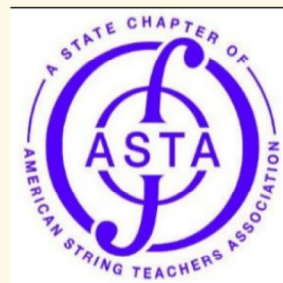
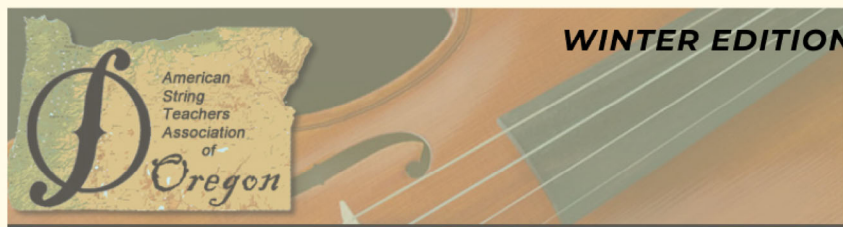


# ***THE CHORDA***



Some of our board members, after the October Biennial Conference

## ***Join Our Board!***

***Elections to be held in  
May for President,  
Secretary, and Treasurer***

If you want to help build string education in Oregon and would like to be on the ballot, please contact ORASTA President

Lisa Zweben at

[astaoregon@gmail.com](mailto:astaoregon@gmail.com), for more information.

## ***Successful Fourth Biennial ORASTA Conference***



Oregon ASTA was very happy to be able to hold the 4th Biennial Oregon ASTA Conference on Friday, October 8th and Saturday, October 9th, 2021 in person!!! On Friday, Soon Hee Newbold, world renowned composer of string music for youth orchestras, spent the day with students from local public schools and youth orchestra programs, college students, and private and public school strings teachers. The day began with Ms. Newbold's brief presentation about her life and her many activities - violinist, composer, actor, Asian martial arts expert, skilled marksman, paramedic. She inspired all of us as she shared the many ways in which she lives life to the fullest while giving each activity her all with the utmost focus and commitment as she strives for excellence.

Following this introduction students separated for sectionals led by ORASTA board members Lily Burton, Paloma Griffin Hebert, Rebekah Hanson, and ORASTA member and high school conductor Mac Mayer. Rehearsal of three ensembles grouped by age followed sectionals and Ms. Newbold visited each rehearsal. After lunch everyone joined together - students as well as adults - under Soon Hee Newbold's baton as we played the three pieces we had all rehearsed and she discussed each composition. After a question and answer period the students headed home and the adults remained for a reading session as Ms. Newbold conducted three more of her compositions. (Continued on page 2)



### Biennial Conference, continued:

On Saturday our special guest was the eminent violinist and pedagogue David Russell, formerly faculty at Cleveland Institute of Music and currently the Anne R. Bell Distinguished Professor of Violin at the University of North Carolina Charlotte. Mr. Russell gave both chamber music and violin masterclasses. In addition to Mr. Russell, Oregon ASTA highlighted the many wonderful musicians in Oregon as they presented viola (Charles Noble) and cello (Diane Chaplin) master classes, and led the following workshops: Strategies for Motivation, with Christine Goodner and Rebekah Hanson; Fiddle and More, with Jenny Estrin; Contemporary Techniques, with Diane Chaplin; Instrument Repair, with Jacob Mitas; Fun Suzuki Techniques for Lesson and the Classroom, with Laura Jauregui Wynter; Feldenkrais for Musicians, with Colin Pip Dixon; Passport to Bach, Exploring Baroque Performance Practice, with violinist Adam LaMotte, violist Arnaud Ghillebaert and cellist Valdine Mishkin; and a Baroque Reading Session with Adam LaMotte using Baroque bows to play Handel and Vivaldi works for string orchestra.

It was wonderful to be together in person, to share so many fun and educational experiences, and to end each day playing music together!

