

TEMPO



ARMTA
Alberta Registered
Music Teachers' Association
September 2021

**Non-Western (World)
Music Teaching in Canada:
Opening the Doors**

**The Crowning Achievement
of Claude Debussy:
Douze Études**

**The Basics of Studio
Inventory**

**My MMA:
Music and Martial Arts**

**Reflective Teaching:
What Should We be Doing Now?**



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President's Message

As most of us are now winding up another year of teaching, studying, online lessons, recitals, and workshops, I would like to share some take-aways from the past year with you.

First, I would like to welcome our new ARMTA provincial administrator, Tamara Bowie, who will be taking the reins from Vicki Martin sometime this August. We had three talented, brilliant applicants for this position, and we are grateful for the interest they showed in ARMTA's growth and continued positive influence in our great province.

Around one month ago, with yet another set of changes in regulations concerning teaching, I thought to check in with our provincial board members to see how things were going with them and with their branches/areas. I had hoped at that time to send out a president letter and reach out to all members.

This board meeting was a huge reality check, and to be honest, it has taken these four weeks for me to mull over the incredible courage, resiliency, and sacrifices our teachers are making this year. Responses from our provincial board members at our Zoom meeting included: taking part-time jobs to pay their bills, stopping or adapting their voice/wind instrument teaching, dealing with the smaller number of students, staying positive, mourning the loss of in-person concerts as both performers and audience, propping up their students who are dealing with isolation, frustration with the ever-changing government regulations, tiredness, branch members who are considering permanent retirement, teaching online/at home with noise levels from family on both ends of the computer screen, missing the thrill of music festivals "as they were," dealing with the loss of family and friends due to COVID-19, mental health issues, etc.

The sincerity and the honesty of these ARMTA members is heroic. I am blessed to be surrounded by them. But I just could not write this planned letter without taking a few weeks to let it soak in. I had to ask: why do we do what we do? What makes this kind of effort, well, worth it?

The answers came to me when I looked over the past two months, with my own students. It is the love. The love we have for music, for playing it, hearing it, teaching it. The love we have for our education, and the importance

of passing on what we have been given by those great instructors who trained us. The love we have for our students: those young (and old) souls who come to us each week with music in hand, waiting for it to permeate their hearts. For those students who come in after a bad day, after being quarantined for the third or fourth time, whose school has been closed or re-opened, who are dealing with issues we cannot really imagine. But we know, somehow, that music will help.

I have a large poster in my studio entrance that reads: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know when to just play piano." I have a mug that says: "Education is important, but playing piano is importanter." Music is so very important to our hearts and souls. It is a balm for our minds. That is why we must continue.

On a YouTube video by Yeonmi Park, she shared about an orchestra conductor in North Korea who was recently shot to death at the command of the dictator there for daring to question the dictator's musical comments after a concert. The entire orchestra was forced to watch this execution. She also shared that while all citizens have to attend weekly "self-criticism sessions," all "artists" have to do that every two days. There is much to think about in that experience. Our creativeness and our love of beauty is a big part of our strength. Hang on to those things and cherish your unique qualities.

The sacrifices we have made this year made a huge difference in the lives of our students. I salute our members, each and every one, for helping in whatever way you could to get these amazing (mostly) young musicians through this year. And now let us help each other through ARMTA to get ourselves back up off the floor and come back stronger. Let's catch our breath over the summer and do something new and great this fall. Your thoughts and ideas are welcome. Thank you for everything you have already done.

Nathene Arthur, ARCT, RMT
President, ARMTA Provincial

ARMTA Board of Directors July 2021

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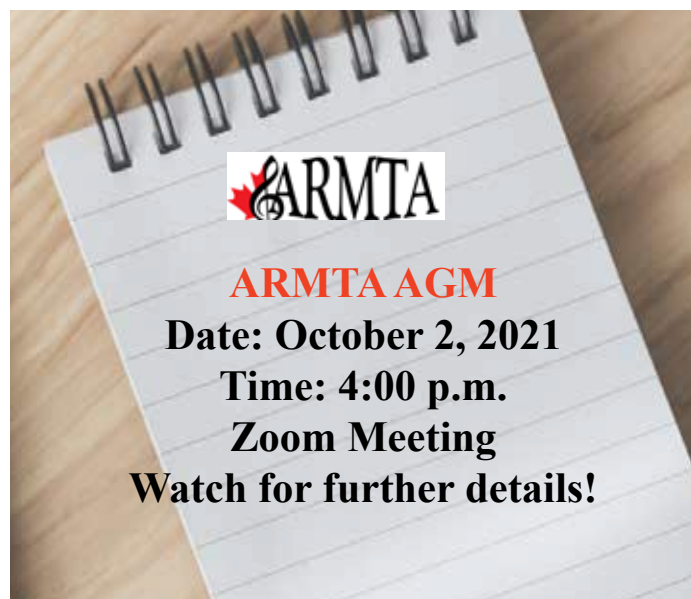
B. Mus (4-year)

Minor

2021 Milestone Awards

Congratulations to the following members on their years of continuous membership in ARMTA!

Name	Branch	Years
Isabel Lehmann	Member at Large	25
Shelagh Scott	Edmonton	25
Adele Bosse-Morgan	Edmonton	25
Dawn Stahl	Edmonton	25
Wan Tsai Chen	Calgary	25
Sherry Ann Lynn	Member at Large	25
Sharon Gair	Edmonton	25
Nancy Dick	Medicine Hat	25
Gayle Berg	Edmonton	30
Danuta Wijas	Calgary	30
Catherine Bender-Thorsen	Member at Large	30
Glenda Murphy	Edmonton	30
Siew Leng Low	Edmonton	30
Gay Schmaus	Edmonton	30
Michele Wheatley-Brown	Calgary	30
Janet Brown	Member at Large	35
Brenda Brown	Edmonton	35
Larisa Kaplansky	Edmonton	40
Deborah Gallant	Edmonton	40
Judith Ammann	Edmonton	40
Donna Holoboff	Calgary	45
Carol S. Moore	Calgary	45
Alexandra M. Munn	Edmonton	55



We've Got Thank-You Notes!

