

STAR-POST (MUSIC)

MORE SUPPORT FOR MUSIC TEACHERS THROUGH ARTIST-MENTORSHIP AND PEDAGOGICAL RESEARCH

There has never been greater support for our arts education efforts in Singapore, and it is important for us as arts educators to take advantage of every window of opportunity to receive support, be it in terms of funding, resources or training. In this edition of STAR-Post, we would like to highlight two avenues of support for your professional learning: The Artist-Mentor Scheme (AMS) and the Arts Pedagogical Research Fund (APRF).

Artist-Mentor Scheme

Wouldn't it be wonderful to:

- » Learn more about our traditional Chinese, Malay, and Indian musical art forms, and to better understand how to effectively teach these forms in the classroom?
- » Learn how to arrange music effectively for our music classrooms?
- » Learn how to conduct effective band or choir rehearsals and sectionals?
- » Learn how to become a better facilitator of community music making?

Wouldn't it be an even richer experience to learn these through being mentored by some of Singapore's most outstanding music practitioners? With the AMS, now you can!

The AMS provides funding of up to \$8,000 for teachers to learn from established practitioners through the following phases:

1. Learning from Artist-Mentor (through consultations, tutorials, demonstrations, hands-on sessions)
2. Co-teaching with Artist-Mentor
3. Teaching independently and supported by Artist-Mentor through lesson debriefs

Through this process, teachers will enhance their musical and pedagogical competencies, and gain intriguing insights into the world of a professional music artist.

Arts Pedagogical Research Fund

Would you like to learn more about research, and how it can help you develop your pedagogical understanding? Would your school benefit from extra funding to purchase teaching resources or music equipment? If you answered a resounding "YES!" to both questions, then you really should look at applying for the APRF.

Under the APRF, teachers will embark on a journey to learn about the intricacies of qualitative and quantitative research. They will then apply what they have learnt to undertake a research study in the following areas:

- » Student-centred music pedagogies set within a local context;
- » Nurturing identity and understanding of cultural heritage through music lessons;
- » Nurturing values through music lessons.

Successful applicants will receive a one-off grant of up to \$20,000 that can be used to:

- » Develop or procure teaching resources;
- » Purchase of music instruments, equipment;
- » Hire external specialists;
- » Fund the professional development of teachers.

The benefits of the APRF journey go beyond just the training and funding support. It will sharpen your cognitive capabilities and your eye for details. We can guarantee that you will never see research in the same way again!

Application Procedure

There will be a briefing on the AMS and APRF on 30 September (Monday) from 3pm – 5pm at STAR.

Interested applicants can register for the briefing by [filling up this e-form](#). More information is also available from the STAR website or through the official notifications from the links given below. The closing date for all applications will be on 30 October 2013. We hope to have you on board!

Notifications and Useful Links

[Notification for APRF \(Available only on MOE Intranet\)](#)

[Notification for AMS \(Available only on MOE Intranet\)](#)

[Softcopy Application Forms and FAQs](#)

THE “SINGING CLASSROOM PROJECT”

Singing has been a fundamental practice of humanity from the beginnings of our existence, stemming from the basic human need for communication and self-expression. People from all over the world engage in singing for a multitude of purposes, but have we ever wondered how singing can directly benefit us as an individual and as part of a community?

Singing brings with it physiological and psychological benefits. It improves one's physical being through the practice of good breathing and posture, and develops one's confidence and self-efficacy. It is a multi-faceted activity that sculpts one's sense of social identity through interactions within and beyond a community - a critical life-skill in today's globalised society.

“The Singing Classroom Project” explores the effective use of singing as an integral music-making activity in our music classrooms. In the months of July and August, 14 of our STAR Associates from Primary, Secondary and Tertiary levels were invited on board to develop their capacity in engaging students musically through singing. The teachers were split into two groups: 10 teachers to pilot the strategies within the music classroom and 4 teachers to work with their school choirs. They were mentored by our Outstanding-Educators-in-Residence A/P Hong Xiangtang and Ms Mari Koistinen.

Through this mentoring process, the teachers developed a better understanding of good vocal technique and learnt how singing could be used to teach musical concepts in a way that is more engaging and enriching for students.

A/P Hong Xiangtang **Moody Bible Institute, USA**

Singing is a physical activity that involves the entire body. In a PE class, warm-ups in the form of muscle-stretching are done at the beginning to prevent injury, build stamina, and perhaps practice a certain skill that is part of the lesson activity later. Similarly, at the start of every music lesson, the students' minds, bodies and voices should be prepped. A healthy and vibrant singing culture emerges from singing classrooms where music teachers find ways for children to feel uninhibited in the use of their voices in creating and experiencing music. Routine physical and vocal warm-ups can be made fun and enjoyable to engage the students' imagination while developing their voices so that singing and movement become natural means of musical expression and experience.



