

**Higher Music Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:  
Developing young musicians' artistry during the time of  
classical music's uncertain future**

Kyung W. Kang  
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Kyungnet@gmail.com

## I. Abstract

Are we not formed, as notes of music are,  
for one another, though dissimilar?  
~ Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Epipsychidion*

As we were approaching the 21<sup>st</sup> century, leading American music schools were searching for a new paradigm for higher music education. With the emergence and rise of popular music and music classes being cut from the public school systems, the audience for classical music was significantly shrinking. Furthermore, as the world was going through rapid changes, technologically, economically, politically, socially, and culturally, classical music was facing an uncertain future. The leadership within the important institutions sought after a new trend of training classical musicians by placing increased emphasis on liberal arts classes. These schools were first established by following the educational model of European music conservatories with a long tradition of performance training outside of academic structure. The origin of the conservatory structure is closer to a vocational training center for would-be professional musicians.

It is a fact that the way in which the world receives classical music is vastly different from the days when the conservatory system was deemed with unquestionable value. The changes of the contemporary world posed insurmountable ramifications to the field of classical music. The audiences for classical music have been decreasing to an extent that the field itself is increasingly becoming peripheral and off the radar from the prevalent culture of America. With diminishing listeners for both live and recorded music at hand, performance presenters were faced with having to reduce the number of presentations or close down the series completely. As the discipline was losing the listeners, supporters, and the public interest, the paying performance opportunities and jobs were also disappearing. Today, the market is significantly smaller, yet American music schools are producing a greater number of graduates today than ever before. There are a number of data sources showing how hard it is to get a full-time job in performance, and one study claims that fewer than 10% of conservatory-trained graduates get a full-time job in performance in their lifetime (1). Therefore, educational leaders believed the need for improvement and sought out ways to further develop the current curriculum with the objective of better preparing their graduates to meet today's challenging world.

There had been strong voices calling attention to the importance of producing an all-around musician and an all-around person, and the general consensus began to develop as the all-around education to be the answer to today's problems. After all, John Erskine's educational philosophy of General Honors course which later expanded to form undergraduate's Core Curriculum, a two-year study of the humanities, had gained a place and was already incorporated in the curriculum of every American university (2). For music schools, the rationale for a greater focus on liberal arts curriculum plus minimal business courses for career building lay mainly in three areas: 1) to better develop young musicians' artistry: the outcome would empower the graduates to stand out among peers, and thus fare better in today's competitive job market, 2) to better prepare them for life

skills, and 3) to enable them to be equipped and responsive to the rapidly changing conditions of the field. The first point had to be based on the assumption that the humanities study was an efficacious medium for one's cognitive development upon which artistic imagination was drawn. The majority of American music schools since have adopted the premise, and liberal arts curriculum and the humanities classes have become an integral part of undergraduate studies.

The new trend came with benefits and costs. It brought on support and objection from both faculty and students. With the added focus on liberal arts study, many students found less time to practice in their schedule. Since playing an instrument requires a highly advanced form of physical control, a degree similar to a gymnast, there is a potential window of time, physiologically and kinesiology, in the course of a life that one can develop the technical facilities in big strides. The undergraduate years are almost the last stretch of this period, and thus a critical stage to devote one's time to practicing the instrument. While the new focus could be beneficial for many students, it also functioned as extraneous to those who just wanted to practice as much as possible in order to get their playing level up. Furthermore, a high-quality humanistic study taught in English requires English proficiency for the class work, the point that drove the schools to qualify foreign students' English comprehension levels as an admission requirement. Previously, the applicants were evaluated solely based on their audition (performance ability), but now, they were required to submit TOEFL (The Test of English as a Foreign Language) scores. As it is customary and necessary for most aspiring young music students to spend several hours of practicing every day, they also are less likely as a group to allocate enough time and participation to academic classes during high school. Therefore, many outstanding players from abroad could not meet the TOEFL score requirement and were denied admission to the American conservatories whereas they would have passed with flying colors prior to the paradigm shift. In the past, foreign students from the countries where classical music was not developed, for the most part, went back after completing their studies and became the leaders in building the classical music scene in their nations making immeasurable contributions. This was even so for musically thriving countries of today such as Japan and Korea. Under today's admission's system, so many of these leaders would not have had a chance to study in America. So there were certain gains to be had by implementing the philosophy of producing an all-around person, but the change also caused the American music schools to become more rigid, inflexible and less conducive to train star-soloist types of students or even admitting them.

After research into the situation and interviewing a number of administrators, faculty members, and students, it was evident that the gifts came in dissimilar capacities, qualities, and characters. Different types of education worked for different talents and no one structure could work sweepingly. Therefore, I have concluded that we need to make more allowances in the ways we recognize how differently the individual talents may assimilate knowledge and develop intellectually and artistically, and more flexibility is necessary in designing their educational passage. Taking all this into consideration, my research led me to propose an education paradigm based on the following four precepts so as to solve some of the problems of the current curriculum and to better prepare the

music majors for the contemporary world. The recommendation is for America's higher music education, specifically for classical music instrumental majors in undergraduate program today.

- I. Flexible Education.  
Flexible Education would be based on structuring flexible and adaptable curriculums instead of rigid and fixed programs. A humanistic approach to solutions would be sought out instead of computer-fed solutions like processing binary solutions. The flexibility will enable schools to provide individualized and tailored curriculum for different types of talents as well as to admit a small number of special students who may already have performing careers and foreign students who demonstrate the highest level of performance, but do not show English proficiency yet.
- II. Generous Education.  
Generous Education would be based on providing a comprehensive educational and life-preparatory experience. Students would be supported beyond present means to excel in school and also professionally.
- III. Convergence Education.  
Convergence Education would be based on integrating various disciplinary principles, technologies, and philosophies into music classes and vice versa. Furthermore, convergence of civic duty, community service and music could be designed.
- IV. Divergence Education  
Divergence Education would be designed with a goal of providing an intellectual and artistic depository of great wealth for the mind that is unique and distinct to local heritage and tradition.