From Jerry Li, 1st place winner of ARMTA Provincial Piano Competition

I'm writing to express my sincere appreciation for your contributions that made this award possible.... A little bit about me: I compose in addition to playing piano and I run a non-profit that encourages youth to impact their communities through art (From Art to Heart). My teacher is Colleen Athparia and I'm in Grade 11.



From Colette Hennebury, recipient of a Calgary Branch Award

With so many worthy candidates, I am grateful and humbled to have been chosen to receive this award. Amidst a busy family life with two young children, providing me ... this scholarship is certainly a practical help and an encouragement to keep growing!

From Krysa Schlenker, recipient of a Medicine Hat Branch Award

I received the award for Grade 9 piano. ... I am extremely grateful for this award and it motivates me to continue to work hard at my music because now I've learned that if I put in the extra practice time, awesome things can come from it!

From Rachel Eifert, recipient of a Grande Prairie Branch Award

This money has helped fund my fine arts pursuits in high school and at home. During COVID-19, piano and this award have helped me out a lot especially with my mental health. It is very important that I have been able to play during this tough time in all of our lives. Knowing that my hard work has been acknowledged is an amazing feeling and something that I will never forget.

From recipients of ARMTA Needs Based Bursaries* (Names withheld)

I wanted to say a huge thank you for granting me with this bursary. I started piano lessons in September of 2020 after I had knee surgery. Not being able to work my physically demanding job left me spending most of my time at home. That is when I decided to start

learning piano, as I always loved how it sounds and I thought if not now, then when. After my first lesson, it was very clear to me I made a great life choice. Not working left me really tight on money to be allocating towards my weekly lessons. This grant has given me the opportunity to continue on with my passion without compromising my living costs. I am so grateful that now I can continue on my journey of becoming an amazing piano player.

Thank you very much for choosing me for this bursary! I have not been able to get many violin students because of the lockdowns, and so had no way to earn money. Your bursary will greatly help me in purchasing a higher quality bow to better improve my musical studies and teaching.

This \$500 will allow me to accomplish my goal of finishing RCM level 8 by the time I graduate from high school.

Thanks to you, I am one step closer to achieving my goal. ... I just passed level 9 History with first class honours with distinction. ... Your generosity has inspired me to work even harder in order to give back to the community. I hope that one day I will be able to help other students just as you have helped me.

Music is a significant part of the world. ... I am in love with playing and learning new pieces. ... I am grateful to the ARMTA bursary committee for providing me the chance to continue learning without worrying about the financial need.

Thank you so much for the bursary. It came at the right time as I had just finished my application to pursue music in university and this bursary can be used towards it. Because of this bursary, I will be able to participate in a jazz band—something I have great interest in but I was worried that I would not be able to pay the fee.

**The ARMTA Bursary, also referred to as “Needs Based Bursaries” is offered to assist students, at any level, who wish to further or continue their music studies and struggle with the costs involved in this pursuit. The basic requirements are commitment to music study and financial need. Multiple awards are available in any given year in amounts from \$200 to \$500 per year/per recipient.*

ARMTA Recognition Fund Awards

April 2020–21 Totalling \$22,050

18 Needs Based Bursaries (Recipients—Confidential)	\$8,000
2020 ARMTA Branch Awards:	\$5,400
Calgary and Edmonton \$1,000 each possible	
Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Red Deer	\$750
2020 CASSA (Calgary Arts Summer School Association) Awards	\$450
2020 ARMTA Student Composer Competition	\$350
2020 Contemporary Showcases	
Calgary \$350 Edmonton \$350	\$700
ARMTA Provincial Pedagogy Scholarships	\$1,000
ARMTA Provincial Piano Competition 2021	\$3,650
ARMTA Provincial Voice Competition 2021	\$2,500

ARMTA acknowledges with gratitude the 2020–21 donors

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ARMTA Provincial

In honour of Annette Bradley, recipient of ARMTA Service Award 2020

ARMTA Provincial

In honour of Kimerica Parr with appreciation for serving as provincial president from 2018–2020

Mary Schweitzer

To donate to the ARMTA Recognition Fund, please visit www.armta.ca/armta-recognition-fund

Branch News

Edmonton Branch

By Rosemarie Horne & Heather McGuire

Our year continued with Zoom monthly executive meetings as well as virtual recitals and workshops. This year our branch welcomed 20 members since last June. The diversity of subjects within the membership is ever expanding as in addition to several pianists, we have brass, strings, and guitar teachers joining us.

Branch Events

Our continuing education program saw presentations on creating our own online courses (Ron Long), Hindustani Music Systems (Subash Giri), and the process of adjudication (Viktoria Reisch-Dapp). During Canada Music Week, ARMTA and BCRMTA held a collaborative online recital featuring Canadian composers with students from both branches participating. In early 2021, the branch executive created an opportunity for members and friends to donate to a special fund in memory of Erin Bai, daughter of branch member Leslie Bai. A portion was used to fund a commission by Lynette Sawatzky to compose a work in memory of Erin entitled "RemembERING." The piece will be used at the fall Contemporary Showcase festival.

Awards & Scholarships

A new provincial scholarship was created on behalf of the late Bette-Joan Rac, a long-time Edmonton Branch music teacher. This \$1,000 scholarship is a "needs based" scholarship awarded annually towards piano instruction, with special consideration given to first- and second-generation Canadians.

The recipient of our 2021 Exceptional Service Award was Carol Mellors, who has served on several boards locally, provincially, and nationally. Carol spoke at our virtual AGM about ARMTA's cooperation with music and culture communities through the years.

As we look forward, we are excited to see regulations lifted so that students can get back to regular lessons and teachers can get back to their traditional style of teaching. We will forever be changed from our experiences of the last 16 months as teachers will continue to embrace the opportunities of online teaching for remote students, access to online workshops Canada wide and expanded educational opportunities for us and our students.

Calgary Branch

By Barbara Robertson

Hello from the Calgary Branch! As everyone focused on the pandemic, Calgary speech and music teachers continued what we do best, we taught. During that time, we also dealt with normal life like weather, technical glitches, house repairs, family stresses, health issues, and unfortunately, the passing of a dear friend and colleague, Roberta Stephen.

We were thankful to be able to keep teaching, offering an escape, an education, and a release for our students, and maintaining human contact (often virtually) with others while sharing the joys of music. We learned so much about microphones, webcams, recording, online teaching, and were exposed to the possibility of so many webinars and online concerts. We were busier than ever.