Ms Mari Koistinen **Kuopion Yhteiskoulun** **Musiikkilukio, Finland**

When you have young children learning a new song or a difficult phrase in a piece of music, it is good to get them to 'follow' the music with their hands. They could do this tracing first with their eyes closed, and then again with their eyes open as they follow the melody and rhythm of the song. In this way, they will have a motoric way to relate to the music: listening, looking, feeling, and singing. It is also good to get the kids to practise moving or stepping to the pulse of the music as a group, while being focussed on the rhythmic subdivisions of the music in their head. When children experience music tangibly through exercises like these, they will develop a deeper understanding of musical concepts.



TEACHER REFLECTIONS IN THE "SINGING CLASSROOM PROJECT"



MS THEODORA HUANG
FAIRFIELD METHODIST SECONDARY SCHOOL

I encouraged students to listen and to make musical choices. They were given a say in how the musical phrase was shaped, and thus became invested in the outcome – generally, the sound was much improved with a greater level of energy and musicality.



MS JOSEPHINE CHAN
BUKIT VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Using sounds that were created by students during the warm-up activity gave them a sense of ownership. It is important that the vocal warm-up activity and development of the lesson should be connected for a coherent and effective lesson.



MRS ADELA TANDAR
JUYING PRIMARY SCHOOL

I managed to engage children musically throughout the lesson, starting and ending the lesson with a song. During the lesson, the children sang as part of their classroom discipline routine as well. However, I feel that I need to be more conscious of how I sing while demonstrating a song to be a good role model for the students.



MRS RACHEL TEOH
ANGLO CHINESE JUNIOR COLLEGE

Throughout the time with Mari, what stood out to me was:

- 1. the reminder to enjoy the music-making process;*
- 2. to use the whole body and mind (brain gym/ mental exercises which involve music). When the students are thoroughly engaged, the sound will naturally be fuller and rounder;*
- 3. Singers should sing with other voice parts to be more well-grounded in their pitching. This will also allow the choristers to interact and promote greater musical cohesiveness.*



THOUGHTS FROM A MASTER PEDAGOGUE

John R. Stevenson • Co-founder and co-director of the *Institute for Jaques-Dalcroze Education*



John R. Stevenson (Jack), co-founder and co-director of the Institute for Jaques-Dalcroze Education presents his thoughts in the following article - *The Crusis Lifts: An Experience in Simple and Compound Meter*. In this second part of three instalments, Stevenson discusses arm beat patterns for meters with three, four, and five or more beats.

Compound Meter

Swing and sway are the hallmark sensations of compound meter. The experiences of rolling, and rocking, are in direct contrast with the more angular sensations of simple meter. The fun thing about compound meter is that it has a tendency to evoke memories of our childhood when skipping, galloping, swinging, and swaying were part of our everyday locomotor life.

Because these sensations arise out of our childhood, some people mistake them for being childish rather than childlike. There is a sizable difference between the two: childish is defined as silly, immature, and inane while childlike is defined as natural, spontaneous, and uninhibited. Among the many attributes of the Jaques-Dalcroze approach is its ability to evoke the child in each of us by working to unveil the movement of our youth, the movement that was once our natural and uninhibited response to our environment. Every Dalcrozian seeks to rekindle this childlike behavior not only in themselves, but in every student. It is this behavior that reveals who we truly are as creative, uninhibited, and spontaneous artistic musicians, and compound meter does a great job in helping to peel back the multiple layers of adulthood.

Compound meter has several properties that are linked to the physical domain. To perform in this metric structure musically, one will need to have first experienced it and only then come to understand it.

Dotted Beat Notes and Divisions

The compound beat has three divisions, which means that the beat note must have a dot attached to it. There are two types of notes in the music world; those with dots and those without dots. Those with dots are divisible by three, while those without dots are divisible by two. Beat-note values without dots are used in simple time signatures, while beat-note values with dots are used in compound time signatures.

The second attribute concerns the divisions. As stated above, the beat is composed of three divisions in compound meter. It is the aspect of three that evokes the circular, swinging, and swaying sensations in the body. When music in compound meter is heard it incites individuals to swing and sway. On the other hand, when listening to music in simple meter the body will want to move in angular or straight lines with sharp corners at the ictus. Learning to

read the body's physical responses will allow individuals to identify the time signature quickly and accurately.

