

Current Trends in Teaching Music Appreciation: A Roundtable

THE EDITORS

Music Appreciation (an introduction to music for non-music majors) is a frequent course assignment for many music historians, but many musicologists may not have actually taken the course in their own studies before being asked to teach it. While often taught as a historical survey for non-musicians (“music history lite”), new course materials and approaches are now available which offer new methodologies and pedagogies. Previously, the *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* invited several authors of music history textbooks to contribute to an issue of the journal;¹ we recently repeated this invitation to several authors of music appreciation textbooks for inclusion in the current issue.

The following essays present personal narratives on the motivations for writing new appreciation textbooks that provide more insight and context than the introductions to the texts themselves. Steven Cornelius and Mary Nativig (co-authors of *Music: A Social Experience*) describe the students they teach in their classes before addressing the central questions they seek to answer in their pedagogy (“What do we want our students to know and why do we want them to know it?”). They go on to describe not only their pedagogical philosophy, but also provide insight into the student assignments (such as personal interviews and analyses of period sheet music) and tests they give.

Thomas Forrest Kelly explains how his recently published music appreciation book, *Music Then and Now*, developed from his popular *First Nights* course and text. The process of producing the new book gave him hopes for “a book that sings . . . that produced the music just as you were reading about it” and also reinforced for him the essential role of the teacher in the classroom as a “fellow listener” with the students.

1. “The Textbook Issue,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 1, no. 2 (2011), <http://www.ams-net.org/ojs/index.php/jmhp/issue/view/11>.

2 *Journal of Music History Pedagogy*

Robin Wallace describes a skills-based approach to music appreciation as the core of his forthcoming *Take Note: An Introduction to Music through Active Listening*. He recounts his personal relationship with one of the most important music appreciation authors of the previous generation, Joseph Machilis, who “lived just downstairs from my grandparents.” From those origins, Wallace retraces his own experiences teaching music appreciation which have lead him to the balancing of musical form, history, and listening skills he employs in his own teaching.