couple of days and mulled it over. Slowly the pros of doing band started to outweigh the cons in my head so much so that I finally signed up on the band website, confirming that I was going to do it.

To be honest, band camp was 100% under the category of "out of my comfort zone" for various reasons: I didn't know anyone, I didn't know how to play my instrument, and I didn't know the first thing about marching (did I mention I didn't know anything?). I went to the first dinner and marching rehearsal timid and afraid of what it was going to be like, but once I got there I realized I was just psyching myself out in my head. Everyone was so welcoming and friendly; it seemed like the perfect environment to learn something new. I also discovered that I wasn't the only vocalist that was in band, which made the experience more comfortable knowing that I wasn't alone. After dinner we made our way to the field to begin marching band rehearsal. Once we started, it was clear to see I was absolutely terrible at marching. Yet, the band members still helped me in any way that they could and I started to realize that it wasn't as overwhelming and scary as it may have seemed. I learned to take each new bit of

information at a time from learning people's names, to learning how to do an 8-5 step, to playing the first few notes on the saxophone. Little by little, things started to feel more familiar and easier to me. The eagerness and willingness to learn from your mistakes is also important in trying something new, because you won't always get it right the first time. For instance, when we learned our first drill set in "Kanye Part 1", I would miss my spot 9 times out of 10. With the help of TA's and fellow band members, the number continued to go down until the spot was always hit correctly. If I didn't want to learn this material, I never would have. Now when we learn a new set, I'm not as off the first time as I was in the beginning. All these little struggles I had in the beginning slowly seemed to improve until it all seemed natural to me.



Looking back now on the beginning of the season and what I expected from it, I can say now that band was not what I thought it would be. In a way, it was so much more than what I could have predicted. That's the funny thing about trying something you've never done before: sometimes it exceeds your expectations of how it's going to be. To be fair, the experience of band this year was heightened just a bit due to the Canes' great season (go canes), but besides that, the experiences I've had in band thus far will stay with me forever. From the rigorous practices, to the rush we get from doing our pregame and halftime shows, to the excitement of tailgating and being front row at the football games, they all add up to create an experience unlike any other. Through this experience, I have also developed life skills and lessons that aren't even directly related to band or music. For instance, I used to run on what one might call "Miami time," AKA a good 10-15 minutes late to everything. However, due to many early call times and the fear of the consequences of being late to them, I've learned to be a little bit early to everything instead. I have also learned about the importance of living in the moment. It is so easy to be practicing a song or a certain drill move and be thinking about what you have to do later that day instead of the task at hand. But if your mind is on something else, then you are bound to mess up. I've learned that living in the now is just as important as making plans for the future.

Basically the point I'm trying to make here in this long story is that going out of your comfort zone is the most rewarding thing that you can do for yourself. It can allow you to grow in ways that you were not able to once before and to see things from a whole new perspective. Now when I tell people I'm in marching band as a vocalist, they think I'm crazy for doing so, but I don't see it that way. I see it as a way to get out of my comfortable little bubble. I see it as the life lessons that I have learned and skills I have acquired. I see it as the amazing opportunities it may bring me in the future. And this is only the beginning.

- Kristina Betancourt



## *Gender Discrimination in Orchestral Conducting*

When no one is trying to understand why it is difficult for women to break into the field of orchestral conducting, one must understand the current climate in the classical music industry in regards to women. The climate is best represented by a statement made by Vasily Petrenko, the principal conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic. He stated that “Orchestras react better when they have a man in front of them [because] when there’s a woman in front of them they are thinking about something else.” Orchestral conducting is considered the last glass ceiling in the music industry. Throughout history, women have fought for representation in orchestras as instrumentalists and conductors, and continue to receive significant resistance to this day. The numbers are abysmal. In France, only 17 out of 574 concerts were conducted by women in 2013. That adds up to around 3% of concerts. *Bachtrack* reported that on the 2013 list of the top 150 conductors in the world, only five were women. This, again, adds up to around 3.3%. This is a global issue. In a time where equality between the sexes is a prominent and observed issue, women conductors still face discrimination.