Time Signatures (Reinvented)

Time signatures in compound meter are written differently than those in simple meter. Simple meter time signatures focus on beats, while compound meter time signatures focus on divisions. Therefore, the top number in compound meter describes the number of divisions, and the bottom number describes the note value that depicts division.

In the simple meters of $3/4$, $4/4$, $2/2$, $3/8$ for example, the bottom numbers represent specific note values. The number 4 represents the quarter note, the number 2 represents the half note, and the number 8 represents the eighth note. However, in the compound meters of $6/8$, $9/8$, and $12/8$, the bottom number, eight (the eighth note) is not the beat, but rather the division.

This is clear because of internal reactions during listening. These internal reactions do not experience the eighth note as the beat note, but rather instinctively groups together three of the eighth notes into a single dotted quarter note. It is the grouping of three that produces the circular sensation linked to compound meter. Since the dotted note value is an uneven division of a larger beat there is no whole number to represent it. Therefore, it becomes necessary to write the compound meter signatures using the division. The division of the dotted quarter note is the eighth note. Therefore, a two-beat compound meter is written as six divisions rather than two beats.

"We propose a new method of indicating the time of a piece at the beginning, or changes in the course of its development. In many cases the present signatures are neither clear nor consistent. In indicating a $3/4$ bar the figure 3 denotes the number of beats, and the 4 the duration of each beat; but in writing $6/8$ the figure 6, instead of denoting the number of beats, denotes their subdivisions. It would be preferable to utilise the first number to indicate consistently the number of beats, and to denote the duration of each beat by the symbol corresponding to that duration."¹

1. Jaques-Dalcroze, Emile. *Rhythm, Music and Education* (London, England: The Dalcroze Society, 1967) p 84.

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"The reinvention of the time signature is an innovation attributed to Jaques-Dalcroze. It projects the actual physical sensation of the music rather than its theoretical underpinnings. He uses this new system for both simple and compound meters. The following illustration is from Jaques-Dalcroze, Rhythm, Music and Education (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1921), "Musical Supplement."²

Example No. 2

compound meter		simple meter		
$\frac{6}{8} = \frac{2}{\bullet}$	$\frac{9}{8} = \frac{3}{\bullet}$	$\frac{2}{4} = \frac{2}{\bullet}$	$\frac{3}{4} = \frac{3}{\bullet}$	$\frac{4}{4} = \frac{4}{\bullet}$
$\frac{6}{4} = \frac{2}{\circ}$	$\frac{12}{8} = \frac{4}{\bullet}$	$C = \frac{4}{\bullet}$	$C = \frac{2}{\circ}$	$\frac{6}{4} = \frac{6}{\bullet}$

This illustration presents the most common compound time signatures as proposed by M. Jaques. The compound time signatures are used in this text.

Effects of Tempo

Tempo does affect our perception of compound meter. When the tempo quickens, the beat (dotted note value) loses the ability to evoke circular sensations and morphs into a non-dotted note value allowing the music to sound like a march of John Philip Sousa. In this instance the meter is not truly compound but rather simple, and the three divisions become free flowing triplets. On the other hand when the tempo slackens, the divisions morph into simple beats, and again evoke the sensations linked to simple meter.

Arm and Body Swing Patterns in Compound Meter


Two Beats

As stated earlier, swing and sway are the hallmark sensations of compound meter. These sensations are carried over into the arm beat patterns. In fact the arm beat patterns in compound meter are more often referred to as arms swing patterns because of the nature of the movements involved. However, the study of the arm swings is predicated on the study of the body swings, which involve the entire upper body including the knees, ankles, toes and heels. With ample space between the feet and the center of gravity lowered with a bend in the knees and a slight bend at the hips, each beat is generated by a lift of the weight from the heels to the balls of the feet, thereby creating a gesture that


moves upward from the floor and returns as if pulsating in a circle motion. Because of the circular movement it is difficult to pinpoint exactly where the ictus of each beat occurs. This is yet another characteristic of compound meter.



All three meters begin with the body bent over forward with the torso dangling from the hips, and the arms dangling from the shoulders. The knees and ankles are slightly bent, and the heels are slightly lifted and ready to generate the pulsations. The young man in the photo is in the perfect position. Imagine that he will toss the ball with both hand by lifting it from the floor. This image will provide the necessary information about how the movement is done. The toss or the crasis will initiate with a thrust of energy from the lower extremities and the body's core³, which will swing the body forward and up. As the body reaches the apex of the gesture allow the body to fall forward and down returning to the starting position. The arms, neck, and shoulders are all loose. No part of the body is placed into position, but rather thrown into position.

