



# Newsletter

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Fort Worth Music Teachers Association

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## Dear FWMTA Colleagues,

Normally I would begin my comments in our September Newsletter with a recap of the TMTA Convention, which, like most everything else this spring and summer, was unfortunately canceled due to the pandemic. While we ultimately could not celebrate these achievements in Houston this past June, FWMTA members and convention delegates would have:

- thrilled to performances by our student ensembles;
- seen FWMTA receive the TMTA Best of State Local Association Award;
- experienced the premiere of a new chamber work by 2020 TMTA Commissioned Composer Dr. Martin Blessinger (Go Frogs!); and
- celebrated our three fabulous Teacher of the Year Nominees, including Dr. Ann Gipson, winner of this year's TMTA Award for Outstanding Collegiate Teaching Achievement.

Over the past six months many of us have missed important family events, catching up with friends, or a much-anticipated vacation. We may have seen declines in student enrollment, had concerts or accompanying engagements canceled, and may be feeling pretty withered after months of online teaching and Zoom meetings.

But there is much to look forward to at FWMTA this year, despite the challenges still facing us all personally and professionally. We kicked off with a fast-paced and informative virtual meeting, "In the Spotlight." Our BookNotes discussion is scheduled online for November 13, our annual joint meeting with Piano Teachers Forum and Mid-Cities MTA will be held on February 9, 2021 at the Woman's Club of Fort Worth, and Meet the Composer with Mona Rejino is scheduled for May 1, 2021, at Texas Wesleyan University.

FWMTA's committee chairs have been tirelessly planning ways to keep our students motivated while protecting everyone's health and safety. This is no small task, considering that several of our events have always involved hundreds of people converging on one building at one time! Some of our largest in-person events have been significantly revamped to accommodate these objectives: our Fall Festival will take place in a video format for the first time; Theory testing will be conducted in teachers' studios, students' homes, and outdoor spaces; Open Recitals will begin in January 2021; and our Solo Competition will be spread over two

weekends in order to provide students with an ideal venue for live performance while also reducing foot traffic.

Important announcements (either from FWMTA or from TMTA) are forthcoming for several other activities including: the TMTA Performance Contest, which we've planned to take place at TCU in February, 2021; and Outreach, for which we are now finalizing dates in December, 2020 and May, 2021. Ensembles will proceed as usual in the spring, using the repertoire chosen for last year. Sign up your students – after going stir-crazy since March, nothing will give them greater joy than making music together (and costumes, of course)!

In the meantime, students and teachers can stay busy and inspired this fall. Activities such as the Publication Contest, Creative Video Contest, and Original Composition Contest continue to provide a creative outlet even for students stuck at home. The World of Music curriculum can deepen understanding and provide fresh context for practicing. Chamber music is the perfect expressive outlet for siblings who can safely rehearse together. And I hope you'll join us November 13 when we discuss *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance* by Angela Duckworth, a book that most of us will surely appreciate after these past few months!

Wishing all a healthy, productive, and enriching semester!

Evan Mitchell, President



**The TMTA Award for Outstanding Collegiate Teaching Achievement** is awarded for outstanding success in teaching at the collegiate level in music performance, composition, theory, history, or any combination. TMTA named FWMTA member Dr. Ann Milliman Gipson the 2020 recipient of this prestigious award.

The FWMTA nominees included - Teacher of the Year: Dr. Jill T. Sprenger  
Outstanding Pre-Collegiate Teaching Achievement: Jennea Potter

A note of interest: TMTA's Award for Outstanding Collegiate Teaching Achievement - awarded once in the lifetime of the recipient - was awarded for the first time in the year 1987 to Amanda Vick Lethco (Austin). Through the years three other FWMTA members have had the honor of receiving this award: John Owings, 1998; Dr. Tamas Ungar, 2002 and Dr. John Solomons, 2012.

## Editor's Column



A recent account in a major news journal pointed to the rise in piano sales since March of 2020.

Numerous piano dealers nationwide attribute this sudden

and immense resurgence of interest in the piano to the pandemic when we Americans found ourselves sequestered to our homes. This points to the rather odd role COVID-19 has played in creating an interest in the playing and purchase of pianos.