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## II. Introduction

There were two issues that prompted me to become interested in the subject of educating young musicians initially: First, we all hear about how prodigies have a difficult time sustaining their careers and making successful transitions into adulthood. Due to the required commitment to their art, child prodigies' educational path is intensely focused, but narrow, and they lead tightly managed lives. If music prodigies receive all-around education, can they become more resilient in life, thus increasing the possibility for career longevity? Secondly, when American music schools were making a paradigm shift – breaking away from the traditional European conservatory system, and turning to liberal arts programming as a solution to increasing student's artistry, thus hoping they would stand out and have a better chance at finding and even creating employment – South Korea launched its first national music conservatory modeling it after old European style training as a solution to educate and produce artists. So what would be the best education for the contemporary world?

### a. Child Prodigies and Career Longevity

It is my desire and hope to win honor, fame and money.  
~ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

In the world of business, sustainability strategy and corporate longevity are today's much-discussed topics. Because the chances of companies surviving beyond 50 years are bleakly slim, business administration strategies have evolved from profit-oriented to longevity-conscious in recent years. In the world of child prodigies, even long before the business world brought up the word longevity, it has been widely recognized that the career survival rate for these prodigies is faint. Narrowing it down to the music field, by now, we have seen repeatedly that the probability of an instrumentalist prodigy maturing into a distinguished artist is a daunting chance. Supposedly, world-renowned violinist Itzhak Perlman has said, "For every child prodigy that you know about, at least 50 potential ones have burned out before you even heard about them." Even for those who make it to adulthood, the majority do not seem to be able to sustain their meteoric careers for long. Of those I personally know, many seem to have experienced disproportionate emotional difficulties, although we all know someone's misery is very personal, and one cannot assign universal significance to specific miseries. It is a fact that regardless of the amount of talent and success one is blessed with, no one is exempted from the trials and tests accompanying life. That is a part of life. So I imagined a question: what if these prodigies balanced their time management a little differently? For instance, even if one develops as a slightly less virtuosic player as a result of reduced practice time, had that time been allotted to social activities to acquire life-negotiating skills or to liberal arts coursework to yield better cognitive development, could the artist have turned out to be a more balanced person and performer? Would that balance make the person stronger and

better equipped to deal with life, and not get debilitated as easily? In so doing, by being more resilient, could a longer career result?

I came across a number of music prodigies in my life. Some, I had a chance to be acquainted with starting from their early childhood and some I met when they were already adults. In order to be an accomplished instrumentalist from a young age, one has to dedicate long hours of practice time every day to attain the required physiological control. Therefore, prodigies necessarily prioritize their activities; devoting enormous time and energy to their musical training, and in the process, end up sacrificing normal childhood activities such as socializing, general studying, and playtime to a large degree. This results in diminished opportunities for experiencing social- and life negotiations. What's more, such prodigies tend to be subjected to an extraordinary amount of ongoing praise and adulation, so even difficult interactions do not call upon them to summon the usual conciliatory efforts with others or themselves. One can imagine that these settings deprive them of the types of self-discovery that can only be achieved through reciprocal dynamics with others. On the other hand, the advantages of spending time practicing alone help gain self-discipline, self-critique, and perfectionism. Overall, even when granting that everyone's life is a unique, one-of-a-kind experience, those of the child prodigy must be thought of as extraordinary and unbalanced when compared with broader conventional existence.

The most historically renowned musical prodigy must be Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. His father, Leopold, recognized his son's talent early on and was determined to make something of him. Young Mozart was a huge sensation, and the royals and aristocrats of Europe fawned over him. One can only imagine the adulation he was accustomed to as a child! Essentially, Mozart was on tour from ages 6 to 17. He received no formal education, but absorbed knowledge voraciously from visiting places as well as meeting great minds and composers while on tour. At the age of 25, he moved out of his father's home in Salzburg and settled on his own in Vienna, writing to his father, "[...] it is my desire and hope to win honor, fame and money." At Mozarthaus, his residence at one point and now a museum, many details of his life and letters are thoughtfully displayed. The current exhibition (January – May, 2012) is titled *Between Fear and Hope – Mozart's rise and fall in the Viennese society*. The fall refers to the point in time when Mozart composed his new opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*. Due to his satirizing of the lifestyle and culture of contemporary aristocrats in Figaro, they gradually withdrew their support of him. According to the exhibition, Mozart was the first composer to finance his life as an independent artist. For one of the concerts Mozart organized and presented himself, he wrote to his father the names of 173 attendees in an attempt to show how successful he was. Think of someone actually writing down by hand 173 names and the titles! Mozart must have been intensely driven to seek his father's approval, but his father became upset and disapproving upon hearing of the fallouts among the aristocrats. That must have made Mozart particularly insecure and even more fragile. Mozart's letters and historical events show that he was not psychologically mature enough to reconcile all of the emerging internal and external conflicts, and to emerge from these setbacks with positive self-regard. I can only imagine that when excessive adulation becomes the norm of life, even the conventional norm could register as a most devastating fall from grace,



let alone the rejections he encountered. The inner intensity of emotions does not have to correlate or be commensurate with exterior events. I could not escape thinking, if perhaps Mozart's father had assigned a higher value to a rounded and balanced education, even if at the expense of his musical expectations, Mozart might have been better prepared for society and life. By being able to manage his life resiliently, could he have sustained a longer career and even greater longevity? By having time on his side, could he actually have written more and left us more of his priceless legacy?

