



A letter from Board Chair—Cheryl Drewes

Dear friends,

This is my first letter as the president of Jump Into Music. Leading with me, are some of the most dedicated people I know: Beth Ann Johnson (Vice President and Secretary) Kevin Peterson (Treasurer) and Joan Kohler (Member at Large).

We have been together from the start, first as a small pilot program at Mountain View Lutheran Church, Edgewood, beginning in 2012. Now we are an established non-profit celebrating our fifth anniversary this year, and what a year it has been, profoundly altered by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. And yet, we persevere, true to our mission, because in these trying times, music is even more important in the life of a child.

Indeed, it has been a time to press on, conquer the technological learning curve, and gear up for online private music lessons. For me as piano teacher, there were so many unknowns, and ironically, “Jump Into Music” became much more a “leap of faith,” with lots of questions which can be boiled down to one – how can I possibly do this?

In retrospect, it has been a rewarding experience, with new questions. What are we learning while continuing in our work, challenged as we are by pandemic restrictions put in place for everyone’s safety? How have these limitations become avenues of growth in musicianship, maturity and compassion for the students and teachers? Where will these paths lead in a post pandemic world?

My students have shown themselves to be mindful and patient with distance learning, adapting to the new normal with grace and the required initiative needed for a successful online lesson. During ordinary time, it is usually the teacher who writes lesson assignments in student notebooks, annotates music scores for interpretation, and marks sections for extra practice. Now, this task is the student’s responsibility, and one that I intend to require even when in-person lessons resume. As well, the students have proven themselves very capable of developing proper technique by mirroring my motions even if from only a computer screen. It is not as thorough as when taught in person, but the fundamentals are developed, thanks to the student’s intuitive attention to details of movement. Not surprisingly, active listening acuity is enhanced when visual cues are limited, refining a vital musical skill while also opening a path toward true empathy.

I am most proud of my students, who while navigating the reality of the pandemic, are learning life-long skills of awareness, compassion and initiative through these online lessons. In deepest gratitude, we thank you, our supporters. By your continued donations and words of encouragement, you help us bring private music lessons to students who would otherwise not be able to afford them; lessons that we truly believe are life changing.

Thank you for your support!

Board of Directors

Cheryl Drewes
Board President/Treasurer

Kevin Peterson
Treasurer

Beth Ann Johnson
Vice President/Secretary

Joan Kohler
Board Member

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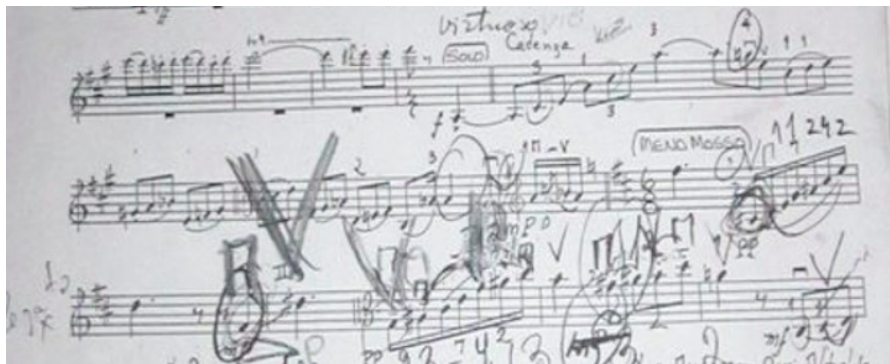
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Messing Up the Music—Kevin Peterson

When I teach piano lessons I require all of my students to have a pencil on the piano before I will start a lesson. From their very first lesson I coach students on the importance of making pencil markings in their music. This starts with their names in the books, and then progresses to lots of finger numbers, note names, arrows, definitions, translations, circling, and so on; the more advanced the music, the more markings are necessary. Additionally, many book series that we teachers now use for private music lessons have loads of extra activities in the books for students to do, especially in supplemental theory books, that require lots of pencil markings.

That said, I notice that there are almost no new markings made in the music by students in between their lessons. Instead of chalking this up to (only) laziness, I've come to believe that students don't write in their music in large part because they're embarrassed, or more to the point, they don't want the visual, physical reminder that they've messed up. To them, seeing a pencil marking on the page is a scarlet letter to wear during any subsequent practicing, reminding them that they weren't practicing correctly. To them, every new marking made during practice is an admittance of failure.

Au contraire! At least once a year I bring around my own music scores, in particular ones from when I was a music performance major in college (Bach fugues with full analysis in the score are a favorite of mine, along with the Debussy Preludes). I also inform them that if the Seattle Symphony members each have a pencil on their stands during rehearsal, certainly we should, too. Additionally, study after study confirms that students who hand-write their class notes instead of typing them, and those who make their own flash cards instead of buying them, learn significantly better, and faster. This is partly due to the physical act of doing it, partly because the person has to take ownership of their action, and partly because it forces students to process as they go instead of simply transcribing or mentally checking out.



The frustration and shame students feel when seeing a physical reminder of their mistakes is no accident. We have created a culture in which we celebrate perfection, the greatest among us, and not the effort or the process it takes to get there. Part of my job as a teacher and as a musician is not to encourage perfection, but to encourage personal growth, transparency, effort, process, and

grit. These are the values that will serve our students - and their communities and future selves- far more than perfection or idolatry. Music is a discipline not in the sense of punitive action to sub-par performance, but instead of helping foster growth mindset and a positive attitude in a culture that seeks to berate, often subtly and subconsciously, and keep us stuck in the mud.

Maybe the biggest point of all this, ironically, is that making markings in the score helps students keep our heads out of it, and really lets the music jump off the page and come alive- and as the music does, so does their spirits and their souls.



Don't put Music on Hold: the Power of Lessons in a pandemic

In March 2020, when the Covid 19 Pandemic cancelled school, church, and sports, it also cancelled in person music lessons. But music is too important to simply set it to the side or a few weeks (which have now turned into months). Working with our families and instructors, after a few weeks we were able to resume online music lessons.

Some might ask “why bother?”.

The vision of Jump Into Music has always been to ensure that children of all ages have access to quality music lessons regardless of ability to pay for those lessons. Why would we let a little thing like a pandemic stop us?

Thanks to modern technology (ZOOM), many of our students are able to continue their one-on-one lessons online from the comfort of their home, using a cell phone or lap top. There are distractions, like siblings, parents and yes, pets wandering through a lesson. But there are also benefits: lessons on ZOOM can be recorded, so the student can go back listen/view the recording when they want, allowing the students to hear the encouraging words of an instructor throughout the week, and enabling them to review key points, such as hand position, or practice assignments.

While there are “free” lessons available on platforms like YouTube, they are not individualized to the student. Giving lessons on ZOOM allows our instructors to continue to give individualized lessons that meet the student where they are, as well as help provide the students with motivation. This helps improve the student's self confidence.

This winter, our students will be performing their first “Zoom” recital. Normally, we invite all of our supporters and friends to our recitals, but since this is our first one, we will be keeping it to students, teachers, and their families. It is a bit like a “Dress Rehearsal”: Performing in public is an important step for our young musicians, and we want to be sure that we work out any technology glitch before we open our “show” to the public. If it goes well, we hope to do another “Zoom Recital” in the spring, and open it to a larger crowd!





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Thanks to our community partners including:



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Our Mission:

To give every child the opportunity to nurture their innate musical abilities, guided by enthusiastic and compassionate teachers, without regard to financial circumstance or demographics, empowering each child to be a positive influence in the world.