Parents working from home have for over five months now, shared their space with their home-schooled children.

Could the renewed realization of the benefits derived from the study of piano, and the joys of making music together as a family have contributed to the rise in piano sales and the pursuit of lessons in piano - from beginners to that of the keen adult amateur pianist? While an accurate answer to this question cannot be provided at this time, piano dealers across North America are elated over the extraordinary interest in, and the robust sales of acoustic and digital pianos since April 2020.

To hark back to the years of WWII is to find an equally interesting parallel. The piano's involvement and popularity during the harsh conditions of the 2<sup>nd</sup> WW came about in a circuitous way. This was a time of parachutes, bombs, aircraft, men and women being subjected to working in the harshest of conditions and an unending, senseless, tragic loss of lives. How then did the piano come to play a role in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War?

Pianos standing firmly on the sidelines became an indispensable part of America's military during WWII. The U.S. government, in an effort to direct essential materials such as copper, brass, iron and other such resources toward the war effort, put a stop to the production of

music instruments. Steinway factory using a skeleton crew turned at this critical juncture to the manufacture of wings, nose assemblies, tail assemblies, floors and other much needed parts for Troop Transport Gliders. Steinway was also contracted to build coffins.

Although a stop to the manufacture of music instruments was ordered, the government saw a need for music and entertainment - both of which would lift the spirits of the soldiers - as part of the war effort as well. The one instrument that could meet this requirement was the piano - a sturdy piano, one that could withstand harsh conditions such as being packed in a crate and air-dropped from a plane. The U.S. government turned once again to Steinway and Sons, only this time they were commissioned to construct not parts for Gliders, but little upright pianos. Steinway met the challenge by incorporating many a new feature into the pianos that came to be called Victory Verticals or G.I Verticals (the term G.I. stands for government issue or government inspected).

Anti-insect treatment, water-resistant glue, celluloid covered keys and bass strings covered not in the conventional copper, but in soft iron were used. Only a fraction of the metal used in regular pianos was utilized in these Vertical pianos. Weighing 455 pounds, the military khaki-colored pianos were comfortably carried by four soldiers holding on to handles placed under the key bed and the back.

The pianos packed in wooden crates were placed on large navy vessels and dispatched by the army to areas of war where there were American troops. A Steinway war-time advertisement shows a B-17 bomber delivering a Victory Vertical piano to the jungles of New Guinea as part of its cargo. The advertisement goes on to state, that although Steinway is building Glider parts for the U.S. government, a few of

their pianos could still be purchased by civilians.

Close to five thousand such pianos were manufactured by Steinway during the war years. By the war's end, close to three thousand pianos had been sent to our troops, the others were sold to churches and schools.

Between 2,500 and 3,000 Victory Verticals were air-dropped during the war. This tells us that they were played by as many pianists serving in the war, each of whom had had some sort of musical training in their youth. That training was brought to the fore as soldier/pianists played the popular American tunes of the war years.

An utilitarian piano, devoid of adornment, hardly noticeable due to its military khaki color, stood silent rather like a sentinel on guard until it was awakened at the touch of its keyboard...its engaging sounds beckoned soldiers to cast their fears and uncertainties aside, if only momentarily, and sing to the accompaniment of a pianist.

Pianos, music and pianists of the armed forces unflinchingly raised the hopes and spirits of our troops faced with the grim reality of war.

We can only surmise as to whether the spike in piano sales at this time continues into a future free of the coronavirus. Let's hope it does.

*It is interesting to note that 1909 was a stellar year for piano sales in the U.S. - 364,500 new pianos were sold in that year. Sales remained at a high level, but the course of time shows the impact radio, television and technological innovations made on consumers; the ensuing result: a drop in sales to approximately 30,000 new pianos being sold in a single year in America. This figure excludes the sale of the ubiquitous digital keyboard.*

Rosemary Solomons  
Newsletter Editor

## November 2020 Meeting BookNotes Presenter Ann Gipson writes...

Please join me on Friday, November 13 from 10:30 am-noon for BookNotes to discuss the book "Grit: the Power of Passion and Perseverance" by Angela Duckworth. Dealing with the challenges and upheavals of the pandemic in the past

few months has more than likely tested each of our own grit and perseverance.