ARMTA Calgary still made time for professional development programs, student "concerts" and awards, and our board meetings.

- Looi Tan organized an August workshop led by Rachel Goldenberg with advice on studio teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Ivea Mark organized a Zoom workshop on challenges with parents.
- Scholarships and awards were given to our outstanding students at two virtual recitals organized by Tanya Foster, Lisa Kiernan, and Ron Proctor.
- Three Branching Out virtual sessions were organized by Looi Tan, Frances Ewington, Nathene Arthur:
 1. Kien To presented on "The role of social media in the music industry."
 2. Dale Erikson talked about "Learning through the arts."
 3. Subash Giri discussed "Multicultural music."Two of these presentations are recorded on the ARMTA website.
- Josee Robitaille, Frances Ewington, and Carol Moore kept the Student Recitals zooming. They even had special draws for participants.
- I participated in the Rotary Calgary Concerto Competition as one of the organizers/volunteers. The students and accompanists performed in person, with masks, at Michael Lipnicki's Fine Pianos. My husband live streamed the performances which were watched all over the world.

We were in danger of losing our journal, *Impromptu*, but thanks to volunteers, Nathene Arthur, Rachel McLellan, Jacqueline Law, Maryellen Pankratz, Carol Moore, and

me, we had a winter issue and are working on a fall issue. We are so thankful that Beth Olver continues to chair our board, and that Denisha Teichroeb, as treasurer, works with Maryellen, our administrator. LaDona will continue to administer scholarships and grants and Melodie Archer will continue as new member coordinator.

We are glad to have the following join the Calgary Branch board: Lorna Sewell, Carolyn Steeves, and Mary Jane Vandekerkhove, as well as several Calgary members who work as conveners. Thanks to Rita Thurn who has served on the ARMTA board with me.

Lethbridge Branch

By Lorrie Wittke

The Lethbridge Branch continued to see steady progress through perseverance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers presented four virtual recitals and two virtual workshops.

A celebration of Canada Music week took place with a watch party in which students participated in a scavenger hunt. As the Lethbridge and District Music and Speech Arts Festival drew near, students again enjoyed a watch party for another virtual recital. The year ended with two final virtual recitals, one for children and youth, and one for adults. Many new skills were developed as teachers worked to put these special virtual events on. The Lethbridge Branch also recognized students receiving first-class honours marks on their Royal Conservatory practical and theory exams during their first virtual recital of the year. The Lethbridge Branch ARMTA Recognition Fund Student Awards were also presented to students who have achieved the highest first-class honours marks in both a practical and theory exam during the award year December 2019 to August 2020.

On March 5, a Zoom presentation by Christine Donkin was held, entitled "My thoughts on teaching composition." This presentation was a Peer Outreach project for CMFTA Branching Out. Another Zoom presentation was held on May 3 with Derek Chiu, the Alberta regional representative for the Royal Conservatory of Music. Derek discussed the Teacher's Portal and explored ways to integrate this digital resource into music teaching.

Grande Prairie

By Gwendolyn Bartek

The Grande Prairie Branch continued to meet by Zoom this spring. We had two excellent workshops with Merlin Thompson on March 22 and April 12. We formed a committee to choose

how to disburse the scholarship funds we received from ARMTA, and chose one junior, one intermediate, and one senior student. The teachers presented the cheques to the teachers privately, due to COVID-19, but I do know some pictures were shared within the teachers' studio! We ended the year with a Zoom discussion of how the year had gone for each of us.

Congratulations to the Provincial Awards Winners

ARMTA Vocal Competition 2021

First Place: Aemilia Moser

Second Place: Brenna Bazinet

Third Place: Laren Stepler

Congratulations to these fine young singers! Aemilia Moser represented Alberta at the CFMTA Competition.

ARMTA Continuing Education Scholarship Winner 2021

The ARMTA Continuing Education Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that Marek Orszulik is the recipient of the 2021 ARMTA Continuing Education Scholarship. Congratulations, Marek!

Marek has been accepted into the PhD program at the Royal Northern College of Music, based in Manchester U.K. This college is one of the most respected music schools in the country, and is one of the constituent parts of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music that administers graded exams nationwide.

Marek will be studying under renowned classical guitarist, Craig Ogden, and working towards a PhD in performance while maintaining his teaching practice. The focus of Marek's PhD will be the Russian guitarist and composer, Sergei Rudnev (b.1955). Although Russia is not normally considered a significant source for guitar repertoire, there is a surprising wealth of little-explored music readily available. Rudnev himself is a prolific contributor, and has been largely overlooked by concert guitarists. By completing this PhD, Marek will be able to more fully account for this remarkable composer's output as well as to highlight the importance of Russia in general for the variety and diversity of its guitar repertoire.

Non-Western (World) Music Teaching in Canada: Opening the Doors

By Subash Giri

Historically, non-Western music has long been lumped together and defined with the vague term “world music.” Coined in the 1960s, these two words were sometimes replaced with “ethnic music” or “developing world music.” But what do these words mean? The *Canadian Encyclopedia of Music* states: “Broadly interpreted, ‘world music’ can mean the traditional music of cultures outside North America and Western Europe, or contemporary versions of traditional music.” This article discusses some barriers that exist for those who wish to teach and study this “non-Western music” in Canada.

In recent decades, many artists, educators, and scholars have found the term “world music” to be problematic. It created a stereotype which implies it is less evolved music, unworthy music, and music without theoretical foundation. Many have argued that the term “world music” is outdated and have called for its redefinition. As the debate regarding exactly what to call it goes on and on, non-Western music teaching is not well served. During my informal discussions with non-Western music educators and students here in Canada, I heard that they have experienced a lack of interest, and sometimes disregard, from musicians who have been trained in the “traditional Canadian systems.” I suspect that this might be partly because there is no syllabus for non-Western music in the two main conservatories in Canada—the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM), Toronto, and Conservatory Canada. So, up until this date and time, there has been no exposure to the vast amounts of highly developed music from parts of the world outside Western Europe and North America.