### b. Music Education Paradigm

When we categorize higher education for classical musicians, there are two archetypes of schools. One is conservatory and the other, university music department. University music departments originally emphasized academic study of music, and although greater emphasis is placed today on performance, the work of academic importance is a long-held tradition. On the other hand, the origin of the conservatory is closer to a vocational training center for would-be professional musicians, mostly outside of academic structure. Although the first professional music school in history, the Scholar Cantorum (papal choir), was established by the Roman Catholic Church and dates back to the late 7<sup>th</sup> century, the term Conservatory derives from the Renaissance period (16th century) in Italy. At the time, orphanages were attached to hospitals, and the orphans (conservati) were given a musical education. In fact, Vivaldi (1678-1741) was a priest who gave musical training to the orphans at Pio Ospedale della Pietà (Devout Hospital of Mercy) in Venice where he served as the master of violin. He was known as the "red priest" for his red hair, and his orphanage orchestra was one of the most famous touring musical groups in his time. Furthermore, a number of his students became famous soloists in Europe. Vivaldi's orchestra epitomizes the success of conservatory training. Over the years, the term conservatory was gradually applied to music schools whether the name incorporated the word "conservatory" or not. (e.g. College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati vs. Manhattan School of Music) Today, in the United States, the word conservatory is casually used to describe a college-level educational institution devoted to the study of classical music, but also to differentiate from the other paradigm, university music department. The students who seek conservatory schooling have goals of becoming professional performers.

American music schools were first established taking an educational model after the traditional European conservatory. In fact, the most renowned American music school, The Juilliard School (3), was founded in 1905 with a mission so that, "American musicians should not have to go abroad for advanced study, and [the founder] created the Institute as an American music academy that would provide an educational experience comparable to that of the established European conservatories" The said European curriculum is filled with performance-related classes (private instruction, chamber music, orchestra) and music theory based classes (ear training, music analysis, music history), but without any of the subjects that form today's liberal arts core curriculum (literature,

history, math, science, expository writing) in universities. However, within the last twenty years or so, American music conservatories have been diverging from the European conservatory curriculum, and working toward incorporating and putting an emphasis on study of the humanities along with electives in music business as a solution to better prepare the graduates in the changing world, which is another issue and will be covered later. So about the time when American music schools were diverging from the European model, the South Korean government launched its first music conservatory in the style of traditional European education, but more accurately, it was modeled after the past paradigm of America's leading institutions. The rationale behind it was so that the South Korean young musicians do not have to go abroad for their musical education. Classical music training has been big in South Korea, and arguably, it is recognized as a musically advanced country because in the recent years, the prizewinners at any of the prestigious international competitions will almost surely include some young Korean musicians. This was an interesting occurrence, and I started to wonder which model prepared young musicians better for today's world, and what effects did each archetype produce on students' development.

### **III. Classical Music in Contemporary America**

A number of statistics show that classical music in America has been losing its audience steadily, and its result is a shrinking market. Loyal audiences, comprised of older generations, have been gradually retiring from attending concerts due to inevitable physical immobility. With music classes being cut from the American education system in recent history, the majority of the young generation have not acquired a taste for this kind of music. Therefore, there has not been an infusion of new blood to make up for the loss. As the market is decreasing, the presenters are pressured to show the commercial success over artistic success, and furthermore, the climate is inauspicious to consider making any investments based on future artistic success. Thus, the productions are becoming more and more polarized between presenters who can afford and manage the feat by featuring star artists who attract mass interest and participation and smaller as well as regional presenters featuring lesser-known to unknown artists. Consequently, the bottom rungs are unsustainable and disappearing, making classical music more marginal and off the radar from the prevalent culture of America.

### a. The Classical Market

The decline of audience members and financial support for classical music in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century dramatically shrank the concert market in the United States. Due to not being financially viable, many smaller regional concert series closed down and some larger ones reduced the number of presentations. Columbia Artists Management's subdivision Community Concerts Service booked their artists to 376 communities across the United States in the late thirties. After facing a couple decades of dwindling stages and the company ownership duly having been passed around to several different enterprises, the operation finally closed down in 2002. American orchestras are particularly having difficulty as corroborated by the recent bankruptcy declarations and the fold of orchestras such as the Philadelphia, Detroit, Syracuse, and Louisville Orchestras and the Honolulu Symphony. In 2011, New York City Opera found itself in a serious financial predicament. The company moved out of Lincoln Center after 46 years of residency and drastically reduced the number of performances just to stay alive, but it is evident that New York City Opera 2012 is not the same institution as it was in 2010 when comparing the scale of its programs, productions, and operations. It is a startling discovery that America's cultural iconic institutions such as the Philadelphia Orchestra and New York City Opera are becoming nonviable, but perhaps that is a sign of the times we live in as companies in private sectors also chance a short life expectancy rate. However, one stark difference is, in music, the new start-ups are seldom, and the history proves that it has taken decades to build a leading performance organization whereas in the private sector, companies can achieve the pinnacle status within just a few years such as Facebook, Youtube, etc. On the whole, the orchestras and performing organizations that have gone under have rarely been replaced, and consequently, there are fewer extant jobs today for performance majors than there were three and four decades ago.