Among the topics that Duckworth discusses include "What Grit is and Why it Matters, Growing Grit From the Inside Out and Growing Grit from the Outside In." She explores aspects of "showing up, distracted by talent, effort counts twice, practice, purpose, and hope." The engaging, easy to read book is full of

individual stories and research data. Hopefully, this excerpt will give you a taste of her writing. "...There are no shortcuts to excellence. Developing real expertise, figuring out really hard problems, it all takes time - longer than most people imagine. And then, you know, you've got to apply those skills and produce goods or services that are valuable to people. Rome wasn't built in

a day...And here's the really important thing. Grit is about working on something you care about so much that you're willing to stay loyal to it... it's doing what you love, but not just falling in love - staying in love."

As many of us find ourselves struggling to impact and inspire our students using new technologies and teaching in unfamiliar formats, we must hold on to our passion for teaching and our love for music now more than

ever. Join me as we consider our own "Grit" and discover ways that we and our students can thrive in this season of uncertainty.

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## Calendar for 2020/2021

**Please check FWMTA website concerning possible changes to these events due to COVID-19.**

**February – May 2021 will be covered in the next issue of the Newsletter**

### SEPTEMBER

- 13 Student Affiliate Enrollment Deadline
- 20 Fall Festival: Jazz and Contemporary Registration Deadline

### OCTOBER

- 1 Fall Theory Test Registration Deadline
- 12 Fall Festival video submission deadline:  
Jazz and Contemporary
- 24 Fall Theory Testing Window Begins  
Chamber Music Festival registration deadline.  
Joint event with Mid-Cities MTA and  
Tarrant County College- Northeast.  
Register at <https://mcmta.org/>

### NOVEMBER

- 1 Original Composition Contest Deadline for Entry
- 1 Student Affiliate Late Enrollment Deadline (Fee Assessed)
- 7 Fall Theory Testing Window Ends
- 13 "BookNotes", 10:30 am, discussion led by Dr. Ann Gipson
- 21 Chamber Music Festival: piano and instrumental at TCC-NE.  
For more info and registration, please visit <https://mcmta.org>

### DECEMBER

- 1 Youth Duo Piano Competition Registration Deadline
- 1 Local Publication Contest Deadline
- 1 Local Video Contest Deadline
- 6 Student Affiliate Extended Late Enrollment Deadline  
(Fee Increased)
- TBD Outreach performances

### JANUARY 2021

- TBD Spring Theory Test Registration Deadline
- 16 Local Performance Contest Registration Postmark
- TBD State and Local Piano Ensemble Team Intent Form  
and Fees Postmark Date
- TBD Original Composition Contest State Deadline
- 30 Open Recital

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## Upcoming Events

### 2020 Fall Festival Registration

Katie Montgomery-Fall Festival Chair

Fall Festival will be held online this year. Teachers can begin completing registration by Monday, August 24th. Students will be recording their pieces ahead of time for the judges. There are instructions at [FWMTA.org](http://FWMTA.org) explaining how to upload videos and create pdfs of music for the judges.

This is the registration link. It can also be found on the FWMTA website. <https://app.simplissimoevents.com/event/s/49/teachers/new>

Looking forward to this year's festival and the many students that will play!

### FWMTA Theory Committee

June Leondar- Theory Chair

Welcome back to the start of another semester! As you can probably imagine, some FWMTA activities will continue to be presented in alternative formats this semester in order to accommodate social distancing and best practices related to COVID-19 safety.

See attached PDF documents (e-mail of August 17, 2020). They contain important details regarding our FWMTA theory testing procedures in accordance with recent guidance from TMTA, as well as a copy of the notice issued by TMTA. Our Theory Committee has

worked hard to come up with an effective, fair, and safe way of coordinating our tests.

Please read this information carefully. Any questions may be directed to Theory Chair June Leondar

As always, practice tests and other useful materials may be found at [TMTA.org](http://TMTA.org). Please note: updated Level 12 materials reflecting the new syllabus are now available on the TMTA site.

Thank you and we all look forward to a successful year for our members and students!