Interestingly, when I applied to join Alberta Registered Music Teachers’ Association (ARMTA) in January 2018, the examining board had difficulty evaluating my undergraduate and graduate music credentials to register me in my specialized study of Hindustani classical voice. I have a master’s degree in this specialty and am currently working on my doctorate at the University of Alberta. I have been teaching South Asian music (voice, drumming, strings, harmonium) for 15 years in Nepal, Norway, and Canada (Edmonton). This specialty presented the examining board with a new area of expertise; I was pleased when they created a new subject area called “Ethnomusicology” and registered me in that category.

Disparities

In 2020, I received an inquiry from a prospective student



Above: Author performing Hindustani classical raga with students in the fall 2019 recital at Convocation Hall, University of Alberta. (Photo courtesy: Ujwal Thakur)

who wanted to learn Hindustani classical voice with me. The student inquired, “What is the course duration, and will you provide any certificate of completion after the course?” Despite being a registered music teacher with ARMTA, I did not have an official certification system to offer in this area of music study. I could offer a certificate from my studio, but that is not what the student was referring to in the question. Non-Western music teachers often encounter this dilemma with new and existing students who are accustomed to the Canadian curriculum and Conservatory examination and certification, and who want study supports and opportunities to compete and perform for recognized certification. Students have every right to be concerned about how their progress and achievement will be gauged; they want a platform to explore their talents; they seek resources (awards, scholarships, bursaries) to affirm their study and reward their effort. Highly qualified non-Western music teachers dream of supporting themselves through studio teaching, as this is where their passion lies, and they want to make a career in Canada. There is no national institution or body that can presently assist in this regard.

The RCM is the educational institution that provides a national standard of examination for music students in Canada and in some of the United States through the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA). Conservatory Canada is also used across Canada and, more recently, in China. These examination systems and credentials (certificates and diplomas) are recognized across Canada and in other countries; this is partly because these institutions have existed for many decades.

There are abundant opportunities (awards, competitions, and performances) for students who wish to pursue any

Western music study, as well as for teachers who seek certification and want to enhance their skills. In contrast, there is still a notable gap in opportunities for the non-Western music teaching-learning experience in Canada.

RCM, Conservatory Canada, the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' Associations (CFMTA) and provincial registered music teachers' organizations are understandably also centered around Western music teaching because that is what they have always known. Although they welcome non-Western music teachers for their membership (I was warmly welcomed by the ARMTA, Edmonton Branch in 2018), their programs and activities reflect an absence of opportunity for non-Western music teachers and students.



Above: Author's students performing Hindustani classical singing and Bollywood songs in a virtual vocal recital (Zoom) held on January 2, 2021.

I had the opportunity to attend the CFMTA conference after becoming a member of ARMTA. The conference provided music teachers countless opportunities for networking and professional development. It also offered a platform for students to present their talent through the National Piano and Voice competitions. The conference was an outstanding experience for me; however, as a non-Western music educator, I did not find anything relevant to my professional development as an instructor of non-Western music. Similarly, ARMTA offers a range of opportunities, including awards, scholarships, performance recitals, and competitions, for the students of ARMTA members. My students (non-Western music students in general) are not eligible for these opportunities as there are no such programs and activities designed to include non-Western music students. Non-Western music students do not have these opportunities because the music that they study is new to the organizations and, to date, they fit neither CFMTA's nor ARMTA's definition of "Canadian music students."

Time to Rethink?

Canada is a home to diverse cultures and communities. Multiculturalism became an official policy in 1971. In

The Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988, it states that Canada "will foster the recognition and appreciation of the diverse cultures of Canadian society and will promote the reflection and the evolving expressions of those cultures." Ironically, while some music cultures are thriving, many others are suffering. Through my own experience, as I developed my own teaching studio in Edmonton, I learned that there is a tremendous potential for the professional non-Western music teaching in Canada. A quick Google search will display a notable number of music schools/professionals that offer a wide range of non-Western music instruction across Canada. Many have a virtual presence and teach online; others are teaching music privately in their home studios. Canadian students seem open to exploring and appreciating different music traditions. I believe the key issue is that there is no system nor any institution for non-Western music teaching in Canada. Educators and students are both in search of a path that can guide them in the right direction in this regard.

One of the CFMTA's mission statements states, "Honour and support Canadian music and its contribution to our culture." Is it possible, in our future, to include Indigenous music and non-Western musical styles that reflect more ethnic communities that are contributing to the fabric of Canadian society? Since ARMTA promotes the "love and knowledge of music through professional teaching and service in the community," can we put some focus on service to non-Western music and Indigenous music?

On one hand, we often pride ourselves in how well we include, celebrate, and advocate for multiculturalism in Canada. On the other hand, we are not aware of how some cultures and music traditions face barriers based on race, colour, and ethnicity. I encourage CFMTA and ARMTA members to become the keystones to bridge this otherness. Perhaps we could be the catalyst that finds a way to systematize, recognize and honour non-Western music instruction and study in Canada. Could this be the time to start opening some doors?

The Author

Subash Giri (PhD candidate, MMus, MMus Mgmt, MA) is an assistant lecturer of Indian Music Ensemble (IME) at the Department of Music, University of Alberta. He has been



teaching music in universities, schools, and communities for the past 15 years. He specializes in Hindustani classical music. He is a former vice president of ARMTA, Edmonton Branch.

ARMTA Student Composer Competition 2021

By Christine Rogers

There were 51 composition entries submitted by 44 students this year from 21 teachers. A record year! (This is a definite increase from last year—31 entries submitted by 30 students from 13 teachers).

Adjudicator Jesse Plessis (his information and photo can be viewed on the website at <https://armta.ca/student-composer-competition/>) awarded seven first-place prizes (totalling \$525) presented in Preparatory 1, Preparatory 2 (8 years and under), A1, A2 (11 years and under), B1 (15 years and under), C (19 years and under), and D (Open) categories which were entered in the CFMTA national competition. Results will be released later in August.

Preparatory Category Class 1 (8 and under) First Place: Luke Klein

Luke Klein is 6 years old and a kindergarten student in Red Deer, Alberta. This is his first year learning piano and the first song he composed. He loves to play the piano and enjoys making his own songs when he is supposed to be practicing. He loves building with Lego bricks and playing outside with his two younger sisters. When he grows up, he wants to be an engineer with his dad, write songs for movies and maybe for the radio, too.



The Hop-Hop Song
Luke Klein

Bouncy

Piano

mf

“The Hop-Hop Song” by Luke Klein.

