

**LAKE TRAVIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
AUSTIN, TEXAS**



*Outside the Concert Hall:
Unique Performance Opportunities*

Anna Macias, Clinician

with special guests the *Lake Travis Fiddlers*

December 18, 2015 - 1:30pm

The Midwest Clinic
Chicago, Illinois

Welcome

On behalf of the Lake Travis Independent School District, we thank you for your attendance at today's workshop: *Outside the Concert Hall: Unique Performance Opportunities*. Since their founding, the *Lake Travis Fiddlers* and their director Anna Macias have become a staple not only in our school district but across the State of Texas having performed hundreds of times for the public, dignitaries, and special events. Not only have their efforts helped increase visibility for our growing orchestra program, but more importantly they have created an important outlet for community outreach. Lake Travis ISD is proud to have a comprehensive Fine Arts program in grades K-12 which includes Music, Dance, Theatre Arts, and Visual Arts. Our students continue to excel at state and national events as well as being some of the top scholars on their campuses. Thank you again for your attendance today and best wishes for a successful *Midwest Clinic*.



Charles C. Aguillon
Director of Fine Arts

About the Clinician



Anna Macias has served as the Director of Orchestras at Lake Travis High School in the Lake Travis ISD since 1996 and has served as a conductor with the Austin Youth Orchestras since 2003. Ms. Macias has served as an organizer for the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) High School Region Orchestra since 1999 and is currently serving as TMEA Region 26 Orchestra Division Chair. Ms. Macias is affiliated with TMEA, Texas Orchestra Directors Association (TODA), Texas Music Adjudicators Association (TMAA), and

Mu Omicron. In addition to her work with public schools, Ms. Macias maintains a private double bass studio. In 1997, she attended the Texas Music Camp, hosted by Johnny Gimble, and fell in love with Texas old time fiddling and Western Swing music. In 2000, Ms. Macias formed the Lake Travis Fiddlers, a group of talented middle school and high school students who perform old time fiddle tunes and Western Swing music at various hill country functions.

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FINE ARTS

Congratulations to the following Lake Travis ISD ensembles for being featured at national conferences and festivals this year!

The Midwest Clinic, Chicago, Illinois

Lake Travis Fiddlers, demonstration group, Anna Macias, Director and clinician

Music for All National Concert Band Festival, Indianapolis, Indiana

Lake Travis High School Wind Ensemble, Richard Hicks, Director

Lake Travis Middle School Symphonic Band, Kevin Jedele, Director

Special thanks to our workshop sponsor:



Anna Macias
Director of LTHS Orchestras
Director of Lake Travis Fiddlers



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Outside the Concert Hall: Unique Performance Opportunities

DESCRIPTION This session is a presentation on how to organize, teach, and perform with a fiddle group.

The **INTRO** that you will never hear.

Here's how it started for me. My nephew was in Deanna Badgett's violin studio in San Marcos, TX. Well, Deanna had a small fiddle group on the side that played mostly at retirement homes and assisted living centers. My first exposure to fiddle music came when I was asked to accompany this group by playing double bass for them. Before that, my only other performing experience besides classical was when I was in an all-girl mariachi group in college. I enjoyed playing with Ms. Badgett's kids at their fiddle gigs so much that I decided to attend Johnny Gimble's Swing Camp near Waco, TX with my nephew. He had the "fiddlin' bug" and that's all he wanted to do. Johnny Gimble's camp was my first experience of really paying attention to Western Swing music. And I liked it! It wasn't long before I was listening to Bob Wills tunes from the 1930s and 40s and Asleep at the Wheel CDs from the 70s, 80s, and 90s.

I soon found myself accompanying my nephew at fiddle contests and sitting in at fiddle jams with Texas old-time fiddlers. Not the bluegrass jams, mind you, but the old-time fiddle jams where they just go around the circle and play one fiddle tune after another (breakdowns, reels, rags, polkas, and waltzes). Now, them bluegrass fellers ain't so welcome in these jams cause' they start singin' and what such. It was at these fiddle contests and jams that I first heard the hard-driving Texas style guitar rhythm that is used to accompany the old-time fiddling. It's very fun to play and very addicting.