Enter Marin Alsop, a woman conductor who is currently one of the best conductors of our time. From 1992 to 2016 she served as the director of the Cabrillo Festival in Santa Cruz, California. During this time, from 1993 to 2005, she became the first principal conductor and then music director of the Colorado Symphony. Alsop has discussed that, throughout her career, she almost “put the blinders on.” She figured other women conductors would start following her lead. In the early 2000s, she came up for air and looked around, and she noticed that still women did not have real representation in the field. In 2002, she started the Taki Concordia Conducting Fellowship for promising women conductors. Alsop continues to



provide clinics and workshops for women conductors to encourage representation in the field. This was a major step for women conductors. Continuing through her career, her achievements and awards became more and more notable. In 2005, she became the first conductor ever to receive a MacArthur Fellowship. Arguably her finest and most significant achievement though, was in 2007. She was appointed the 12th music director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. It was at this time she became the first woman to be the principal conductor and music director of a major US Symphony Orchestra. Her contract has now been extended until the 2020-2021 season.

In the years to come, the hope is that through efforts by individuals such as Alsop, women will have a fair shot at representation. Overall, women conductors are trailblazers in their own right. This being said, they are still human and sometimes fall into the traps of society’s assigned roles for them in regards to the way they dress and act. It is unfortunate that the representation of women has increased in other fields throughout the waves of feminism, but in the field of conducting we have made minimal progress.

- Christie Page

### *Diversity in the Music Classroom*

Diversity is a word that is thrown around a lot these days, but what exactly does it mean? For me, it means implementing an assortment of music from a variety of cultures, time periods, and religions. It is vastly important for kids to understand that different is not equivalent to bad, and that differences are a learning opportunity rather than something to be shied away from or made fun of. By introducing songs from other countries and cultures, we encourage students to make connections to their own lives.

Another important aspect of diversity is how it makes for a more inclusive classroom. Every teacher wants his or her classroom to be a safe zone for students, and one of the most effective ways I've found to achieve this is to make sure every student is positively represented in the classroom through musical selections. I subscribe to the idea that "authentic caring is dependent on the development of relationships that are initiated through respect. The concept is one rooted in the establishment of a socially just school environment that believes in students and their ability to succeed because of, not despite of, their culture" (Carlos Abril; *Teaching General Music: Approaches, Issues, and Viewpoints*, page 249, 2016). The teacher should put in significant effort to know his or her students, and in the process, avoid the deficit model, which claims that teachers often judge students by what they aren't capable of instead of their strong points. When presenting these diverse pieces in class, allow the students to share what they know about that piece's origin; this is a great way for international students or students with non-USA backgrounds to share about their culture and feel like they belong.

For example, I chose a piece in Spanish for a summer camp show, and the students who spoke Spanish felt accepted and could share some of their culture.

Teachers can stand at the front of the classroom and lecture all day, but students sharing information with one another tends to stick better.



As one of my peers at the Frost School of Music, University of Miami mentioned in an interview with Amy Stillman in his Doctoral Essay, "You know, it is possible to be historically informed and totally creative. What is the framework you start with, what do [you] view this framework to be? That is where I see the challenge for many people starting with less than a fully loaded deck" (Jace

Saplan *Nā Mele O Ka Lāhui: A Conductor's Guide to the Choral Music of Lili'uokalani* 110). Many teachers are reluctant to introduce diverse pieces of music into the classroom because they themselves know little about different cultures, and/or they are worried about how the song will be received by the students. The most important part of introducing diverse music to the classroom is to learn all you are able to about the history and culture it stems from, then bring it to life by making connections to the familiar - just make sure that you are staying true to the message and background of the song. The worst thing you could do as a teacher would be to ignore the implications and meaning of a song; what is music if there is no meaning?