The entire movement provides an excellent experience for sensing how the crasis lifts and the anacrusis falls. As the movement is performed in a meter of 2 beats — $\frac{2}{\bullet}$. ($\frac{6}{8}$), think "swing up and down" to the following rhythm.  etc.

Three and Four Beats

In the compound triple meter of $\frac{3}{\bullet}$. ($\frac{9}{8}$) the crasis (beat one) begins in the same place thrusting the torso upward, but the metacrusis (beat 2) is indicated by a backward rotation of the arms from the shoulders before the torso falls forward again during the anacrusis (beat 3). Think "swing up - around and down" to the following rhythm.  In the compound quadruple meter of $\frac{4}{\bullet}$. ($\frac{12}{8}$) the crasis (beat one) begins in the same place thrusting

2. Bonus, Alexander Evan. The Metronomic Performance Practice: A History of Rhythm, Metronomes, and the Mechanization of Musicality, Ph.D Dissertation, Case Western Reserve University, 2010.
3. The center of the body that includes the muscles of the pelvis, and abdomen.

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the torso upward, but the post-crusic metacrusis (beat two) is a movement of parallel arms swing to the left then for the pre-anacrusic metacrusis (beat three) the arms circling back to rotate backward from the shoulders then for the anacrusis (beat four) the torso falls forward and down again. Think "swing up, over around and down" to the following rhythm.



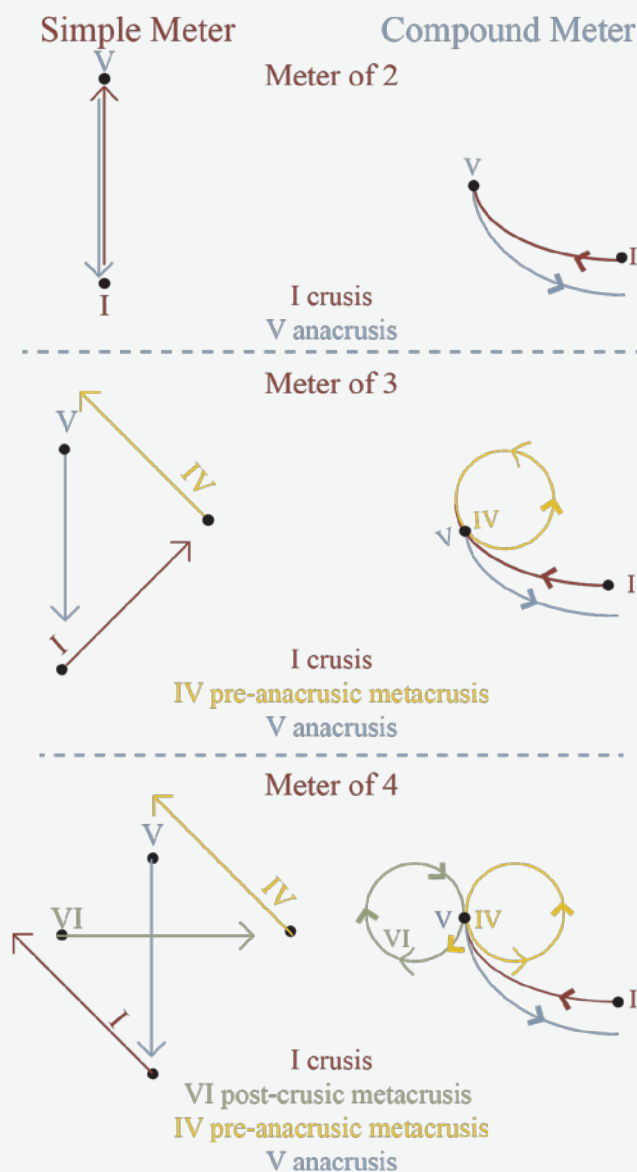
The arm swings are similar to the body swings but done with less energy. As in any movement the energy is generated out of the floor by the slight lift of the heels, and with the knees and ankles slightly bent. For a meter of two the crusic gesture begins with the arms outstretched toward the sides of the body and the elbows slightly bent. For the crusic launch the arms are swung forward and up only to fall loosely toward the starting position for the anacrusic beat. For the meter of three beats the eurhythmician inserts the metacrusic beat between the crusic and anacrusis by creating a circle with the arms generated from the elbows. The meter of four beats is accomplished by inserting a circle of the arms to the left for the post-crusic metacrusis.