About that same time, I was playing upright bass in a Cuban band and I really enjoyed playing that music. I loved playing Latin Jazz. I liked playing in the dark clubs with all of the sexy salsa dancers and I enjoyed being the only female musician on stage with all those sweaty little men. They called me "La Reyna de Con Rumba Son!" Now, there's only one problem with playing in a salsa band with eight Cuban band members. Can you guess what that would be? Too many Cubans! Specifically, too many Cubans with different opinions on how to run a Cuban band. Seriously, in less than two years Con Rumba Son had become one of the hottest salsa bands in Austin; then, it imploded.

So I turned to something that I could have a little more control over. I became the bass player in my 7-year-old nephew's fiddle band. And along with Vernon, the 75-year-old guitar player who had been accompanying him at fiddle contests, and my husband on snare drum and sound, we were soon performing at nursing homes, private parties, and local restaurants under the name "Damian Green and the" whatever came to Damian's mind during his intro. My favorite band name was when we played at Flipnotics coffee house one night and Damian introduced us as "Damian Green and the Furbies." We had to explain to Vernon what a Furby was.

Vernon and I also traveled around the state with Damian playing at country music shows. You may have been to one of these. Most of them are held in small towns and they have names like "Lockhart Opry," and "Yoakum Country Opry," and the "East Texas Jamboree." That's just to name a few. So we traveled all around Texas — Damian, Vernon, and myself — headlining these country music shows. And with my husband, Vance, manning the product table, we sold more than 2,000 "Fiddle Boy" CDs, cassettes, and video tapes! You could say that this was where I got my "professional touring experience." Well, this had run its course by the time Damian was 10. He went on to bigger and better things and Vernon and I went back to our Tuesday night fiddle jams at Artz Rib House.

With the life of small-town celebrity behind me, I soon found myself needing to fill that “fiddle void.” That was about 14 years ago. I had been watching the progress of several student groups like the Cooper Fiddlers out in Abilene, TX and to a lesser extent, the Saline Fiddlers up in Michigan. These groups inspired me to start my own fiddle group in Lake Travis.

That’s how it started for me. Your start may be completely different. What I want you to notice is this. Prior to starting my fiddle group, I had only a few years of “fiddling experience” and my passion for Western Swing music was less than three years old at the time. I was not raised in a small farming community nor had I been taken to house parties or barn dances as a child. And I am definitely not a champion fiddler. I discovered fiddle music and then Western Swing in much the same way that my students discover the music. The only difference I suppose is that they are being introduced to the genre at a younger age than myself. I say this to emphasize that you don’t have to be a fiddle champion, or an old-time fiddle teacher, or even a fiddler to start a fiddle group. And you sure don’t have to be a hillbilly to fall in love with Western Swing music! But you do have to have an intense interest in the music and you need to have the time and energy to do something extra for no other reason than because you enjoy it.

Q: Is this what you would call a question-answer outline?

A: Yes, I believe so. Honestly, I was one of those high school students who wrote their research paper first then went back and did the outline to match the paper. OK, I’ll admit it; I did it in college too.

Q: Am I qualified to be the leader of a fiddle group?

A: You don’t have to be a fiddle champion, or an old-time fiddle teacher, or even a fiddler to start a fiddle group. But you do have to have an intense interest in the music and you need to have the time and energy to do something extra for no other reason than because you enjoy it.

Q: So, how do I get started?

A: You can get started by listening, really listening to these old tunes that have been playing in the background all your life. You’ve been hearing fiddle tunes like Cotton-Eyed Joe, Rubber Dolly, and Liberty all your life on the radio, TV, and in movie theaters. Now, you can start paying attention to not just how they sound but how they are played.

Q: Where can I see and hear these fiddle tunes being played?

A: YouTube - great resource for researching fiddle tune candidates. If you have access to YouTube then you can listen to and learn more fiddle music in a week than any farm kid could growing up in 1940s.

Q: What kind of a fiddle group should I start?

A: You will want to sit down and think about what kind of fiddle group you want to have. You can find plenty of excellent examples of youth fiddling performance groups on YouTube. Visit websites of performing groups to get ideas that you may want to use in your group. The Saline Fiddlers, the Calgary Fiddlers, and Revolution Strings are good examples of well-organized, well-structured, youth fiddling performance groups.

Q: Do you own stock in YouTube?

A: No, I don't, but YouTube rocks! Can I get an "Amen?"