Some simple statistics show how hard it must be for today's music majors to find employment in the performing field when you consider the number of music performance major graduates, 6,822 in 2008-09 alone. If you consider 35 years as one's average working life span, we get a performance workforce of 238,770 in the US. When you consider the fact that the professional orchestras take up a significant portion of the performing employment positions, and there are only 51 professional orchestras with 4,000 plus collective personnel in the US (4), it is not surprising to hear about stories being circulated in the industry of a couple thousand applications coming in for 1 to 2 job openings for a major orchestra. The highest paid orchestra in 2011 was the Chicago Symphony Orchestra with an annual starting salary of \$144,040 for 52-week employment. The lowest paid was also based in Chicago, the Grand Park Symphony, a part-time orchestra working only 10 weeks during the summer, with an annual starting salary of \$12,127 (4).

National Center for Education Statistics:

Bachelor's, master's, and doctor's degrees conferred by degree-granting institutions, by student and discipline division: 2008-09			
Discipline division	Bachelor's degrees	Master's degrees	Doctor's degrees (Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.)
	Total	Total	Total
Music performance, general	4,087	2,326	409

In 1992, in her thesis, *Training Musicians and Developing People: Can A Music Conservatory Do it All?* Donna Jean Plasket wrote, “fewer than ten percent of conservatory trained musicians who dream of becoming full-time performing musicians ever realize that life.”

In 2004, Juilliard’s centennial year, the *New York Times* published an article called, “The Juilliard Effect: Ten Years later.” The author, Daniel J. Wakin followed the class of 1994. Excluding pianists, of the 44 instrumentalists who graduated that year, Wakin was able to trace 36 alumni. The 24 working in the music profession and the remaining 12 were no longer in professional music performance jobs, but working in careers ranging from being an English teacher in Japan to a public relations assistant to an insurance underwriter. For America’s most prestigious music school with a 7.4 percent admission rate, the employment rate gives us a glimpse of the overall depressed job market for the classical instrumental majors. The article also quotes the special pride and privileged feelings of these students for having been admitted to and for having graduated from Juilliard as well as conveying the high hopes they had at the beginning.

b. The Relevance

Without music, life would be a mistake.  
~ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols; And, The Anti-Christ*

So what are the values classical music proffers to today’s society? Why do we need to preserve the dying discipline or should we regard it as the process of cultural selection and let it take its own course of irrelevance to death?

There are a plethora of studies that show the benefits of classical music. On a more practical and immediate plane, there are research results that show classical music contributing to one’s cognitive development. Mozart Effects, a famous study, claims that a person, after listening to Mozart’s music, gets a higher score on a spatial intelligence test. However, the researchers obtained similar results, although not as

much of a jump in the score, from many other styles of music including that of Yanni whose music does not fall into the category of classical music.

On a deeper level, there are records of how classical music provided relief and hope to the prisoners during the holocaust, to both the performers and listeners. Alice Herz Sommer was an accomplished pianist in Prague when she was taken to a holocaust camp, Theresienstadt. It was a Nazi propaganda camp designed to show the outside world how well the Jews were treated. There, the artists were made to perform, paint, etc. and were filmed. Sommer performed over 100 concerts including playing all Chopin etudes. Now 107 years old, she says, "It was the only thing that made me to have hope. Music is god." One of the audience members at the time Zinker says, "[her performance] gave moral support, not entertainment. It is a bigger value (5)."

On the other hand, one of the important criticisms of classical music is that it is for the elite. There is truth to it as found in the thoughts of Arnold Schoenberg, an illustrious composer who left his mark in music history. "If it is art, it is not for all," he later wrote, "and if it is for all, it is not art (6)." David Cronenberg says, "Art forms of the past were really considered elitist. Bach did not compose for the masses, neither did Beethoven. It was always for patrons, aristocrats, and royalty. Now we have a sort of democratic version of that, which is to say that the audience is so splintered in its interests (7)."

I find that all of the above reasoning is valid within certain context. Learning to play classical music and listening to it will aid mental and cognitive developments. But, so will many other forms of study. Classical music can touch and move someone in profound ways, but the same can be said of other art forms too. Classical music is not for the elite only, but it certainly is intellectually more challenging to understand than popular music because of the complexity and sophistication of the form. For instance, there can be sections upon sections without any catchy melody. So the listener would have to invest multiplicity of listening time to understand and appreciate it. When you consider a symphony often lasting thirty minutes or longer and it includes many sections without apparent tunes, you can presume that it may require an inquiring mind to invest the time and effort to listen.

In addition to the personal benefits listed above, we also should look at what it means to have it as part of our cultural heritage and artistic ecosystem. In that sense, the form should be advocated based on why we should have it, but more importantly, why we could not have it as a lost art. It would be similar to losing the works of Shakespeare or Sophocles. There are many forms and levels of literature that tell good stories from which morality can be drawn, even from formulaic romance to mysteries. However, in the works of Shakespeare and Sophocles, there are layers and layers of understanding to be gotten, and when enough time is invested in it to be so well versed, these works shed light on the complex and multiplex nature of humanity so comprehensively and profoundly that they transcend what can be achieved by easier reading or popular materials. Thus, regardless of how many audiences they attract, its value for the sake of art and humanity exists. Therefore, it would be important to preserve it as part of our artistic ecosystem. After all, without the heritage of the classical literature, some of

today's entertaining novel writers may not exist either. Works of Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart, to Mahler and to Kurtag, all serve the same purpose. It is a demanding form of music for listeners, now even more so than ever because we live in an instant gratification culture and so many forms of entertainment are available, but at the same time, its offerings being unique and profound cannot be obtained from other types of easy listening music. And even in the western pop world, there probably is not an artist that has not been influenced by the harmonies of Mozart and Beethoven whether consciously or unconsciously.