Please visit [www.orasta.org](http://www.orasta.org) for a complete list of our wonderful presenters! And be sure to see the reviews of a few presentations that follow in this newsletter.

- ORASTA President Lisa Zweben



## ORASTA



## SOLO COMPETITION

We had 40 applicants and 23 participating teachers this year! The Preliminary Round videos were very well done and show the excellent teaching in our Oregon-ASTA community. You are invited to the competition Finals, which will be held live on Dec 12, 2021, at Portland State University. Check [www.orasta.org](http://www.orasta.org) for future details.

Proof of vaccine will be required at the competition. For those exempted from vaccines for medical or religious reasons, proof of a negative Covid-19 PCR test taken within 72 hours of the competition will be required. We are very grateful to our sponsors who are making this possible!



### David Russell Violin Master Class Inspires Students and Teachers

The first performer was Erica Yang, who played the third movement of Mendelssohn Concerto in e minor, accompanied by Grace Ko. Mr. Russell first gave a general remark about Mendelssohn: that his music tends to be youthful and bubbly because he did not live to be an old man. In this particular movement, the technical burden for us is all in the right hand.

In the Allegretto section, Mr. Russell remarked that Erica tended to diminuendo when she went to the tip. The first phrase of each pair is a question, and should sustain to the last note. (Continued on page 3)



## **Russell Masterclass continued:**

Sometimes you have to “press more” to avoid fading. Also, each phrase starts with 2 eighths and a quarter. These 3 notes should sound like they are leading together, not like 3 individual notes. The third phrase should “get angry” and stay louder and more intense.

At the beginning of the Allegro Vivace, Mr. Russell worked with Erica on starting from the string, and using more bow, especially on the harmonics in m. 2, 4, and 6. He showed her how you can lift the harmonic finger off and the harmonic will still sound, as long as the speed of the bow doesn't slow down.

In the main theme, he said each up bow should start with a “click”, like a colle stroke. The first up bow in each series is the most important one to articulate. For bow division, he recommended using just a little more bow on the down bow slurs, such as in m.9 and 10, so the up bows are not trapped too close to the frog. In places like m.15, Mr. Russell recommended coming off slightly between each 3 note slur so that the impact of dropping back on provides more articulation.

Mr. Russell suggested making a crescendo in some of the slurred scales, such as in m. 16. In m.18, 20 and 21, “Don't be too nice!” More assertive articulations provide energy.

In big scales, such as in m.53-55, increase the bow and flatten the hair but don't slow down. In m.107, really sustain against the short notes of the orchestra, and be sure the 8th notes are rhythmically exact. When the cellos take over that melody in m.117, work a little harder to project.

In summary, he suggested that Erica not “fall into the trap” of making diminuendo when in the upper half of the bow, and to hear more “clicks” when the bow is articulating.

The second performer was Charles Dalrymple, playing the Adagio in g minor from Sonata #1 by J.S.Bach. Mr. Russell asked “How do we decide on a proper tempo? We look at the movement of the harmony. If it is too slow, we forget what the previous chord was.” He pointed out that the dominant chord in m.1 is reiterated in m.2, which builds tension. In this Adagio, most of the harmonies are on half notes, unlike the Grave of the a minor sonata, in which the harmonies move in quarter notes.

This movement is written in three large sections. The first one ends on m.9 in d minor and is preceded by a “Dominant pedal” A7 chord on counts 1 and 3 in m.8. The reiteration of the dominant builds tension, and a ritardando would be appropriate to highlight the cadence.

In m.9 the F# pulls upward to the G in m.10, while the E flat pulls down to the D in m.10. In m.11, sustain the bottom notes more and crescendo to increase tension. In m.12, crescendo more to increase the “surprise” of the diminished chord on m.13. “What we think in our heads is often barely noticeable. You have to exaggerate your musical intentions.”