Q: Does my fiddle group have to live up to the high standards set by these well-organized, well-structured, youth fiddling performance groups?

A: Heck no! It's all up to you at this point. You may be like me and not want to go near that big.

Q: Can you give me an example of a youth fiddling performance group that does not live up to these high standards?

A: As a matter of fact, I can. The Lake Travis Fiddlers is an excellent example of a fiddle group that marches to the beat of a different drum. We may not sparkle, shine and shimmer like these groups but we do a lot of stuff well. Did I mention that the Lake Travis Fiddlers is the primary fundraising performance group for the Lake Travis Orchestras? By the way, we really don't see ourselves as a "youth fiddling performance group."

Q: What instruments will I need to start a fiddle group?

A: Fiddles, acoustic guitar(s), bass, drums, and lead guitar (as soon as possible). That's really all you need to get started. Other instruments that could be useful as your group grows would be a sax or a piano.

Q: Why do you suggest that fiddlers play "prepared solos" instead of improvised solos? They have to start playing out of the box sometime, don't they?

A: Yes, fiddlers should be encouraged to spread their improvisational wings and play out of the box. Unfortunately, your average student fiddler is going to "drop the ball" quite often resulting in mean looks from other band members and uncomfortable looks from audience members. In my opinion, the performance takes precedence over the educational value or the experience of students taking real rides during the performance. Besides, most audience members can't tell the difference between a planned solo and an improvised solo even if they hear the tune every time you play. They just know what sounds good.

Q: What songs did you play when you first started your fiddle group?

A: Old Joe Clark, Rubber Dolly, Cotton-Eyed Joe, Joe Turner Blues, Swallow-Tail Jig, Devil's Dream, Silver Bells, San Antonio Rose, Milk Cow Blues, Liberty, Cajun Fiddle, The Plainsman, Faded Love, Westphalia Waltz, and Blackberry Blossom.

Q: Do I have to use a professional guitar player in my group?

A: No, but it helps. And it is probably the most important thing that we've done in the past few years to help us get to the next level.

Q: Are there any fiddle group CDs that you would recommend?

A: Yes, thanks for asking! "Keep on the Sunny Side," by the Lake Travis Fiddlers, is sure to please! The album contains traditional fiddle tunes, Western Swing songs, a popular jazz piece, a Mexican bolero, a Beatles tune, a couple of gospel songs, a Texas waltz, a contemporary pop song, a Honky Tonk tune, and an Israeli folk song.

Q: Do you have any advice to give about rehearsals?

A: Here's the advice I recently gave to a group of my esteemed colleagues.

- Teach performance techniques during rehearsal; don't just work on repertoire.
 - Students **do** have to be taught how to play and sing into microphones.
 - Show students models on YouTube for examples of stage presence and other performance concepts. We like to use videos of the Quebe Sisters Band to illustrate positive performance habits.
 - When possible, rehearse in the same positions that you are in on stage. And set up the sound system when you can and have students play and sing into the mics. Don't just sit around in a circle and work on the music all of the time.
 - Players who play into amps need to practice with amps, not acoustically.

Q: Who are the clinicians that you have brought in to help with the Fiddlers?

A: Here's a list of clinicians who have worked with the Fiddlers over the years:

- Erik Hokkenen - fiddle (exceptional fiddler, guitar player, composer in Austin, TX)
- J.D. Pendley - guitar (popular sideman, plays with five or six bands in Austin, TX)
- Damian Green - fiddle (Aaron Watson)
- Jason Lerma - guitar (Aaron Watson)
- Quebe Sisters - fiddle (QSB tours nationally and internationally)
- Elana James - fiddle (Hot Club of Cowtown)
- Elizabeth McQueen - vocals (Asleep at the Wheel; has her own band in Austin, TX)

List of clinicians (continued)

- Jon Doyle - sax (one of the best jazz sax and clarinet players in Austin; has toured with Asleep at the Wheel and Willie Nelson)
- James Gwyn - drums (Marshall Ford Swing Band; tours with Junior Brown)
- Julian Juan Gamez - mariachi
- Javier Chaparro - violin, guitar, vocals (band leader, composer in Austin, TX)
- Sophia Johnson - guitar, backup vocals (formerly with Toy Hearts, tours with Sunny Sweeney)

Q: How do you see gigs?