#### **IV. Higher Music Education in Today's America**

As performing jobs are filled by auditions and the sole basis for assessment is the quality of performance, the foremost concern for American music schools is to design an educational paradigm that will enhance their graduates performing level to make them stand out among other candidates. Today's young artists already perform at a higher level of technical proficiency than previous generations of musicians. Since technical deficiency is not a problem to address for the majority, improving their artistry has been sought out as a solution. In an effort to achieve this, there has been an increasing trend within American music conservatories toward putting an emphasis on study of the humanities along with electives in music business in the last two decades or so. Previously, the focus of these institutions had been on developing students' performance skills, and consequently, the curriculum was comprised primarily of performance-related classes. The stated missions in the past were about "educating young musicians for careers as performing artists;" whereas, today, more and more institutions are adopting goals such as "artistic, personal, and intellectual growth" and "producing cultural leaders (8)."

##### **a. The New Trend**

During the time of classical music's uncertain future, many of the leading educators have called attention to the training goal for young musicians in higher education – skill-oriented versus developing artistry. Two of America's most influential educators are also the pathfinders of the cause. Joseph Polisi (9), the President of the Juilliard School implemented more serious liberal arts curriculum for his school, and Leon Botstein, the President of Bard College and the conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra have been publicly championing the cause. In the article, "The Training of Musicians" published in *The Musical Quarterly* in 2000, Botstein points out the problems of today's American conservatory education and calls for a "fundamental rethinking of professional training." He writes that there is a crucial need today for the musicians to deliver special meaning otherwise not available to the audience because of the modern day difficulties

classical music is facing. Furthermore, he alludes to today's young performers not having enough originality or artistic personality to engage the listener. He states that there are a greater number of highly technical and virtuosic young instrumentalists than ever in history, so what lacks in these students is not in the realm of technical, but interpretative and musical. For solutions, he recommends that conservatories reinvent the curriculum to focus more on general education and interdisciplinary studies between music and other fields such as mathematics, history, psychology, etc. Botstein asserts that by doing so, the students will "deepen their musical skills and widen their curiosity and intellectual horizons," and consequently, they will be better prepared to function years after graduation.

In the book, *The Artist as Citizen*, Joseph Polisi describes his vision of training the students to become "musicians" and not [mere] "instrumental players." He writes, "[Musicians vs. instrumental players] The distinction is an obvious and important one. Digital or vocal efficiency will not make a musician. This kinetic ability must be linked to an intellect that interprets the great thought of our musical heritage. There are far too many institutions of higher learning in the United States that are training instrumental practitioners, and not musicians (p.102)." Polisi believes that a serious study of the humanities will enable young musicians to achieve higher artistry and interpretative capabilities. Thus, he has directed a new initiative to implement a stronger liberal arts program since he took office as the President in the mid eighties. Considering that The Juilliard School had remained an archetype conservatory until Polisi's arrival, his placing importance on academics was one of the most significant policy changes in the history of the school.

Today, the majority of music schools are placing greater emphasis on the humanities studies than twenty or thirty years ago. The schools also offer some basic career enhancing courses as well as physiological workshops such as the Alexander Technique. The rationale for a greater focus on liberal arts curriculum plus these workshops are mainly for these three points: 1) to better develop young musicians' artistry: the outcome would empower the graduates to stand out among peers, and thus fare better in today's competitive job market, 2) to better prepare them for life skills, and 3) to enable them to be equipped and responsive to the rapidly changing conditions of the field.

Undoubtedly, the study of the humanities in a formal structure will force a student to examine and think about some subjects dealing with human conditions. After all, the composers were subject to human conditions and their experiences also shaped their music. Furthermore, observation and contemplation required in the study will help develop one's cognitive capabilities. At last, higher intellectual and cognitive capacities will transfer to one's considerations about and thoughts into musical phrases as well as the making of better decisions.

### b. Loss of Practice

Although studying liberal arts courses would enhance the learning experience and outcome of any student, for music majors, in practice, the schedule most likely would result in reduced practice time. This is because on many days a student may have to choose between individual practice time and a time to do the homework even if attending the class is not a problem timewise. Since playing an instrument requires a highly advanced form of physical control, a degree similar to a gymnast, there is a potential window of time, physiologically and kinesiology, in the course of a life that one can develop the technical facilities in big strides. A typical performance major will have put in a good 4 – 6 hours of daily practice time over a multitude of years before entering college. The live audition repertoire for prestigious music schools requires highly skilled players. The undergraduate years are almost the last stretch of this period, thus a critical stage to devote one's time to practicing the instrument. While the new focus would be beneficial for many students, it also functioned as extraneous to those who just wanted to practice as much as possible and get their playing level up. Ultimately, inadequate practice time will impede the students from realizing their potential artistic excellence to the fullest. That being the case, some administrators, faculty and students believe that the new concentration takes away from the traditional value of the music conservatory – fostering artistic excellence through a hard regimen of drilling. Therefore, very few schools still continue to uphold the traditional conservatory philosophy to this day.

### c. Loss of Opportunity

Jian Wang (10) is one of the most distinguished cellists, but also is referred to as the most renowned cellist performing today to have emerged from the Yale School of Music. It is rightly so considering the fact that he has been performing with many of the world's leading orchestras from the Berlin Philharmonic to La Scala in Milan, the London Symphony to Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and the symphony orchestras from Chicago to Boston. Furthermore, Deutsche Grammophone's release of his 10 recordings in a time when the industry is contracting drastically provides a window to Jian Wang's artistic and commercial success.

