

Knowing the Background of a Composer and Composition *Does* Make a Difference

Presented by
David Littrell

2005 Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic

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Manhattan, Kansas

Knowing the Background of a Composer and Composition *Does* Make a Difference

Knowing the background of a composer and a composition can lead to a more musically satisfying performance as well as an educational experience for the conductor and students.

Subject Areas About a Composer or Composition

1. Composer's biographical information
2. Historical background of the composition, including its relation to the composer's life and other compositions
3. Perspective of the piece in the context of music history, style, and societal culture
4. Required technical skills and overview of rhythmic considerations, keys, meters, bowing and fingering problems, instrumentation
5. Stylistic considerations for interpreting bowing styles, dynamics, articulation, and emotional expression
6. Musical elements: melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre
7. Form and structure of the composition
8. Similar repertoire available through recordings
9. Encyclopedia, Web site, and book resources

Jacquelyn Dillon emphatically states that the music *is* the curriculum and that we are responsible for giving our students the opportunity to play music of high quality for educational and aesthetic reasons. Planning the repertoire for the school year is perhaps the single most important decision an orchestra conductor will make.

Listening List for Today's Presentation

Canyon Sunset	John Caponegro	Grade 1	Kendor
Appalachian Sunrise	Doris Gazda	Grade 2	Kjos
Folk Tune and Fiddle Dance	Percy Fletcher	Grade 3	Boosey & Hawkes
Brook Green Suite	Gustav Holst	Grade 3	G. Schirmer
Holberg Suite	Edvard Grieg	Grade 5	Kalmus; Luck's

Bibliography

Littrell, David. *Teaching Music through Performance in Orchestra, Volumes 1 and 2*. Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2001 and 2003. (Volume 1 partially compiled and edited by Laura Reed.)

Teaching Music through Performance in Orchestra: Resource Recordings, Volumes 1 and 2. Michigan State University Symphony Orchestra, Leon Gregorian, conductor. Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2003 and 2005. Four-CD and three-CD recordings of all Grade 1-3 pieces from both volumes.

Teaching Music through Performance in Orchestra

Michael Allen, Louis Bergonzi, Jacquelyn Dillon, Robert Gillespie, James Kjelland, Dorothy Straub
Compiled and edited by David Littrell and Laura Reed Racine

Written, researched, and compiled by scholars with a wealth of teaching experience, *Teaching Music through Performance in Orchestra* is a one-of-a-kind, indispensable resource that allows educators to lead students beyond the notes on the printed page toward total musical awareness and understanding!

Part I of this valuable guide offers “words of wisdom” from six successful orchestra teachers with over 150 years of experience among them. Each gives practical advice on subjects ranging from producing well-rounded musicians, rehearsal suggestions, and preparing for festivals to selecting high-quality music and the impact of national standards on teaching.

Part II contains a nuts-and-bolts analysis of 100 of the most significant works for strings and full orchestra, Grades 1–6. Researched and compiled by scholarly musicians and teachers across the country, this section gives important information on each musical selection, including composer and composition information, historical background, technical requirements, stylistic considerations, musical elements (form and structure), suggestions for additional listening, and a guide to selected references.

As a reference guide or a college-level text, *Teaching Music through Performance in Orchestra* is an ideal tool for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of his or her music repertoire.

Michael Allen is a professor of String Music Education and String Pedagogy at Florida State University in Tallahassee. **Louis Bergonzi** is a professor of String Music Education and String Pedagogy at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. He is a past-president of the American String Teachers Association with National School Teachers Association. **Jacquelyn Dillon** is a professor of String Music Education and String Pedagogy at Wichita State University in Kansas. She is a past president of the American String Teachers Association with National School Teachers Association. **Robert Gillespie** is a professor of String Music Education and String Pedagogy at The Ohio State University in Columbus. **James Kjelland** is a professor of String Music Education and String Pedagogy at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. **Dorothy Straub** is Director of Music for Fairfield, Connecticut Schools and a past president of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC). **Laura Reed Racine** is editor of the American String Teacher journal and founder and director of the north Central West Virginia Community Orchestra. **David Littrell** is a University Distinguished Professor of Music at Kansas State University, where he teaches cello, double bass, baroque cello, and conducts the orchestra. He is a past president of the American String Teachers Association with NSOA.

G-5565 Hardcover, 526 pages \$39.50

Teaching Music through Performance in Orchestra: Resource Recordings Volume 1, Grades 1–3

Michigan State University Symphony Orchestra
Leon Gregorian, conductor

This 4-CD set contains almost all of the Grade 1 through 3 repertoire from the book, recorded exquisitely by the Michigan State University Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Leon Gregorian. The quality of the music is top-notch, but many of these lower-grade pieces are impossible to find in recorded form. This CD set is the perfect companion to any string orchestra or orchestra conductor looking for music of the highest quality in the Grade 1 through 3 levels.

CD-536 Four-CD set \$49.50

Teaching Music through Performance in Orchestra, Volume 2

Michael Allen, Louis Bergonzi, Jacquelyn Dillon, Robert Gillespie, James Kjelland, Dorothy Straub
Compiled and edited by David Littrell

The practical advice and undeniably helpful analysis found in the first volume of *Teaching Music through Performance in Orchestra* continues with Volume 2. Written, researched, and compiled by scholars with a wealth of teaching experience, this book is literally packed with indispensable information for music educators!

Part I of the book contains essays penned by six renowned orchestra teachers: Michael Allen, Louis Bergonzi, Jacquelyn Dillon, Robert Gillespie, James Kjelland, and Dorothy Straub. From pedagogy, assessment, and musicianship to motivation, repertoire-based warm-ups, and playing in tune, these experts' "words of wisdom" are sure to both help and inspire teachers in the classroom.

Part II contains a nuts-and-bolts analysis of 100 of the most significant works for string and full orchestra, Grades 1-6. Researched and compiled by musicians and teachers across the country, this section gives essential information on each musical selection, including composer and composition information, historical background, technical requirements, stylistic considerations, musical elements (form and structure), suggestions for additional listening, and a guide to selected references.

As a reference guide or a college-level text, *Teaching Music through Performance in Orchestra, Volume 2* is an ideal tool for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of his or her music repertoire.

G-6091 Hardcover, 691 pages.....\$44.95

Teaching Music through Performance in Orchestra: Resource Recordings Volume 2, Grades 1-3

Michigan State University Symphony Orchestra
Leon Gregorian, conductor

This 3-CD set features masterful performances of the Grade 1-3 string orchestra repertoire from Volume 2. Once again, these CDs maintain the highest standards that have been synonymous with the *Teaching Music* series. Perfect for anyone looking for the best literature available for string orchestra.

CD-615 Three-CD set.....\$39.50

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