A: This is the way I see gigs. Gigs are the reward for learning and rehearsing the music and getting better as a band. I once heard that a gig is worth about six rehearsals, so we do play out as often as possible. You should get up and running with your group as soon as possible and play out. It is good for band morale and it is good for band confidence.

Q: How do you get your gigs?

A: We don't go out and actively look for places to play. In other words, we kind of take them as they come. We have thought about promoting the band a little more and will probably do so in the near future so that we can play more lucrative gigs and raise more money for the Orchestra program.

Q: What do you mean by "recurring gigs?"

A: Gigs that you will want to play every year.

For example, each year we play the: LTISD Employee Convocation; LTISD New Teachers Breakfast; Rexanna Hawkins Lung Cancer Benefit; Austin's HEB Feast of Sharing; Texas Independence Day Celebration at the Capitol; Texas Western Swing Fiddling Showcase in Belton, TX; The Best Little Cowboy Gathering In Texas (La Grange, TX); Mother's Day at Rosie's Tamale House; Lakeway 4th of July parade and celebration; the annual Parade of Champions; Orchestra's annual fundraising show.

Q: Why are these "recurring gigs" so important?

A: These recurring shows are important for several reasons. For one, being a part of these events helps us establish ourselves as an important part of the community and it helps us consistently reinforce our identity in the community. Another benefit of being involved in annual events like these is that it allows us to associate ourselves with these positive events.

Q: Are there any special tools that I will need to do business?

A: I'm not sure how "special" they are but here's a list of tools that you will need to do business:

- Calendar
- Invoice
- A system to communicate with your group. I do an email initially and then a student leader does follow up. You need to know who is available for the gigs.
- Input List / Stage Plot
- Band pic and Bio
- Business card
- Email List signup sheet
- Contract

Q: Do I need to have a sound system for my group?

A: Yes, you will want to invest in a sound system as soon as possible so that you can amplify your group at venues or events where sound reinforcement is not provided.

Q: Do I need a partner to help me run the group?

A: Yes. In my opinion, you need to have a partner to do this. Then, you can divide up duties. It's a big job for one person to do alone.

Q: How do you deal with frustration?

A: Practice, practice, practice. Just kidding! Seriously, I think the best cure for frustration is patience. It takes time to create anything of value.