Jian was first introduced to the audience of the western hemisphere at the age of ten when he appeared playing the cello in the celebrated documentary film, *From Mao to Mozart: Isaac Stern in China*. The film documented America's most renowned violinist, Isaac Stern on his historical trip to China in 1979, and it subsequently won an Oscar in 1981. Jian, a child prodigy at the time of the filming, performed with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra and became an instantaneous sensation. With the support and guidance of Stern, Jian on his first trip to America played for Aldo Parisot, a legendary cellist and a faculty member at the Yale School of Music. Upon hearing the audition, Parisot urged



Jian to come to study at Yale. As to English proficiency, Jian said that he didn't know a word, so to speak.

“I receive Yale's application form and I don't understand a thing. I called Mr. Parisot from China and told him that I cannot fill it out. What should I do? Then, Mr. Parisot said, don't worry. Just sign your name and fax to me.”

Jian was admitted to Yale without a TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score, but solely based on artistic merit. He was in a special program and given one year to improve his English so he could participate in classes. In three years, he graduated from Yale's certificate program, the equivalent to a master's degree. He proceeded to have a worldwide concert career and has become arguably the most successfully performing Yale alumnus bringing recognition to the school along the way.

Several generations earlier, Aldo Parisot (11), Jian Wang's teacher, came to Yale from Brazil in 1946. He also was a quintessential child prodigy giving a professional debut at the age of twelve. Upon hearing Parisot perform, Charles Sprague Smith, an attaché of the American embassy in Brazil, approached and offered to arrange for him to study with the eminent cellist, Emmanuel Feuermann at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Parisot was excited at the opportunity, but Feuermann died before the trip was realized. A few years later, Smith again suggested Parisot should come to America to study, this time at the Yale School of Music. Parisot didn't find any cello faculty whom he wanted to study with at Yale. So at age twenty-six, he agreed to come to Yale with the provision that he would not have to take cello lessons from anyone at the school. He was a special student participating in only a few classes including theory, chamber music and orchestra. He didn't have a specified major. Soon after, his illustrious career began, and it led him to nearly a dozen performances with the New York Philharmonic, and numerous contemporary composers wrote concertos for him to give the world premieres of. He is one of the most celebrated cellists of his time, received the United Nations Peace Medal, holds a couple of honorary doctoral degrees, and is the Samuel Sanford Professor in Music at the Yale School of Music.

None of this is possible today. The prestigious music schools require TOEFL scores in ranges of 80 to 90 for admission in order to ensure that the students have enough English proficiency to do the class work. In addition, the curriculums in compliance with the Middle States Accreditation standards are rigid and inflexible. The above two artists could not have found their places in American higher education institutions today. The current admissions process and curriculums are well structured and organized, but if your case does not fit the ready-made cases, then you are off the trajectory, thus there is no place within the system. That would be the cost of all-around education with not enough flexibility and allowance for individual circumstances. Yet, these two cellists are a few of the most famed alumni for the school, and their contribution to the world of music is absolutely immense and top-notch.

## V. What Makes Great Art?

Since today's young artists collectively possess superior technical proficiency than those of previous generations, artistry has been identified as the point to improve for these musicians. The domain for artistry is in abstracts. It is to do with imagination, creativity, concepts, emotions, colors etc. So what are the mechanics of artistry? Why do some performances move us so deeply and why do some bore us to death? Obviously, the creator of a performance is the performer. In the same setting, for an audience, each performance would only be as artistically satisfying as the performer's artistry.

### a. Interpretation

What we call the beginning is often the end  
And to make an end is to make a beginning.  
The end is where we start from. And every phrase  
And sentence that is right (where every word is at home,  
Taking its place to support the others,  
The word neither diffident nor ostentatious,  
An easy commerce of the old and the new,  
The common word exact without vulgarity,  
The formal word precise but not pedantic,  
The complete consort dancing together)  
Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning,  
Every poem an epitaph.

~ T.S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*

Observable artistry in music performance includes interpretative ability and supporting technical skill to communicate the interpretation to an audience. Technical facilities are easy to define, but what are the mechanics of musical interpretation? The medium of music is sound and silence. As to the sound, every western style music composition is comprised of only 12 notes: A scale is comprised of 7 notes and an additional 5 in-between notes are all there is to the system. (Although some modern works once in a while will demand slightly higher or lower pitches around these 12 notes, they still are not independent notes.) It is the arrangement and organization of these 12 notes that gives us millions of perceptions. This is the work of composers. For performers, the interpretation lies in phrasing. Phrasing is the shaping of notes in time: what to bring out, what to hold, where is the beginning, where is the end, which supports which, what are the consorts? The word "word" virtually can be replaced with "note" in the literary quote at the beginning, the excerpt from the *Four Quartets* by T.S. Eliot. Chopin apparently

said to a student, "he who phrases incorrectly is like a man who does not understand the language he speaks (12)."

### b. Artistic Taste

Only sick music makes money today.  
~ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Case of Wagner: A Musician's Problem*

Culture changes with time, and so does the taste of the public who inhabit disparate worlds of values, traditions, lifestyles, intellect, and the arts. In the field of music, "artistry" is used casually as the contrasting word to "technique." Here, artistry describes all that is intangible and immaterial – metaphysics of music – musical style, imagination, inspiration, etc.

Performance artistry can be established only with relevance to the audience. Since performance is a time-based art unlike painting or film, the person sharing the art has to be present. The impression of the performance is recorded only in the minds of those who are present. Thus, performance requires a receiver, an audience, and the performer's artistry is sized up by the opinion of the audience who carry their own cultural frame of reference.