## News Briefs FWMTA Virtual Meeting Saturday, August 22, 2020



Photo submitted by Christine Pater

### Virtual Meeting

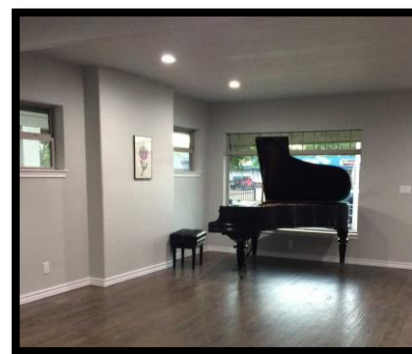
The first FWMTA meeting for the year was held on Saturday, August 2020. In keeping with these uncertain times, members “gathered” together on Zoom at a meeting presided by Evan Mitchell, president, and VPs for Programs, Anne Smith and Gloria Lin. The proceedings began with the spotlight on committee chairs who spoke of upcoming events and the plans afoot to deal with safety while coping with the logistics of each event. MaryAnn Fritz was invited to speak on Creative Motion – a subject she has explored in-depth.

*Please see her highly interesting and informative article on Creative Motion on page 7 of this issue of the Newsletter.*

Jill Sprenger spoke briefly about the Fort Worth Conservatory of Music founded and directed by her. She informed members of the availability of the Conservatory’s recital hall for recital purposes. For further information regarding the recital hall’s availability please contact Jill Sprenger at: [fwconservatoryofmusic.com](http://fwconservatoryofmusic.com)

The VPs for Programs chose well in spotlighting MaryAnn Fritz and Jill Sprenger, as each had something

refreshingly different to offer members. *The editor*



FWCM Recital Hall

### FWMTA extends a warm welcome to the following new members:

- Emily Catherine Griffin (Collegiate)
- Jordan Hickerson (Collegiate)
- Jennifer Leigh McVay
- Allie Michelle Miller
- Hannah Braithwaite Kuipers

**Frederic Situmorang**, who competed in the Local and District TMTA State Competition for 8th grade, made it to the finals at State.  
Student of Jill Sprenger.

**Samuel Asprilla**, 9th grade student at Fort Worth Country Day, was the recipient of a SFAA \$500 scholarship as first prize winner in the Music category of the inaugural SFAA Contest held in April 2020.  
Student of Rosemary Solomons

## Outreach Program Meets with Success

By Jennifer DeSantis

The Spring Outreach performance planned for May 2020, was to have been in a recital format and take place on three consecutive Sundays in May. Due to Covid-19, James L West Center stopped the entry of guests into the facility. This had us decide on turning the event into a video performance. The response to the announcement was overwhelming. Eighteen teachers and 90 students participated.

**I created eleven recitals with the videos sent in by members.** On completion, I sent them to James L West Center and the residents viewed the recitals weekly. I sent the Center videos of recitals from May to July! It turned into a Spring/Summer Outreach Event.

The Activities Director was very pleased with the recitals. She mentioned that they were enjoyed and appreciated by the residents. I was very happy that we were able to reach out and I feel that many of the students enjoyed the community service.

## Duo-Piano Competition

By Ilka Araujo

The 13th Duo-Piano Competition will take place at Texas Wesleyan Martin Hall on February 13, 2021. The approved repertoire will be the same used for the 2020 Competition. The information can be found on the FWMTA website calendar of events. If COVID-19 restrictions still apply at the time of the competition, it will be held within closed doors and live-streamed. Only performers, judge, and committee members will be allowed in the hall. Committee members will help with page-turning and pianos will be disinfected between performers. A great way to have your students prepare is to have each partner record their part so they can practice with each other's recordings. Texas Wesleyan will offer longer rehearsal times per duo the first two weeks in February prior to the competition. We hope you will participate. For further information, please contact: Ilka Araujo at <iaraujo@txwes.edu>

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## Virtual Lesson's Lessons...

Turning to virtual lessons for the first time in March had me encounter many a challenge. Among the "surprises" that continue to linger: a piano one-half tone lower than my own (which calls for transposing whatever is demonstrated), the other piano's B and B flat keys snort when played!