**LAKE TRAVIS
FIDDLERS**

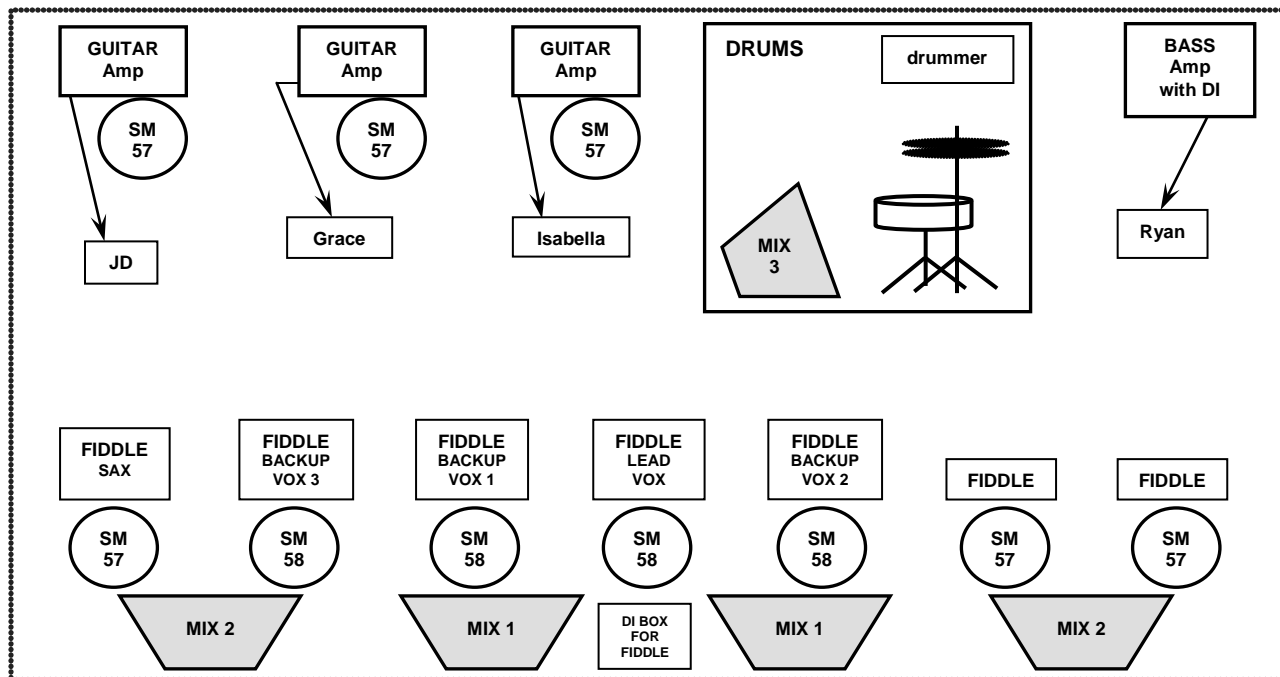


Latest revision – November 17, 2015

INPUT LIST

CH	INSTRUMENT	SOURCE	STAND	MUSICIAN	NOTES
1	FIDDLE / SAX	SM57	Tall Boom	fiddler	
2	FIDDLE / BACKUP VOX	SM58	Tall Boom	fiddler	backup vox 3
3	FIDDLE / BACKUP VOX	SM58	Tall Boom	fiddler	backup vox 1
4	FIDDLE / LEAD VOX	SM58	Tall Boom	Anna	lead vox
5	FIDDLE / BACKUP VOX	SM58	Tall Boom	fiddler	backup vox 2
6	FIDDLE	SM57	Tall Boom	fiddler	
7	FIDDLE	SM57	Tall Boom	fiddler	
8	FIDDLE with pickup	DI		Lucas	Uses DI fiddle for "Ida Red" and "Big Balls." We have a DI box if needed.
9	GUITAR Amp	SM57	Short Boom	JD	
10	GUITAR Amp	SM57	Short Boom	Grace	
11	GUITAR Amp	SM57	Short Boom	Isabella	
12	SNARE	SM57	Tall Boom	drummer	
13	HI HAT	SM57	Tall Boom	drummer	
14	OVERHEAD L			drummer	optional
15	OVERHEAD R			drummer	optional
16	BASS Amp with DI	DI		Ryan	no DI box – XLR built in

STAGE PLOT



Devil's Dream

The musical score for "Devil's Dream" consists of eight staves of music, all in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The notation is as follows:

- Staff 1:** Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. It begins with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4 with a *v* marking, and a repeat sign. The rest of the staff contains eighth-note patterns.
- Staff 2:** Continues the eighth-note patterns from the first staff.
- Staff 3:** Features a repeat sign in the middle. Above the first measure of the second half is a *n* marking, and above the final measure is another *n* marking.
- Staff 4:** Continues the eighth-note patterns.
- Staff 5:** Includes a repeat sign. Above the first measure of the second half is a *n* marking, above the second measure is a *v* marking, and above the final measure is another *n* marking.
- Staff 6:** Continues the eighth-note patterns.
- Staff 7:** Continues the eighth-note patterns, ending with a quarter note G4 and a *n* marking.
- Staff 8:** The final staff, starting with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4 with a *v* marking, and a repeat sign. Above the first measure of the second half is a *n* marking, and above the final measure is another *n* marking.

Westphalia Waltz

First staff of music. Key signature: one sharp (F#). Time signature: 3/4. Features a first ending bracket labeled 'A' and various musical notations including slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Second staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Third staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Fourth staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Fifth staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Sixth staff of music. Features a first ending bracket labeled 'B' and various musical notations including slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Seventh staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Eighth staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Ninth staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Tenth staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Eleventh staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Twelfth staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Thirteenth staff of music. Continuation of the melody with slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

WESTPHALIA WALTZ

3/4

A

11. G	%	%	%
%	%	D ⁷	%
D ⁷	%	%	%
%	%	G	% :

B

11. G	B ⁻	E ⁻	G
G	%	D ⁷	%
A ⁻	E ⁺	A ⁻	D
D ⁷	%	G	% :

MILK COW BLUES

Swing Rhythm

