

# ***Embracing Diversity Through Programming***

## *Going Beyond Selection to Creating Community Through the Ways We Teach*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

We're living in unique times, are we not? While we're presumably on the back side of the pandemic, the last 2+ years has undoubtedly augmented needs for our students that in many ways were already there, but perhaps previously only simmering just below the surface.

Furthermore, the political environment in which we've recently existed has (also presumably) exacerbated anxieties that have great potential to add to the many other stresses of daily life.

- a. The Need to be heard
- b. The Need to be seen and acknowledged
- c. Heightened the urgency and importance of many of the same conversations (being seen & heard) that were already occurring – socially, culturally, etc.
- d. Through a great deal of what we've seen and experienced around us, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) has and continues to be key to our ability to move forward as a society and to grow the communities around which our lives revolve. That includes our school communities, and within those, the sub-communities – our individual programs, for example – within which we function **[this is important]**
- e. Young people have questions about the world that surrounds them
- f. Recognizing that the students in our programs walk in and/or identify with multiple communities is crucial to embracing them all and celebrating them through the experiences that we share in our rehearsal halls and performance venues.

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT, pt. 1**

The teaching profession

- a. Think about why you got into this profession in the first place? Do you remember? Do those reasons still apply as they once did?
- b. What do you think the top reasons are for going into education?
- c. What responsibilities do we have to our students? Might one of them be to inspire some of them to grow into the mentors for others that they need from their own?
- d. It was never about US; it was always about THEM: when students feel empowered to achieve of their own heart & mind, they will always go further because they are investing in themselves, AND they feel invested in

**To that end...**

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT, pt. 2**

WHAT we teach (curriculum) and HOW we teach it (implementation) can powerfully influence students' sense for how they fit into the world about them, into the community(ies) within which they live

- a. Why did you choose MUSIC education? What did you want to share?
- b. Again... what responsibilities do we have to our students?
- c. CAN works that represent DEI be included in that list of considerations?
  - i. Works of the "great masters"?

- ii. Works of different historical periods
- iii. ...of different styles?
- iv. ...of different compositional techniques?
- e. SHOULD DEI be included in that list of considerations?
- f. Can alternate compositional and/or creative approaches be considered an additional component of diversity? [Blackshaw]
  - i. "...it is the differences and irregularities in each composer that present the potential to generate continuously evolving, unique, authentic, and purposeful voices in (our field)." In other words...
  - ii. It's one thing to select music because the title or program implies a certain point of view or recalls a certain event, etc., but it's an entirely other thing to consider message through the eyes of a composer who embodies that which they are hoping to communicate
  - iii. Composers might be considered (or consider themselves) "color first" in approach, or philosophy first, theme/motive first, rhythm, harmony, etc.
  - iv. Do each of US have a "...first" of our own that influences or guides our own musical programming decisions?

## WHY DEI?

***I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. ~ Maya Angelou***

Music is uniquely positioned to teach, to inform, to make us remember

- a. It allows us EXPERIENCE
- b. It makes us FEEL
- c. It helps us UNDERSTAND
- d. If we accept the arts as a reflection of or reaction to the world around us, do we not then have a corresponding responsibility to reflect our world through the music that we program and teach?

**THINK about how our repertoire has CHANGED over the last 50-75 years** and then ask yourself if our programming practices have evolved comparably

***Too often, we are comfortable with a reflection of ourselves*** ~ Velvet Brown, Professor of Tuba & Euphonium, Penn State University, from her Foreword to *The Horizon Leans Forward...*

What an awesome OPPORTUNITY

- a. for US to learn more about the world, its people, and the composers that are around us so that we can faithfully and authentically share it
- b. Every programming decision that we make reflects our values, so to EVOLVE, our selves, through the experiences that we choose to create for (and share WITH) our students is an awesome opportunity
- c. to augment and enhance our own approaches to score study & research, and therefore, implementation

- d. to allow students a space within which they can embrace (and be embraced for) and stand proudly by their own identity or identities, whatever they are and how ever many of them there are