Nietzsche wrote, "Only sick music makes money today" in a context criticizing Wagner in *The Case of Wagner: A Musician's Problem*. The second half of the statement follows, "our big theaters subsist on Wagner (section 5)." But, earlier in life, Nietzsche worshiped Wagner and had written in *Untimely Meditations*, "Measured against Wagner, all earlier music seems stiff and timid (p.242)." After Wagner returned to Christianity, Nietzsche changed his view of Wagner as a man, thus of his music and publicly gave a condemning opinion of him. Here, Nietzsche makes his critique as if a sweeping statement, but it is a personal observation, which is hinged upon a personal taste. On the other hand, Haruki Murakami who weaves some classical music into each of his novels shows how utterly a personal experience it is to be moved by a performance in the book, *South of the Border, West of the Sun* (p.147-148).

"Once she called to invite me to a concert of Liszt piano concertos. The soloist was a famous South American pianist. I cleared my schedule and went with her to the concert hall at Ueno Park. The performance was brilliant. The soloist's technique was outstanding, the music both delicate and deep, and the pianist's heated emotions were there for all to feel. Still, even with my eyes closed, the music didn't sweep me away. A thin curtain stood between myself and pianist, and no matter how much I might try, I couldn't get to the other side. When I told Shimamoto this after the concert, she agreed. "But what was wrong with the performance?" she asked. "I thought it was wonderful." "Don't you remember?" I said. "The record we used to listen to, at the end of the second movement there

was this tiny scratch you could hear. Putchi! Putchi! Somehow, without that scratch, I can't get into the music!"

An acclaimed British writer, Ian McEwan, gives a voice to his character in the novel, *Saturday*, when recounting a best performance as a spiritual experience. He draws from a musical experience, an unattainable state of being, a complete unity of self and others without losing the essence of self (p.171).

"There are these rare moments when musicians together touch something sweeter than they've ever found before in rehearsals or performance, beyond the merely collaborative or technically proficient, when their expression becomes as easy and graceful as friendship or love. This is when they give us a glimpse of what we might be, of our best selves, and of an impossible world in which you give everything to others, but lose nothing of yourself."

As disparate as the three writings are in their viewpoints, context, and style in reference to music, individuals may come away from the same performance with disparate experiences. A newcomer-audience may get moved by the speed of hands, quality of sound, and observable confidence of the performer. A connoisseur may be comparing the performance with five other recordings of the same piece that he catches all of the mechanics of but loses the communication itself. For another, a moment of epiphany may emerge.

Therefore, the performer and the audience both define the performer's artistry. However, since there are too many variables to bring audiences into the equation, let's focus on the artist alone. Personal taste aside, what forms the basic foundation from which to build one's artistry? Imagination may be the starting point of a creative process, but one also needs an intellectual base to make the imagination materialize. In fact, imagination, intellect, and knowledge each spur the workings of the other elements. For instance, a child's imagination may be wild and fantastical in a way much more potent than an adult's, but without proportionate intellect and knowledge, it will be difficult to realize it to a useful creation in any discipline. Inherent amount of imagination aside, more thoughts, ideas, and options will occur to a person with a richer bank of intellect and knowledge than when he had a scantier intellect and knowledge. Studying the humanities will provide knowledge and intellectual resources from which artistic debates and deliberations can be mulled over. For this reason, the humanities studies would be important in building a performer's artistry.

### c. Creativity

All this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of compounding, transposing, augmenting, or diminishing the materials afforded us by the sense of experience. When we think of a golden mountain, we only join two consistent ideas, *gold* and *mountain*, with which we were formerly acquainted.

~ David Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*

An acclaimed artificial intelligence researcher Roger Schank wrote in his book titled *Tell me a Story: Narratives and Intelligence*, “Understanding, for a listener, means mapping the speaker’s stories onto the listener’s stories.” He is claiming that when someone tells a story, we search into our own memory bank to find an experience that shares similar aspects to the story being told to process the incoming information. Since none can have an exact duplicative experience – even if in the same incident, the viewing angle and people will be different from person to person – the receiver cannot draw an identical version to the story being told from his own memory, but a version with some matching aspects to it. Consequently, the thematic understanding of the story will also be varied by each receiver. Schank provides several examples of actual conversations demonstrating this point. Furthermore, he gives two examples of case studies where the listeners draw conclusions of the story they just heard by relating to their own past experiences. As a result, each person interprets the lessons of the story differently. Essentially, understanding and true learning actually do not occur because each of us is referencing our own experience to assimilate the new story and arriving to conclusions based on our own experience, not the new story.

Schank points out that in the shallowest form of understanding, the listener would have one story in his memory bank. So whatever story you tell, the listener is going to understand through his one story and draw a conclusion of your story. At this level, it almost does not matter what story you tell him because his reference point for whatever you say will always be his one story. This is an extreme case. A crazy person just rattling on without any regard to the world around him would be an example. However, if the listener has 10,000 stories in his memory, then he is going to go through 10,000 to match up the story you tell him. Therefore, a less shallow form of understanding will take place.

Actually, the purpose of Schank’s theory was to prove how effective learning does not occur in classrooms, but through one’s experience. Nevertheless, his concept of story file provides insight as to how we process information. If we transpose Schank’s theory to musical understanding, a person with a greater number of references will have a higher form of understanding. The references can be musical or not, I believe. For example, the first four notes of Beethoven’s 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony, one of the most performed classical works, are supposedly a representation of fate knocking at the door. Beethoven never publicly proclaimed that theme for the symphony, so the authenticity of it is in dispute, but regardless, the majority nowadays listening to the music are aware of the fate motif association. A listener who hears the story about the symphony would process the information by going through fate stories in his memory. If he has read *Oedipus Rex* by

Sophocles, *Macbeth* by Shakespeare, and Noah's Ark in the bible, his understanding of the music will be different than another whose only story is from the TV series *Charmed*. The first may think of these four notes as grave, weighty, ominous, momentous and fatal. If it is a performer, he will also conduct with intent to communicate these images and evoke them from the audience. In order to achieve the effect, he may experiment with the timing of the notes, the balance of sound between different instruments in the orchestra, the directions of each note by increasing or decreasing the volume as well as the speed, etc.