The object of both the arm and body swings is to understand the stark difference between the sensation of simple meter and those of compound meter.

It is important musically and physically that these sensations are experienced, studied, analysed and clearly understood so that the interpretation of the metric integrity is maintained.

However, it requires practice. No one will gain the entire understanding of metric integrity experiencing one exercise done a few times. A variety of experiences and exercises is required over a larger portion of time. Practising the gestures and movements until they become inherent, and seem to be innate is a major goal of a Jaques-Dalcroze education. Only then will they all work together to effect every level of musical performance.

John R. Stevenson,
Diplôme Supérieur Jaques-Dalcroze
May 21, 2013, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania



P R O G R A M M E S

Milestone Programmes

Key mandatory programmes at key stages of the teaching career to achieve professional renewal, reinvention and positive transformation in teaching beliefs and practices.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
Orff Workshop (Secondary) *Fully Subscribed	28 October to 1 November 2013 STAR Blk K	CS1 and 2 Music Secondary teachers
Kodaly Workshop *Fully Subscribed	28 October to 1 November 2013 STAR Blk K	CS1, 2 and 3 Music Primary or Secondary teachers

Upskilling Programmes

Programmes to help teachers become qualified music teachers or upgrade teachers in preparation for taking on additional responsibilities.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
*Music Teachers Practitioner Programme – 6th Intake	Jan to May 2014 (deadline: 16 Sep 2013)	Primary Music Teachers (By school nomination)
*Advanced Diploma in Primary Music Education – 7th intake	Aug to Nov 2014 (deadline: 16 Sep 2013)	CS3 Primary Music Teachers or Teachers who have completed MTPP (By school nomination)

*Email invite to nominate has been sent to your Principals. Do let them know if you are keen to come on board.

Supporting Programmes

Programmes to develop teacher-leaders' pedagogical leadership.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
Composing with World Music Workshop by Andy Gleadhill *Fully Subscribed	1st Run: 21 October 2013 2nd Run: 22 October 2013 3rd Run: 23 October 2013 3:00pm to 6:00pm STAR Blk K Lvl 3	CS1, 2 and 3 Music Primary and Secondary teachers

Supporting Schemes

In collaboration with National Arts Council.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
Briefing on the Artist-Mentor Scheme (AMS) and Arts Pedagogical Research Fund (APRF)	30 Sep 2013 3:00pm to 4:00pm (AMS) 4:00pm to 5:00pm (APRF) STAR	Interested Art, Dance, Drama & Music Teachers Register your interest by clicking HERE .

Communities of Practice (CoP)

Programmes that are premised on collaboration and sharing to collectively improve music skills and/or teaching practices.

NAME OF COP	DETAILS	CONTACT
Teachers' Choir	Every Tuesday 4:00 to 6:00pm, Blk K Level 3 STAR Recital Studio	* We welcome all teachers and Allied Educators to participate in the CoPs. Please contact our Programme Executive Ms Tan Bee Ngoh (Tan_Bee_Ngoh@moe.gov.sg) and let her know your area of interest.
Javanese Gamelan Ensemble	Every Thursday 4:00 to 6:00pm, Blk K Level 2 STAR Gamelan Studio	
Teachers' Chamber Orchestra	Every Friday 3:00pm to 5:30pm, Blk K Level 1 STAR Music Workshop	
Teachers' Guitar / Ukulele Ensemble *New!	Please register your interest by clicking HERE	

WHAT'S ON AT STAR



Beginning Teachers' Support Programme

A warm welcome to our beginning teachers into our fraternity of music teachers!

Our Beginning Teachers congregated at STAR in August for the BT Support Programme, where they were able to gain pedagogical advice and emotional support from experienced music teachers.

It was also a good time of networking and catching-up for them as they met as a cohort for the first time since graduating from NIE.

Opportunities like these are invaluable for us as music teachers as it can get rather lonely for us in our field of work, especially if we are the only music teacher in school!



WHAT'S ON AT STAR



Communities of Practice

It is important for music teachers to keep practising and performing their art form. At STAR, music teachers can remain as active practitioners through our Communities of Practice (CoP).



Do join us for our Teachers' Choir, Javanese Gamelan Ensemble, and Teachers' Chamber Orchestra sessions.



We are also looking to set up a Teachers' Guitar & Ukulele Ensemble. If you are interested to be involved or have a proposal for a new CoP, do contact us! (email: Lennie_Chua@moe.gov.sg)

To subscribe to STAR-POST (Music), please contact STAR (Music) Team:

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