Preparatory Category Class 2 (8 and under) First Place: Esme Costar

Esme Costar, aged 6, is a Grade 1 student at St. Michael’s School in Medicine Hat, AB. She recently completed her first year of piano lessons with teacher Jamie Deibert and particularly enjoyed composing cheerful songs about her life. Besides music, she loves playing outside, being around animals, and spending time with her nanas and papa. She would like to be a hair stylist and veterinarian when she grows up.



I Love My Life
Esme Costar

J=120

mf

6 My mom al-ways keeps pro-mi-ses. My dad gives us lots of toys. My

11 B F F is so nice. My sis-ter al-ways plays with me. I love my life!

16 I have good friends. I love my sis-ter. I love my mom and dad. I love my pets.

I am spoil-ed! I love my pia-no teach-er. I love my life! Yay!

“I Love My Life” by Esme Costar.

Category A Class 1 (11 years and under) First Place: Mark Rico-Lam

Mark Rico-Lam is a native Edmontonian. He has studied piano since age 6 with Rhonda McEachen and Heather Hindman. The pandemic interrupted his gymnastics and diving training with the pool and gym frequently closed. However, the silver lining was he had more time to compose music and finish crocheting his sweater! His current favourite composers are Debussy and Chopin.



Fantaisie des Flacons de Neige Par Mark Rico-Lam

L'Éléphant, comme le vent...

Piano

pp

con pedale

Excerpt of “Fantaisie des Flacons de Neige” by Mark Rico-Lam.

Category A Class 2 (11 years and under)

First Place: Jonathan Knight

Jonathan Knight has been playing piano for 3 ½ years. This is his first time submitting a song into a competition, which began as a school assignment. He has a wonderful piano teacher who has helped his love for music to continue to grow each year. He also has an uncle he looks up to, who is a musician and song writer. Jonathan loves to add his own twists to his piano music and enjoys watching how fast his fingers can move once he has it memorized. He is turning 11 this summer and enjoys reading and playing with his dog. He has a deep curiosity about how things work, from electric circuit panels to windmills and even geothermal energy. Jonathan loves the outdoors and is currently learning how to ride a long board on the paths.



Christmas In the Morning

Jonathan Knight

A musical score for the piece "Christmas in the Morning" by Jonathan Knight. It features three systems of music. The first system includes a voice line with lyrics "Christ-mas in the morn-ing... Christ-mas in the morn-ing..." and a piano accompaniment. The second system includes a violin line with lyrics "Christ-mas in the morn-ing... Let's have fun on Christ-mas morn'. The" and piano accompaniment. The third system includes a violin line with lyrics "sun is ris-ing up and we're go-ing out to play, so we're put-ting on our" and piano accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings like *mf* and *mp*, and tempo markings like *Sweetly* and *accel.*

Excerpt of “Christmas in the Morning” by Jonathan Knight.

Category B Class 1 (15 years and under)

First Place: Shawn Jiang

Shawn Jiang is a Grade 10 student who is passionate about composing. He first started piano lessons and experimenting with composing in 2014. What appeals to him the most about composing music is its ability to convey stories and move people. “For me it is a way to express my feelings and emotions.”



Shawn enjoys participating in composition competitions and sharing his music with other people. His favourite composer is Joe Hisaishi. In his spare time he enjoys playing chess.

A musical score for the piece "At First Sight" by Shawn Jiang. It features three systems of music for piano. The first system includes a tempo marking "Sweetly J = 84" and a dynamic marking *p*. The second system includes a dynamic marking *mf*. The third system includes a tempo marking "J = 142" and a dynamic marking *mp*. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and articulation marks.

Excerpt of “At First Sight” by Shawn Jiang.

Category C (19 years and under)

First Place: Sointu Aalto

Sointu Aalto (b.2004 in Helsinki, now based in Treaty 6) is a cellist and composer. Winner of Frost School of Music’s 2020 Ensemble Ibis International Composition Competition, Arcady Ensemble’s 2019 Emerging Composer Competition, Continuum New Music’s 2021 Teen Composer Award, CFMTA’s National 2020 Student Composer Competition, and ACNMP’s National 2020 and 2021 Composition competitions, Sointu is a high school student at Victoria School of the Arts, who enjoys learning about everything academic, and is especially interested in climate science and climate justice. As an artist, she is particularly interested in the connections between music, mathematics, social justice, and philosophy. She has had the opportunity to learn something about composition from Heather Hindman, John Burge, Linda Purves, Mark Hanneson, Andrey Talpash, Jesse Plessis, David McIntyre, Christina Volpini, Charles Stolte, and Allan Gilliland. These people have described her music as “daunting,” “disturbing,” “daring,” “truthful and gripping, and simultaneously polished and raw.” Sointu studies cello with Josephine van Lier. She likes to perform music to people, in orchestra, chamber ensemble, and solo, and recently won an honourable mention in Boulder Bach’s World Bach Competition, high school instrumental category. In her free time, Sointu likes to think.



Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide Levels

I. 280 ppm *Sointu Aalto*

Excerpt of “Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide Levels” by Sointu Aalto

Category D (Open)
First Place: Rochelle Ireland

Growing up, **Rochelle Ireland** always enjoyed singing and the magical sound of the piano that accompanied the church choir she belonged to. Some of her fondest memories involved inventing melodies and songs as she took



every opportunity to experiment. Joining her high school Jazz band provided opportunities and influenced her style, broadening her musical exposure to include Jazz greats such as Ella Fitzgerald and Peggy Lee. Her song writing began in earnest with her first songs composed a cappella in the echoing stairwell after school. Years later, armed with a new piano, a loving husband, and surrounded by two young children, her song writing exploded. Performing her own songs with collaborators over the years gave her the opportunities to explore numerous genres. More recently, her efforts have been focused on learning music theory and charting with her wonderful piano instructor, and studio recording.

Tambora

Rochelle Ireland

Excerpt of “Tambora” by Rochelle Ireland

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Reflective Teaching: What Should We be Doing Now?