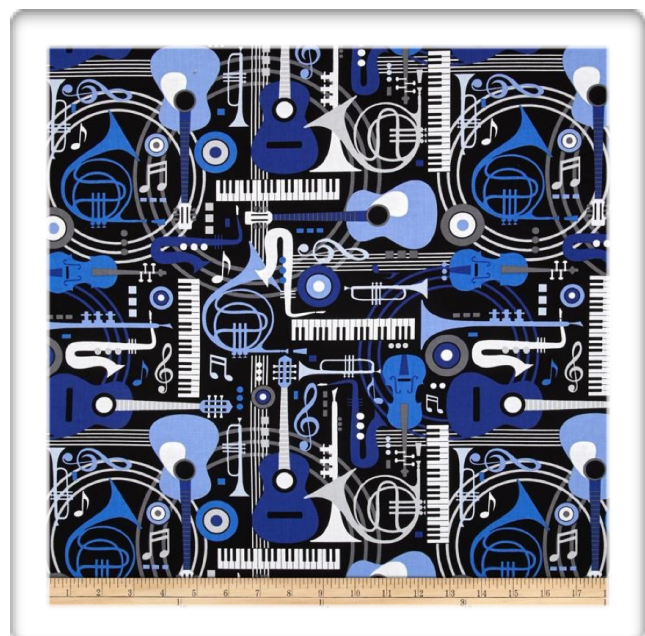
Kids are much more perceptive than we give them credit for, and I believe introducing songs like “Shosholoz” (known as South Africa’s unofficial National Anthem) or “Mu isamaa, mu õnn ja rõõm” (Estonian National Anthem) is crucial. Both the pieces just mentioned were instrumental in shaping the culture and development of their respective countries; Estonia and South Africa are both known for their singing revolutions, and it is so important for students to understand the key role singing and music played in the freeing of these countries from oppressive forces. Music is one of the most powerful forces in the world, and kids need to learn its power.

Diversity can be a daunting and somewhat frightening idea, especially to a beginning teacher. Thoughts about misrepresentation, unfamiliarity, and concern over the reception of the piece are prevalent in many teachers; this is why so many teachers struggle with diversity. The most important piece of advice I can give you is to do your best to fully grasp the cultural, historical, and emotional meaning of the song. Once this is understood, move on to explaining it to your students in a way that they can comprehend, relate to, and respect. Respect is key when bringing in a piece from any culture. Music is one of the most effective ways to teach and relate to other cultures, and I would encourage every teacher to break out of their comfort zone to introduce more diversity in the classroom. “It is not our differences that divide us; it is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences” (Lorde). Unify your classroom by bringing in diversity.

- Allison Cawthon

### *Secondary Instruments: Why you should have One or TWO!*

As music educators, we can all agree that it is necessary to have a certain level of mastery over an instrument. Whether you are a vocalist, percussionist, woodwind, brass, or string player, the skills acquired over the years of rigorous private lessons, practice schedules, and concert seasons has developed a certain degree of understanding over your specific instrument that aids in education. However, an area that may seem overwhelming to many undergraduate music education majors with busy schedules is learning a secondary instrument. Of course, the various techniques courses that are required for the curriculum “expose” us to many instruments, but I’m talking about truly reaching a proficient point on a secondary instrument.





Learning multiple instruments has the potential to bring many benefits to future educators and musicians that can be overlooked. First, learning a secondary instrument will make you a better musician. Learning an instrument is an extremely demanding and frustrating experience for most beginners. Once you have already learned a primary instrument, it makes the process much simpler because you have existing knowledge, especially if that secondary instrument is related to the primary instrument. For example, my primary instrument is clarinet; however, I have had the opportunity to play both alto and tenor saxophone in marching band the past two years. For myself, it was not like picking up a completely new instrument. Thankfully, there was crossover due to the three instruments being all single reed instruments; however, some technical issues posed challenges. Also, by being proficient on two instruments, such as the clarinet and saxophone, that opens up more potential performance and gig opportunities.