Today, some months later, my view of the virtual lesson has changed. Seeking the answers to my requests and making notations on the score have helped my students develop a sense of independence, I feel more relaxed and communication between us has greatly improved.

Though the sound quality and communication of on-line lessons can be enhanced with a few pieces of sophisticated equipment, what it offers will remain a substitute that I will resort to only when no other option is available.

In the interim, let us maintain our patience and perseverance as we look forward to welcoming our students back to our studios and relegating these extraordinary times to a distant memory.

With the foregoing in mind I invited members to write about their own experiences with virtual lessons. Their responses are enlightening and amusing.

*The Editor*

### **Jennifer DeSantis -**

We have all learned so much through this experience. For instance, as I can't point at their score, they have learned to find a measure and point to a specific beat within that measure. Even my youngest students have learned to do this! It is nice to know that the virtual lesson is only a temporary measure; though my students and I have learned from this unusual experience, the virtual lesson could never take the place of in-person teaching.

### **Gloria Lin -**

"Hello there! Can you hear me well?"

"Can you see me well?"

"Please adjust your camera to where I can see your hands and face at the same time."

"Did you put on the "original sound"?"

"Press the recording button and let's get started"

All these questions prior to playing the piano has become the norm if not a habit already, these days. I believe both my students and I miss the warmth of the in-person lessons, but I find the students are more focused because they must look at the screen to listen and communicate. As a result, the lessons are more effective.

### **MaryAnn Fritz -**

**Teaching in the time of Covid-19**, with all the attending restrictions, has been an interesting experience for me. I have found it to be challenging in some areas, such as really hearing tone production or teaching young players the joys of syncopated pedaling! In other ways, though, I have had many interesting surprises. I have found that my students have become more independent, largely because I depend on them to do – slowly – what I might normally do very quickly. This includes marking fingering, circling a spot that needs more attention, marking the score for dynamics or phrasing, and looking up Italian terms that pop up in their music. I am striving to remember that my students can do more for themselves, even as we eventually return to a more conventional lesson situation.

### ***Lori Christ -***

**When I began our online teaching** adventure last March, I was a doubter. Months later it is obvious that nothing can truly replace face-to-face lessons, but the experience overall has exceeded my expectations.

Getting a look at the set-up each student has for home practice is... interesting. Out of tune pianos, keyboards, non-standard seating, etc. At least I have trained students to keep a pencil and metronome handy. The next step is learning how to operate both devices, but let's not rush.

It is nice to see my students every week in a relaxed environment, with no need to mask up. We are using our time to reinforce basic concepts, and most students are practicing more than usual. They are making progress and doing well. But regardless, I can't wait to see them in person again.

### ***Jill Sprenger -***

**What I LIKE** about teaching virtual lessons:

- I can wear my pajama bottoms when teaching.
- I got to teach my students all summer from Montana.
- They are making great progress because of the increased lessons and because they have so much free time without sports.
- I don't have to clean the house - just make sure there are no cobwebs on the ceiling behind me.

What I DON'T like:

- It's so very hard to teach rhythm
- You can't count along with them because of the delay; you can't sing and talk while they're playing to save time, -you have to wait until a stopping point to make a comment.
- Their pianos are out of tune and often not of the highest quality.
- I was shocked at what some of them are practicing on; one of my students had the D and E go out on his digital before making his Solo Contest recording, so he recorded those 2 notes in the correct rhythm from his piece and reached up and pressed the "play" button each time that motive returned!

### ***Jae Kim -***

It took me several weeks to adjust myself from the in-person lessons to the virtual lessons. The main hurdle was the time management. A few obstacles, including time lag, unstable internet connection, and physical distance, caused unclear communication which unexpectedly required me to spend more time on a lesson topic. I found online lessons are not so much viable, particularly with younger students, unless I have a detailed and well-constructed lesson plan. Despite these difficulties, the virtual lessons have taught me how much we are blessed in that we are still able to make some music and to keep our students' music education going.

### ***Cathy Lloyd -***

**I have been using Zoom,** texts, and FaceTime in my voice, piano, theory, and speech private lessons and classes with very positive results. It was tricky at first but every time I use these tools I learn something helpful that makes *Me* a better equipped teacher. I am truly happy and grateful to have this opportunity! I have been surprised with the growth of some of these students who have flourished in the virtual world.