### **AUTHENTIC IMPLEMENTATION v. INAUTHENTIC**

- a. Lifting EVERYONE up and bringing NO ONE down
- b. What is the makeup of your ensemble community? Of your school community or the greater community in which you exist?
- c. LISTEN: What do you want me to know about you and what would make you feel seen, elevated, acknowledged, honored, valued?
- d. A “checklist” approach is not an authentic one, but there should also be no sense of “you’re being watched, you know...”
- e. Consider not programming one concert at a time, but rather, try to gain a broader, “bird’s eye” view

### **CURRICULAR CONSIDERATIONS and IMPLEMENTATION IMPLICATIONS: Evolution vs.**

**Revolution:** SLOW down, learn, evolve, and allow for contextualization

- a. By focusing “on the music and the person who created it, [we are] utilizing the wind band as a vehicle for BOTH music education and egalitarianism” [Blackshaw]
- b. Defining “diverse repertoire”

### **Composer-Centric**

[taken from *The Horizon Leans Forward...*, Chapter 6: “The Repertoire Revolution”]

1. The state of selecting, rehearsing, and performing repertoire by different types of composers (such as people of different races, colors, gender, age, or cultures)
2. The intentional inclusion of different types of composers (such as people of different race, color, gender, age, or culture) in the selection of repertoire intended for (1) professional ensembles, (2) community/amateur ensembles, (3) university performance ensembles, (4) elementary, middle, and high school-based music education programs
3. Repertoire composed with a variety of elements or qualities; a point of difference; variation; irregular, unconventional

Furthermore, “diverse composer might include difference(s) exhibited by a composer as influenced by their:

1. Race, color, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, age, or disability
2. Upbringing, socioeconomic situation, education, and geographical location
3. Compositional approach

### **Repertoire-Centric**

Musical composition(s) that identifies with a story, event, heritage, culture, custom, tradition, etc. associated with different communities, peoples, etc.

[BTW, a composition can be both composer-centric and repertoire-centric]

- c. STILL, though – feed your students well. Whatever you program, program QUALITY

## THE ELEPHANT in the ROOM

- a. SO much of our energy is directed toward performance assessment
- b. According to the *Institute for Composer Diversity*, the proportion of works currently included on many state repertoire lists that are by composers from underrepresented communities is quite low
- c. These two realities are perhaps at odds with progress?

## CONCLUSION

- a. Remember – remember every “why” and “when,” and “for whom” we do what we do; embrace the responsibilities that we have accepted in shaping the artistic & creative minds of the future
- b. Allowing inclusivity through the avenues presented to us through our profession can allow for the growth of all our communities, within and beyond our programs
- c. Again, if we accept the arts as a reflection of or reaction to the world around us, and we accept that corresponding responsibility to reflect our world through the music that we program and teach, consider the CHANGE that can be effected through. our. rehearsal rooms, one program at a time.

## SOME RESOURCES for YOUR CONSIDERATION

- [www.composerdiversity.com](http://www.composerdiversity.com)  
[includes lists cross-referenced with state music lists]\*
- [www.colourfullmusic.com](http://www.colourfullmusic.com)  
[includes example programs of varied difficulty levels]
- [www.andwereheard.org](http://www.andwereheard.org)  
[includes audio, databases, source lists, and more]
- [www.musicbyblackcomposers.org](http://www.musicbyblackcomposers.org)
- [www.windrep.org](http://www.windrep.org)
- [www.jodieblackshaw.com](http://www.jodieblackshaw.com)
- American Composers Forum *BandQuest* Series ([www.composersforum.org/bandquest](http://www.composersforum.org/bandquest))
- Lung, Erik Kar Jun. *The Horizon Leans Forward...*, Chicago: GIA Publications, inc. 2021  
[includes annotated bibliography of works by underrepresented composers]
- Kirchhoff, Craig. "Idea File: Selecting Repertoire: A Matter of Conscience – A Personal Viewpoint. *Canadian Winds: The Journal of the Canadian Band Association*, 3(1), pp. 45-47.