Second, as music educators, learning a secondary instrument allows us to become more comfortable

when teaching new instruments to students. You probably do not recall all the challenges that came with learning your first instrument. By learning a secondary during these undergraduate years, you will gain an understanding towards students, especially elementary and middle school students learning an instrument for the first time. Last semester I joined University Band and decided to learn the trombone. This was an experience that I definitely struggled with; however, I was able to understand the barriers that a beginning student would have with brass instruments.



Third, learning a secondary instrument will also help you develop even more effective time management skills. As a music major, you probably already schedule in your weekly practice time. Now imagine trying to do that same amount of practicing with two instruments. Scary, right? Not if you learn to effectively manage your time. Learning a secondary instrument is a great way to experiment with various practice strategies. You can be just as productive with one hour of practice as with three hours if you plan your practice schedules ahead of time. I recommend doing some research of your own because there are countless resources that focus on different areas of practice strategies. Also, one of the best times of the year to pick up a secondary instrument is over the summer break. Effectively utilizing the free time you have during summer break will put you at a far greater advantage with instruments when you return for classes.

Learning a secondary instrument is an essential part of a music educator's career. It allows us to take a step back from the teacher position and become the student once again. I hope all of you can make the most of all the opportunities to learn new instruments that come across your music education careers. It can truly go a long way to help you as a musician and educator.

- Nicholas Lorenzo



## *The Voice's Full Potential in Two*

### *Contexts*

Do you think Chance the Rapper could sing opera? Or better yet, could opera singer, Joan Sutherland, recreate a Chance the Rapper song? The truth is, with training, understanding of, and respect for different musical styles, anyone can execute any genre they desire.

However, both Joan Sutherland and Chance the Rapper have been extremely successful for very different types of music.



Joan Sutherland's success came from her ability to tell a story, using her incredibly focused vocal technique. In the operatic setting, Sutherland uses her voice to its full capacity by having a unified "color" across the entirety of her expansive range. Any variations in her vocal tone could be considered "shades" of her operatic vocal color. For example, a pianissimo portion of a song may be a paler shade of her voice, whereas a fortissimo would be considered a more pigmented presentation of the same color. Operatic compositions typically provide the listener with complexity in their coverage of multiple vocal registers or intricate melodies. The opera singer has devices, such as dynamic contrast, trills, emphasis of consonants, or a virtuosic passage to convey emotion, but must do so within a consistent sound.

The "Bell Song" from Delibes' *Lakmé*, is known for its virtuosity in the stratosphere of the soprano's range, as well as use of multiple vocal registers. The aria already conveys some of the message for the singer by having the extremely high parts represent the bells referenced in the title. Though Joan Sutherland lowers the key during her performance, the piece showcases the consistency between Sutherland's extremely high notes and her middle range. Her solid technique allows for a proper presentation of the story for her audience.

On the other hand, Chance the Rapper has seen success in his music by emphasizing the inconsistent sounds, or many colors, the voice can make, to connect to his listeners on a personal level. He keeps the listener's attention, throughout a song with little pitch variety, by using more types of sounds, such as growls, shouts, vocal fry, emphasizing diphthongs, and even imprecise pitch. He applies an abstract color palate. What's more is that some of these sounds may be considered taxing to the voice in an operatic setting.