### ***Christine Pater -***

Virtual piano lessons are a wonderful way to stay connected to precious students in their own homes. A boy played his piece for me and suddenly bent down; the music stopped and he disappeared. He reappeared and promptly said, "Sorry, I had to pet the cat."

Some disadvantages of remote teaching are the poor sound quality and delay, sometimes poor internet connection, household distractions, and difficulty in being able to properly demonstrate certain piano techniques.

However, I will continue to embrace this 'new normal' and to look for creative ways to engage my students on their musical journey, even if it is through a computer screen.

### ***Ilka Araujo -***

**To my surprise,** virtual lessons have worked well. Students have adapted easily, and I have learned efficient ways to communicate with them. Nevertheless, it was quite shocking when one day, I first asked a young student to start playing from measure 6. The student admitted seeing numbers 5, 9, 13 but no 6!

Numbering measures and understanding structure and harmony became essential. After recently returning to teaching face-to-face with most students, I realized that all things that sounded acceptable virtually were not at an acceptable level. Therefore, from hand position to pedaling, some rethinking had to take place.

### ***Patrick Behringer -***

Online lessons have proven a viable short-term alternative to, say, no lessons. Some families have become more organized, attentive and accountable while learning new technology and self-assessment. Us too, and we've heard their home instruments. The main drawback of long-term distance learning is using a stunted form of communication to teach a transcendent form. Young students rely on our presence as much as the information; advanced students thrive on sonorous details lost online. Jaunted interactions are tiresome and diminish the natural dialogue of learning. We've grown professionally but can look forward to the day we resume making art in person.

## Creative Motion®

By MaryAnn Fritz, DMA



*Mary Ann Fritz is adjunct professor of piano at Dallas Baptist University where she teaches private piano, class piano, and piano pedagogy. She also maintains a private*

*studio and is active as a clinician, piano festival/competition adjudicator, and workshop leader in the areas of piano and Creative Motion.*

The early part of the 20th century was an exciting time of innovation and transformation. Think of the revolution in transportation afforded by the work of the Wright brothers and Henry Ford. Albert Einstein and Marie Curie in science, John Dewey and Aldous Huxley in philosophy, and politicians and revolutionaries around the world altered our way of life. Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schoenberg, and Charles Ives changed the way we conceptualize music. And the field of music education received a huge boost with the work of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, Zoltán Kodály, and Carl Orff. It was within this atmosphere that a movement known as Creative Motion® was conceived. Martha Stockton Russell's (1875-1951) inquiry into the body's natural response to music began as a result of her own sensitivity to music as a child. She sensed an inner force of forward motion tied to the rhythmic pulse of the music, but she was disappointed as she searched for a teacher who could help her harness that force of motion in her own playing. Russell graduated from Northwestern University with a degree in music theory and then studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London. While she was in Europe, Russell became a student of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, and she eventually introduced his work in some areas of the United States, where she served as one of his accompanists. Jaques-Dalcroze's emphasis on the body as primary in music-making had a lasting

effect on Russell's own work. Martha Russell's interest intensified as she cared for her own special-needs infant, Christopher. She noticed that, although the baby had no voluntary motor control, his muscles – particularly the diaphragm – nevertheless responded differently as she played various chords on the piano. Based upon these observations and remembering her own childhood experiences with music, Russell began research with elementary-aged school children. Russell came to believe that all children possessed an innate ability to respond directly to music in a natural, comfortable manner. She began working in schools across the United States, serving as Director of Music and Rhythms. Apparently, Mrs. Russell was granted considerable freedom to conduct experiments in music education with the children at each of the schools in which she worked. In 1938-39, the Horace Mann School of Columbia University in New York City was the site of a controlled experiment in which second-graders were divided into two groups. One group received one hour of Creative Motion instruction per week, while the control group did not. The researchers found that children in the Creative Motion group made statistically significant gains in posture, use of the body as an integrated whole, a reduction in apparent self-consciousness (i.e. social awkwardness), increase in intelligence as measured by two forms of the Stanford-Binet IQ Test, and greater self-control. Russell's work continued into her later years as she held workshops for teachers in various disciplines. Elementary school teachers continued work with children, helping them to tie physical and mental activities to an awareness of the breath, with the result that children seemed more focused on the task, with greater alertness and reduced physical tension. Music educators, including Marion Flagg, who served as the director of music education for Dallas ISD (1940-1964), taught students to attend to the flow of energy in music as they performed. So, what is Creative