## ENTIRELY NON-EXHAUSTIVE LISTING OF COMPOSERS for YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Keiko Abe – [keiko-abe.jp/en/home-2/](http://keiko-abe.jp/en/home-2/)
2. Kimberly Archer – [kimberlyarcher.squarespace.com](http://kimberlyarcher.squarespace.com)
3. Anthony Barfield – [anthonybarfield.com](http://anthonybarfield.com)
4. Stephanie Berg – [stephanieberg.com](http://stephanieberg.com)
5. Jodie Blackshaw – [jodieblackshaw.com](http://jodieblackshaw.com)
6. Carolyn Bremer – [carolynbremer.com](http://carolynbremer.com)
7. Salvador Brotons – [salvadorbrotons.org](http://salvadorbrotons.org)
8. Carol Brittin Chambers – [aspewoodmusic.com](http://aspewoodmusic.com)
9. Katahji Copley – [katahjcopleymusic.com](http://katahjcopleymusic.com)
10. Viet Cuong – [vietcuongmusic.com](http://vietcuongmusic.com)
11. Kevin Day – [kevindaymusic.com](http://kevindaymusic.com)
12. David Del Tredici – [daviddeltredici.com](http://daviddeltredici.com)
13. David Diamond – [daviddiamond.org](http://daviddiamond.org)
14. Roshanne Etezady – [roshanne.com](http://roshanne.com)
15. Mohammed Fairouz – [mohammedfairouz.com](http://mohammedfairouz.com)
16. Rossano Galante – [rossanogalante.yolasite.com](http://rossanogalante.yolasite.com)
17. Nancy Galbraith – [nancygalbraith.com](http://nancygalbraith.com)
18. Stacy Garrop – [garrop.com](http://garrop.com)
19. Julie Giroux – [juliegiroux.org](http://juliegiroux.org)
20. Rubén Diario Gómez – [en.rubendiariogomez.net](http://en.rubendiariogomez.net)
21. Jonie Greene – [jonigreene.com](http://jonigreene.com)
22. Shelley Hanson – [hebu-music.com/en/musician...](http://hebu-music.com/en/musician...)
23. Lee Hartman – [leehartman.instantenore.com](http://leehartman.instantenore.com)
24. Jennifer Higdon – [jenniferhigdon.com](http://jenniferhigdon.com)
25. Quincy Hilliard –
26. Kristen Hirlinger – [kristenhirlinger.com](http://kristenhirlinger.com)
27. Ching Chu Hu – [chingchuhu.com](http://chingchuhu.com)
28. Jennifer Jolley – [jenniferjolley.com](http://jenniferjolley.com)
29. Ulysses Kay – [wisemusicclassical.com](http://wisemusicclassical.com)
30. Libby Larsen – [libbylarsen.com](http://libbylarsen.com)
31. Arturo Marquez –
32. Cindy McTee – [cindymctee.com](http://cindymctee.com)
33. Kang Han Moi – [hanberg.modoo.at/?link=530mjpxf](http://hanberg.modoo.at/?link=530mjpxf)
34. Gary Powell Nash – [garynash.musicaneo.com](http://garynash.musicaneo.com)
35. Cait Nishimura – [caitnishimura.com](http://caitnishimura.com)
36. Narong Prangcharoen – [narongmusic.com](http://narongmusic.com)
37. Kathryn Salfelder – [kathrynsalfelder.com](http://kathrynsalfelder.com)
38. Giovanni Santos – [giosantosmusic.com](http://giosantosmusic.com)
39. Alex Shapiro – [alexshapiro.org](http://alexshapiro.org)
40. Caroline Shaw – [carolineshaw.com](http://carolineshaw.com)
41. Cristina Spinei – [cristinaspinei.com](http://cristinaspinei.com)
42. Omar Thomas – [omarthomas.com](http://omarthomas.com)
43. Joan Tower – [composers.com/joan-tower](http://composers.com/joan-tower)
44. Zhou Tian – [zhoutianmusic.com](http://zhoutianmusic.com)
45. Chandler Wilson – [chandlerwilsonmusic.com](http://chandlerwilsonmusic.com)
46. Chen Yi – <https://www.presser.com/chen-yi>