By Twila Bakker

This past teaching year has been an incredibly different situation for all studio music teachers; some of us were legally only able to teach online, while others were able to teach wearing masks either inside and out on driveways and in backyards. As ARMTA President Nathene Arthur recently pointed out in a provincial update, we have shown great strength and courage as educators having dealt not only with COVID-19 health restrictions and our own personal economic realities but also with supporting students struggling with isolation and mourning the many losses the world-wide pandemic has inflicted. We should be proud of our accomplishments of navigating new methods of teaching, and as we re-emerge from the uncertainty of COVID-19 and prepare for another year of lessons, we should also take time to reflect on and evaluate our own pedagogical practices. We can utilize the reset that COVID-19 has forced on all of our studios and concretize our capacities for reflective teaching in order to enhance our collaborative learning with our students.

As members of ARMTA, each year we are invited at the time of our membership renewal to utilize the “Reflection Tool” in order to assess our “professional activity and contribution to the music community.” The intent of the document is to encourage us as studio teachers to participate in the greater music community, to move from, the often-solitary experience of teaching private music lessons, to becoming engaged with musicians and pedagogues around us creating a supportive web of people and resources to draw upon as necessary.

The “Reflection Tool” is a stock-taking device that highlights three main areas of engagement: (1) organizational involvement; (2) practitioner development; and (3) pedagogical development. While all of these are important aspects to being a successful studio teacher, this discussion will focus on how cultivating a reflective teaching practice aids in our self-evaluation of teaching and our subsequent development as pedagogues.



What is reflective teaching?

To put it most simply, reflective teaching is the act of reflecting on our teaching practice and adjusting that practice based on the observations we make in the process of reflecting. As performing musicians, we have been trained to do this for our own performing practice—all the thoughts along the lines of: “Am I playing this accurately?”, “How do I know it is accurate?”, “Have I captured the mood?”, “How am I executing the technical skills required to play this?” are examples of what Donald A. Schön (1983/1999) calls “reflecting-in-action” and they influence how we go about practicing and learning a musical work. Rather than just intuitively applying the process to our practice of performing repertoire, education experts suggest that reflecting on the teaching process can reap a multitude of rewards.

As Lisa M. Gruenhagen (2017) notes, “stepping back is an important element in creating at which time [a] myriad [of] ideas, questions, and decisions emerge, such as ‘Have I accomplished what I set out to achieve in this or these works? What kinds of surprises have there been for me in the creation of these works? Am I satisfied? What do I do next?’” The process of reflection on learning goals (for both teacher and student) assists in the creation of student autonomy in learning, and according to Esa Virkkula (2020), this independence maintains and further develops a student’s motivation. Student motivation is something that always fluctuates given the time of year and other demands on time and focus, but over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic health restrictions is something that was particularly challenging—as it became coupled with nonverbal overload via videoconferencing meetings, what we colloquially might know as “Zoom fatigue” (Bailenson, 2021).

With the residue of Zoom fatigue continuing to mark-up student motivation, how might we start to be more methodical and deliberate with reflective teaching? Educational researcher Ken Bain (2004) identified a few key traits of excellent teachers, mainly that they take a learning-based approach and asked themselves a variation of the following questions:

1. Is the material worth learning?
2. Are my students learning what I have said they will?
3. Am I helping my students learn or are they learning despite me?
4. Have I harmed my students by fostering short-term learning

via intimidation tactics rather than encourage additional interest in the field, or failed to evaluate a student's learning properly?

If we take a moment to ask ourselves these questions of our past studio teaching situations (in a post-mortem of the year), we can help ourselves prepare for success the coming year. If we can ask ourselves these questions while we are in the throes of the academic year, we can respond dynamically to the challenges our students face while learning. It is important to recall the timeless words of Leo Tolstoy (1904) on teachers and students:

Instead of convincing themselves [teachers] that, in order to act successfully on a certain object, it is necessary to study it ... they want to teach just as they know how, as they think best, and in case of failure they want to change, not the manner of their teaching, but the nature of the child itself.

As Tolstoy points out, it is crucial that the teacher change the mode of instruction to fit the student, so let us see the challenges of teaching in a Zoom-weary world as opportunities to discover and reflect on how our students have learned in the past and what new ways they might learn in the future.

The Author

Twila Bakker holds a PhD in Music and a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education from Bangor University, Wales; an MA in Musicology from the University of Victoria; and a BA in History and Music from the University of Alberta. She is currently completing a BEd in Music along with a Certificate in International Learning at the University of Alberta.

For further reading:

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The Crowning Achievement of Claude Debussy (1862–1918): *Douze Études* (1915)



Left: Rugged cliff of Pourville. **Right:** Coastline of Pourville on the English Channel.

By Sandra Joy Friesen

Douze Études

Book I

pour les “cinq doigts”: d’après Monsieur Czerny (For Five Fingers: after Mr. Czerny)
pour les Tierces (For Thirds)
pour les Quartes (For Fourths)
pour les Sixtes (For Sixths)
pour les Octaves (For Octaves)
pour les huit doigts (For Eight Fingers)

Book II

pour les Degrés chromatiques (For Chromatic Notes)
pour les Agréments (For Ornaments)
pour les Notes répétées (For Repeated Notes)
pour les Sonorités opposées (For Contrasting Sonorities)
pour les Arpèges composés (For Composite (Blended) Arpeggios)
pour les Accords (For Chords)

Claude Debussy had a profound way of thinking about music, saying that the primal nature or essence of music is that of mystery, and that music is “weakened by trying to be too human.” It seems almost as though his *raison d’être* was to express abstractions of imagery, poetry, sensuality, and emotion through his piano music. After a lifetime of pursuing the aesthetic of musical abstraction, his goal to compose twelve piano *Études* in 1915 was monumental. In many ways, the *Études* represent a culmination of his artistic ideas as they are filled with French charm, wit, and humour, as well as moments of unabashed romanticism, and often a sense of improvisation and spontaneity. Indeed, compositional elements present in earlier major works of the *Preludes*, *Images*, *Estampes*, *Children’s Corner*, *Deux Arabesques*, *Suite Bergamasque*, *Pour le piano*, and *L’Isle joyeuse*, are all present in subtly suggestive fashion in the *Études*. Above all however, in this final and stunning accomplishment of the *Études*, Debussy solidified his status as a composer next to Frédéric Chopin and Franz Liszt, producing a body of work that elevated his piano music to the transcendental.