Motion? It is a wholistic approach to music making, in which attention is given to the body's natural response to music. As much as possible, we allow that response to guide our interpretation of the music. In a lesson with a Creative Motion teacher, a student will be guided to discover how a harmonic progression feels in the body (Can you feel how the dominant pulls you back to tonic? What happens in a deceptive cadence? How is that perceived in the body?). A student might explore how a melody line breathes (Are all those notes equal? Or are there some that feel particularly important, while others seem to ride on the energy of the important notes?). Exploration of phrasing involves hearing/feeling how the phrase expresses itself from its inception or impulse until its climax, the point at which the phrase seems to change in intensity. Creative Motion places great emphasis on body readiness, so students are guided to put themselves in a position where they feel simultaneously grounded and lifted, so that the torso is free to move over the keys or other instrument. This is referred to as the light-weight body. To get a feel for this sense of grounded lightness: Sit comfortably in your chair with your feet on the floor and sitting tall. Notice how your feet help you feel connected to the floor. Notice how your back feels lifted. Can you imagine – without pushing – your torso extending up through your head? Rock slightly from side to side. Do you feel how mobile you are in your chair? Can you imagine that you can move freely over the keyboard as you play the piano or type at your computer? Of course, good posture is essential for musicians. Getting students to notice how their bodies feel in attaining a light-weight body, though, is just as important. It sensitizes them to their own physicality and increases proprioception, reinforcing their ownership of how their bodies move. The light-weight body exercise allows for freedom at the diaphragm, which makes the student's connection with the breath more easily observable to the student. This is such an important aspect of making music –

breathing! We've all heard someone play a phrase while holding their breath. The tension! It is also vitally important to help students refocus as they begin a music lesson – to let go of the day's events and find themselves in that space of creating music. Focusing attention on the breath can do that, and it takes just a few seconds. Here is how a Creative Motion teacher would do that: Return to your feeling of readiness in your body. You feel grounded, connected to the floor through your feet or through your "sitz bones" on the chair. You feel lifted so that your torso extends upwards. Now focus your attention on your breathing center. Can you imagine that the breath you take connects to the arches of your hands? Can you connect the breath to the arches of your feet? Can you imagine the breath connecting from breathing center to the crown of your head? Notice how you feel completely connected as a body. In addition to an integration of body and breath, imagination plays a key role in

Creative Motion instruction. A student might be asked to imagine a pattern in music – how it will sound (audiation) and how it will feel to actually play or sing it (kinesthetic imagination). To the extent that a student can imagine the sound and feeling in detail, he or she will be better able to perform the pattern or phrase. And when the result does not match the imagined pattern, the student and teacher work on figuring out why. Does the student need to work on some aspect of technique? Is poor fingering the issue? Can he or she "feel" that fingering clearly? Is the student trying to stretch through a leap, rather than allowing the arm to carry the hand? Or did the experiment reveal that the imagination of the music – say a phrase in the piece – really just doesn't work? What a great gift to give a student – to let them discover that not all ideas are really workable, and to support them as they experiment with other ways of playing the phrase. Creative Motion espouses "discovery learning," which requires

the teacher to allow the student to experiment, even trying things we know will not work. Our goal is to make musicians who are confident in their own ability to explore, make mistakes, and try again. That does not mean that just anything goes! It is always important to balance discovery with information regarding stylistic requirements, the importance of adhering to the composer's markings in the score, etc. Good musicianship requires a balance between discovering how the body responds to the music and how that response fits into artistic requirements. That discovery then informs future musical experiences. This is just a brief overview of Creative Motion. As with any system, there are many more details in approaching music-making from a Creative Motion perspective. I am happy to talk with you or direct you to more written information about the topic.

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