In “Blessings,” Lohah Brown opens singing, “I’m gonna praise him, praise him ‘till I’m gone/When the praises go up.” Then, Chance comes in, continuing the melody in a laid-back manner—more of a speech-sing hybrid that feels like a personal conversation. We can hear this imprecise intonation in particular on “It seems like blessings keep falling in my lap.” He starts and ends on notes that are clearly in the key, but the notes in the middle of the line exist to text paint, and descend like the blessings “falling in [his] lap.” Throughout the song, we also hear exclamations of “Good God!” which add rhythmic interest, and sound like an extension of the drumbeat. Because he utilizes a human voice, it creates a portion of his drum kit that cannot be replicated by other artists, and furthers the personal relationship the listener feels to Chance. In his rapping, Chance chuckles slightly when he says, “I used to pass out music—I still pass out music.” He invites the listener to laugh with him when he corrects his own usage of the past tense; he’s admitting that he “still” gets excited when he makes new music and gives it to people despite his current fame. With Chance the Rappers’ speech-sing hybrid, exclamations, and very personal sounds like a chuckle, his audience relates to his message of optimism and gratefulness in “Blessings.”

Both Joan Sutherland and Chance the Rapper have successfully drawn in their listeners while having very different vocal techniques in their vocal genre. Sutherland uses her voice to its full capacity, in terms of projection and range, to breathe life into complicated operatic compositions. Chance the Rapper uses his voice to its full capacity by accessing unconventional sounds to bring his listeners into a personal musical conversation. In the context of music education, particularly vocal, teachers should avoid prioritizing one genre over another because art ultimately aims to connect to its audience regardless of the method.

- *Samantha Cordasco*



### *The Importance of Self Care as a Music Education Student*

As a music education student, we constantly have the “go, go, go” mentality, causing us to try to use every bit of time we get as productively as possible. Even though we are constantly busy, we continually try to improve our bad habits each semester, but somehow always end up back at square one: practicing at odd hours, desperately squeezing in field experience hours, and even skipping meals. Unfortunately, the product of this is usually more stress and pressure, and the deterioration of our physical and mental health. So what should we do? TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES. Simple, yet difficult. School and getting an education is important for our future, but our health is even more important.



#### 1. Me time:

No matter how busy you are, allow yourself some “me time” everyday, which is time for yourself! It does not need to be long, it could be as short as 10 minutes to an hour. Do something that makes you happy, calm, energized, and relaxed; anything you love. This could serve as your break from studying as well! Think of it as your time to decompress each day.

If for some reason, you do not know what to do with your “me time,” here are some recommendations:

- [thisissand.com](http://thisissand.com)- make piles of sand on your device. Very simple and oddly relaxing
- [weavesilk.com](http://weavesilk.com)- similar to sand, but draw beautiful patterns with no talent required
- Bullet journaling- an organization system with your own creative twist. A planner, notebook, and to-do list all in one. Relaxing and organizing your life at the same time? Amazing! ([bulletjournal.com](http://bulletjournal.com) for a quick jumpstart guide)
- [gruntle.me](http://gruntle.me)- sorry not sorry, I had to include this one. Smile at pictures and videos of cute animals. Who can resist?
- Exercise- we complain we do not have time to exercise or that we are too tired to, but exercising can, in fact, increase brain activity (aka it's good for you). It can even improve our mood and sleep. You don't necessarily have to go to the gym and workout, finding a sport you enjoy is good too!

#### 2. Eat, eat, eat:

Food is your fuel and without it, you cannot function properly. Remember to eat properly, which includes eating whole foods and eating when you're hungry. Sounds obvious, but many of us skip

meals because we “just don’t have the time.” If you know your schedule is going to prevent you from eating when you feel hungry, bring a snack with you. It will allow you to keep going for an extra hour or two until you are able to go get food.

Pro-tip: I always bring a snack in my backpack. Always. If you ever need a snack, you know who to call! (Unless I already ate it that day)

### 3. Treat yourself:

Keeping yourself motivated is important, and it doesn’t hurt to splurge on yourself once in a while. In fact, you don’t even need to buy anything to treat yourself! I am currently treating myself by sleeping early whenever I have a productive day and finish my work early. Treat yourself to a movie, a nice dinner, new clothes, a trip to the park, whatever makes you happy. The options are endless!

- Angela Lin