Debussy composed the *Études* during the remission of his cancer, while feeling a rather unexpected intense musical rejuvenation. To get away from Paris, he retreated to his favoured coastal village of Pourville (on the English Channel), and composed this music surrounded by peaceful rolling hills, pastoral fields, majestic and rugged cliffs, gusty coastal winds, the crashing of the sea, the pebble beach, the endless sky—all rich sources of inspiration. (The pictures included are of Pourville,

taken in 2009 when I spent some time in France, studying with pianist Paul Roberts, an inspirational performer and teacher of Debussy's music.)

Dedicated to Chopin, the *Études* do not possess imaginative titles, and while the genre itself is weighted with the associations of "technical purpose," Debussy's artistry reaches deep into the poetic evocation of the natural environment around him, of the sensual expressions in poetry and painting, of the spectrum of intimacy and emotion, and of the beauty of sound itself. He paid no heed to the institutional rules of composition but followed his instinct and sensitivities for this collection of colourful diversity laced together through exquisite harmonic language.

Debussy looked back to his predecessor François Couperin's tradition of ornamentation, employing these figures and unmeasured gestures in almost every one of the études, but particularly in *pour les Agréments* where ornamentation becomes the core musical content. He greatly admired J. S. Bach's compositional mastery and in *pour les huit doigts* Debussy writes fanciful flights of finger passagework in this modern take on the Baroque improvisatory keyboard prelude. Debussy's fascination with the sounds of the Balinese Gamelan percussion instruments and of the ancient modes is well-known, and we hear both of these sonic references in *pour les Quartes* with delicate floating fourths, other times clanging and cascading fourths, along with a subtle melodic motive in the Phrygian mode. He looked back to the 19th-century Romantic waltz in *pour les Octaves*, but rather than following the rhythmic rule of the dance form, he captured the essence of the waltz and its coquetry through unexpected rests and accents, dizzying leaps of octaves and quick changes of musical mood. Debussy also pays homage to the great predecessors and teachers of modern piano technique: (1) Carl Czerny, in *pour les "cinq doigts"* where the simple five-finger pattern is transformed into playful finger gymnastics, (2) Frédéric Chopin, in *pour les Tierces* where the interval of the third is transfigured into musical imagery emulating gentle rolling of the waves at first, then billowing gradually into tumultuous crashing of the water on the rocky cliffs, and (3) Franz Liszt, in *pour les Notes répétées*—turning this notoriously difficult technical action into light-hearted expressive and percussive gestures of humour and wit—and in the final *pour les Accords* with decisive chords bounding across the full keyboard range, framing an inner middle section of gentle tenderness.

But for all the musical nods to his greatly adored and respected predecessors, we hear in Debussy's music a remarkable progressive language that would eventually



Above:: Pastoral fields of Pourville.

influence musical modernists through the 20th century. He pursued bold new steps in colouristic sound conceptions in *Sonorités opposées* that even today, more than 100 years later sound fresh and unpredictable. The pirouette passagework in *pour les Degrés chromatiques* illustrate a new creative approach to this simple scale concept, previously unexplored by other composers. The improvisatory spirit paradoxically imbued with astonishing attention to details of notation in *Arpèges composés* present a deceiving interpretive challenge. And finally, his uniquely personal approach to lyricism and phrasing revealed in *pour les Sixtes* suggests a mysterious, delicate, melancholy reflection of life; truly sublime. Through innovations in technique and notation, lightning-paced changes of character or mood, suggestions of teetering rhythmic stabilities, theatrical gestures, simultaneous textures created through layering sonorities, and a complete immersion in musical intuition, Debussy's artistry stands alone and unequalled into the 21st century. Through his blend of calculated objectivity, personal expression, refined aesthetic, and mastery of piano sonority, the *Études* remain in a league of musical art all their own—something that Debussy knew in his heart, as he wrote to his publisher Durand in 1915, "this music wheels above the peaks of performance."

This link of the *Études* is a 2015 performance at St. Olaf College, while I was there as visiting professor in piano: <http://www.stolaf.edu/multimedia/play/?e=1282>.

The Author

Dr. Sandra Joy Friesen performs a wide range of repertoire from traditional to contemporary, interpretation of graphic/pictorial notation, and interdisciplinary collaboration. She lives in Calgary and teaches from her Sound Reflections Music Studio and coaches chamber music at the University of Calgary. (www.sandrajoyfriesen.com)

My MMA: Music and Martial Arts

By Deanna Oye

I am certainly not an up-and-coming candidate for the UFC and probably would get clobbered in a street fight, but I am dedicated to the journey of learning karate, Shotokan style—and as I grow in the discipline, I increasingly see the benefits and parallels to my career as a professional pianist and music teacher. My husband is a martial artist and also my karate teacher, so we have had deep discussions and discovered that our parallel worlds have a multitude of intersections. It convinces me more that pianists should engage in other activities that cultivate the body, mind, and spirit together.

Most music teachers would agree that the training of a student performer to an advanced level has much in common with the development of an elite athlete. The Olympics tend to bring global attention to achievements in high-level sport, and since Tokyo 2020 marks karate's debut as an Olympic sport, I am particularly drawn to the comparison between the mindset and practice of musical and physical artist.

Both karate practitioner and piano performer require a deep commitment to and engagement in their art over years, usually a lifetime of practice. Traditional martial artists cultivate a mindfulness of their environment (in Japanese, “zanshin,” or a state of relaxed awareness), as well an awareness of self (knowing one's strengths and weaknesses) and self-knowledge (the building of one's code of behaviour and belief). The musical artist follows a similar path, developing a relationship with composers and their music, identifying and communicating with audiences, and growing a unique voice that respects tradition yet embraces innovation.

The practice of karate at all levels comes in three forms: kihon, the basic alphabet of movements in karate (e.g., specific punches, blocks or kicks); kata, pre-established forms that might be likened to sentences or paragraphs; and kumite or sparring (my husband likes to call this the art of debate). Compare this to the pianist's technical building blocks of scales, chords, arpeggios, etc., technique in context (exercises, études, and repertoire), and improvisation or perhaps even collaborative performance where chemistry between partners creates sometimes unpredictable results. If we consider these musical parallels to kumite, we understand that certain basic technical skills must be developed first, as well as a corresponding understanding of the theory behind the music.