Mr. Russell's general advice to Charles was to maximize tension and resolution. Also, he suggested that Charles stand with his feet slightly farther apart, for a more stable stance.

The third performer was Evan Ko, playing the Giga in E from Partita #3 by J.S.Bach. Mr. Russell started off by mentioning that a Giga (or Gigue) is a dance form, even though it was not intended to be danced.

The bow stroke in the Giga should be lifting off the string in m.1-2 and similar places that have 8th note upbeats. An exception is in m.20 where the last 8th leads to a detache phrase, and should be longer.

Phrases can be more shaped, such as in m.4, with diminuendo into the dotted 8th followed by crescendo into the next measure. Mr. Russell suggested imagining a duet part while playing this piece, and mentioned that Bach Cantata #29 contains an orchestration of the E Major Preludio. When studying the Preludio, one should listen to the orchestration for inspiration.

The last performer was Timothy Lee, playing Tzigane by Ravel. Mr. Russell asked what Tzigane means, and Timothy correctly answered “Gypsy”. Then Mr. Russell said that this does NOT mean one can play freely, because Ravel was a great orchestrator and composed with detailed precision. The Hungarian Gypsy rhythms and style are written precisely how he wanted them played. “If you don't play the rhythm as written, it gets warped and hard to follow.” Mr. Russell worked with Timothy on the integrity of the Hungarian motif, which is a reverse dotted rhythm with a 32nd followed by a double dotted 8th. He also emphasized the importance of not taking time where it wasn't warranted, and of playing written grace notes truly as grace notes, not taking too much time on them. (Continued on page 4)



**Russell Master Class Continued:**

The master class was inspiring and well-received, and we are grateful that Mr. Russell shared his time and expertise.

- Clarisse Atcherson



# Passport to Bach

*Passport to Bach* was an informative session taught by Valdine Mishkin, Arnaud Ghillebaert, and Adam LaMotte. Valdine gave a description of each type of dance that Bach wrote. Then she showed videos of dancers in period costumes performing each kind of dance. The fun part was when she

muted the sound and played Bach on her cello in tempo with the dancers! It was interesting to see how our modern tempos are often much slower than what Baroque period dancers would have wanted. Arnaud recommended Telemann's *12 Fantasias* for students before they tackle solo Bach. Telemann used the same bass line structure as Bach, so students can be exposed to this kind of writing without the technical difficulty of Bach. Arnaud gave some excellent tips for practicing this music: start chords with resonant bass notes and move to the upper strings before getting to the balance point of the bow. And make musical choices based on the character of the piece and how the phrases evolve.

Adam explained the importance of articulation in Bach using *collé*. He is thankful for the *collé* assignments his teacher gave him using Kreutzer #7! *Collé* uses finger action to make the bow grip the string, producing the desired consonant sound at the beginning of a note.

The highlight of the afternoon was playing our instruments using Baroque bows, which Adam and David Kerr generously provided. Our OR-ASTA conference ended with Adam leading us in a joyful reading of Handel's *Queen of Sheba* and a Vivaldi concerto.

- Lily Burton

## Strategies for Motivation, with Rebekah Hanson and Christine Goodner

Rebekah and Christine conducted a survey of 120 students, asking what motivated them in their younger years as they took music lessons. Some of the interesting results were that students received the most inspiration from their teacher, next was their friends, followed by orchestra. The most influential motivators to keep playing their instrument were orchestra/chamber music, then friends, then performing.

When asked “What advice would you give your younger self?” the answers included:

Listen more (to music and to the teacher)

Be thankful for lessons

Ask questions

Pursue what you love

Stick with it!

This session greatly encouraged teachers to find music that students love, provide performance opportunities, and remember that we make an important impact on our students... which might not be recognized for years down the road.

- Lily Burton

# STAY TUNED FOR UPCOMING EVENTS:

General Meeting and Honors Recital  
March, date TBD

ASTACAP--May, date TBD