I find the idea behind kata particularly intriguing, especially from the perspective of practice. The founder of Shotokan karate, Gichin Funakoshi, developed 26 pre-established forms designed in sequence for varying levels of student experience. Advanced karate-ka (practitioners)



continue to work on the beginner katas throughout their lives, with the level of execution developing naturally with experience. To practise a kata, one can break it down into sequences of movement, further isolate individual movements within the sequences (e.g., one punch out of a series of strikes and blocks), work footwork and combinations, realize fluid execution of movement, and visualize realistic interaction with an adversary. More advanced practitioners will work to understand the founder (Funakoshi) and what was in his spirit in the creation of the kata—and from there, adapt to the individual artist’s own movement, body type, and modern concepts. Earning a black belt in martial arts is a significant achievement but is only the beginning of a journey; research and creativity are lifetime pursuits towards attaining the full expression of oneself through martial arts.

Sound familiar? Clearly, we pianists are not unique in our strategies and objectives in learning music to performance level. So, maybe there are other things we can learn from the practice of martial arts.

The generic term for the family of blocks in karate is called *uke*. But if you consider the way the word *uke* is written in Japanese (from the verb *ukeru*), it actually means to *receive* the energy of your opponent and consequently use it against them. The idea of receiving a strike rather than simply blocking one is a powerful concept with physical and psychological ramifications. For me, it has immediate impact on collaborative playing—the ideas of receiving (and its corollary “giving”), as opposed to (or in conjunction with) “leading and following” add to the richness of relationship in partnered music-making.

Finally, martial artists at the highest level often undertake parallel training in order to heighten their performance level. One just has to look at the best-known martial artist of any generation, Bruce Lee, to observe an individual who dedicated his life and career to the exploration of multiple disciplines including, perhaps surprisingly, cha-cha dancing (which Lee claimed helped him with his footwork) and, of course, everything associated with movie-making. Cognate and distant fields such as strength and conditioning, yoga, dance, somatic education, and/or the study of interdisciplinary martial arts are popularly taken up by many advanced practitioners, and they will also often investigate the spiritual side of their practice. To enter more deeply into movement analysis, the study of fundamental biomechanics and physics is essential for the practitioner to understand how the body works and

how to use it most effectively and efficiently. Additionally, a well-conceived program of muscular development can help to build inner- and inter-muscular connectivity in movement—something that is equally important to pianists, although the idea of connectivity is arguably more important than the amount of muscle build.

Naturally, I am not advocating that every pianist needs to sign up for the next available karate class. However, if we are hoping to train our piano students as elite artists and athletes, we can encourage parallel activities that develop physical, mental and spiritual acuity and proficiency. The stimulation of these three “worlds” through involvement not only in music, but in other contrasting activities, may serve to strengthen the pianists we are helping to guide, and show them that learning to play the piano might just start with putting on a glove.

The Author

Deanna Oye is associate professor at the University of Lethbridge where she teaches studio piano and collaborative piano, and also teaches with the U of L Conservatory. An active performer, she has given performances throughout Canada, the United States, Scotland, Germany, the Netherlands, and Japan. She is an enthusiastic advocate for music in interdisciplinary contexts, with special interest in helping her students make connections between piano performance and their other passions.

The Basics of Studio Inventory

By Ida Edwards

July is typically a music teacher's month to kick off the shoes and dig out the sandals. It is a time to look forward to rest and relaxation. There is understandable desire to close the door to studio after a busy spring season of festivals and music exam prep. "Walking on sunshine" is on the minds of most studio teachers. So, what's my plan for this summer? I am culling my collection of 30 plus years of music books. The plan starts with an inventory check, a recycle pile, and a cross reference with students' needs coming in the fall. Delaying an inventory review results in lost borrowed books, unplanned purchases and panic moments of search and rescue for misplaced tomes.

What is in your music library? Inventory costs money and takes up valuable space in your studio. What is in your methods collections? If you prepare students for music exams, are you current with your exam syllabus? These are some of the questions to ask when preparing for an inventory check

Do you have collections of exam books? Have you considered an online source? I am slowly building a comfort level with accessing PDF's of books that I teach with. With COVID-19 restrictions for in-person lessons, moving to online delivery methods for lessons has led to exploring online access to libraries and PDF's of the books. Increasingly, music lessons are being delivered on many different platforms and the challenge will be to provide access of materials for study.

I am a collector of old music books and I love to receive donations from

the community. This leads to some challenges as the material may be damaged or too fragile for general use. I have yet to explore the world of digitization and the implications that has. If you are a recipient of something old and fragile, check with your local archives for the best storage procedure and get help accessing the value of the piece. I have an old *Strauss Waltzes for Children* piano book (about level 3 piano) that has been a gem to teach from. It is fun to utilize online recordings of orchestral pieces, and then compare the musical choices in a transcribed piece. Having old publications in your library offer a new experience for the student and teacher.

Check out books that have lost their cover (staples tend to wear through). These can be replaced with a file folder or reinforced with a piece of card paper made to fit. I have packing tape in my teacher's desk which is put to good use taping up frayed notebook corners, lesson book covers, etc. Remember always use pencils to mark the music and check that the erasers do their job cleanly. Nothing annoys me more than smudged out pencil marks. For an old book that has broken binding, options include cover protectors per sheet placed in a binder (black, of course, with front and back pockets). I have done this for two books in my collection of sacred music.

Recycling paper is the best way to release old music books. I cringe just a little as I write this as I love my music and understand the cost of buying replacements. However, there comes a time when you have to write a book off. Find your nearest paper recycle centre and drop off your



donations. We don't need books that are incomplete or falling apart in circulation.

Proper library storage of your studio books includes ease of access, dry conditions, and support for the books. I use a filing cabinet for books that used sparingly and magazine holders on a shelf for my weekly lesson material. It is always a work in progress of refileing after a week of lessons because the start of next week usually has that book on the bottom of the pile on the piano. Clean hands and having no food near your music is a must. It is important to share this advice with music students and their parents. Try to avoid multitasking a coffee break with refileing: lesson learnt personally.

Summer is such a beguiling time. The siren call of the studio may not be appealing but preparing music inventory and refileing offers peace of mind. A good inventory of teaching materials and music books is necessary as it takes up valuable space in a home or a studio. This summer, add a studio inventory review to your to-do list. Studio organization includes inventory review. Summertime filing allows for reflection and review. With a bit of time, "Walking on Sunshine" will continue into the start-up lessons of fall.

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