In the case of a performer purely understanding by referencing the sound and musical aspects, without the fate motif known, will try to make sense of these four notes by trying to match up other sounds in his memory bank. He may make reference to other music by Beethoven he heard previously. If a listener only had pop versions associated with this piece of music in his memory file, from disco to rock and roll, then, his impression even while listening to it in its original form, a classical version, may be lighter, more upbeat and motional.

So how does imagination fit into this? I think it is our mind's ability to pull together exterior disparate stories by referencing disparate stories in our memory banks, connecting them, filling some gaps, and synthesizing. For example, we hear a story of a fat white cat. If the listener does not have such stories in his memory bank, he may make reference to a fat pig plus white snow plus a cat and then come up with a visual image. In Jonah Lehrer's new book *Imagine: How Creativity Works*, he talks about the occurrences of sudden insightful moments. The creators notice something, and sometimes several disparate things, but from those observations, all of a sudden a creative idea emerges. Lehrer explains that according to 18th-century philosopher David Hume in *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, invention was often an act of recombination, of blending ideas or transposing them. Lehrer lists ample examples of historical creativity, and how new ideas sprang up from old existing ideas:

“Johannes Gutenberg transformed his knowledge of wine presses into an idea for a printing machine capable of mass-producing words. The Wright brothers used their knowledge of bicycle manufacturing to invent the airplane. (Their first flying craft was, in many respects, just a bicycle with wings.) George de Mestral came up with Velcro after noticing burrs clinging to the fur of his dog. And Larry Page and Sergey Brin developed the search algorithm behind Google by applying the ranking method used for academic articles to the sprawl of the World Wide Web; a hyperlink was like a citation (p.39).”

In final consideration, whether it is for knowledge, intellect, intelligence, imagination, or creativity, a higher form of understanding can occur for a person with a greater number of stories than a scantier pool to draw from.

#### d. Originality & Individualism

If you only read the books that everyone else is reading, you can only think what everyone else is thinking.

~ Haruki Murakami, *Norwegian Wood*

One of the widely held criticisms for today's young artists is that they lack originality. The world has become much smaller through travel and available information. In fact, as to cyber space, it is just one large global community. Through travel and information, more or less, today's young artists have access to the same pool of knowledge and musical influence, which reflects on their playing.

In search of young talents, Monique Devaux (13), the artistic director for the Louvre, travels approximately 40 days every year from Seoul to Moscow to New York to hear live auditions. She oversees the Louvre's concert programming including its prominent rising star series, which was her design from the beginning. Monique told me that it is much more difficult today to select a young artist to invite because of two reasons. First, the technical mastery of young artists is so common that virtuosity does not stand out anymore. Second, there are not enough individualistic style differences between performers. She said, "Twenty years ago, when Vadim [Repin] and Joshua [Bell] came onto the concert scene, they were just so different. Today, it is hard to find those kinds of stylistic differences because the top talents go abroad to a couple of famous music schools, get the same education, and play similarly." When I asked her if she thought the humanities studies would help raising one's artistry, she said yes, but it would be beneficial to take on local humanistic study and of one's heritage and tradition, rather than the same classics everyone studies. Monique was expressing the need of divergence in education in today's global society.

Although not a related concept to Monique's divergence, Jonah Lehrer writes about divergent thinking and convergent thinking in his book, *Imagine*. Divergent thinking is sudden insights, unexpected thoughts, and remote associations. Convergent thinking is with intention, analysis, and attention. Both are required in a creative process. If divergent thinking draws from one's story file, Schank's concept, accumulating one's own unique story file would enhance individualism in young artists. For this, divergence in education and experience would be immensely valuable.

### **VI. Flexible and Generous Education**

No two people are the same. Everyone is dissimilar and unlike. We are who we are, determined by biology, psychology, and spirituality. Then, also there is a dimension of cultural determination, which one cannot entirely escape regardless of the amount of free

will, intelligence, and analytical ability a person possesses. Each musical talent is also endowed differently -- biologically, psychologically, and spiritually. They are affected by disparate cultural determinisms as well. In addition, high school graduates arrive to college with varying degrees of education and accomplishments. Even within musical talents, not only the level of gift varies, but also the level of technical development and that each forte lies in a different area with dissimilar qualities and characters. To some, assimilating contemporary music having the most foreign sounding harmony with complex rhythm to date may come easily, yet trying to create a sensible and tasteful phrasing of a Beethoven symphony could yield no result. Some may draw gorgeous sound by any standard, but habitually play out of tune regardless of good training. This is a case of demonstrated talent for sound, but not for intonation. As to the qualities and characters, for instance, musicians, even with comparable playing proficiencies, will each draw a different quality of sound from the same instrument and in many cases, actually varying volume. So although musical talents are bound by the word "talent", the quality shared is not the same. The quality also will dictate which areas of development will come easily and those that will be difficult.

For this research, I interviewed over 50 professional performing musicians, teachers, educational and arts administrators, and students from Asia, Europe, South America, and the US. They started musical training in their native countries, but all received their highest education from an American institution. Their ages are between the early twenties and the nineties, their college years ranging from the 1930's to 2012. The seven performing musicians and teachers who were extensively interviewed are recognized as the top leading figures in the field worldwide. Out of the seven, four received conservatory type of education with a diploma and three received degrees, two Bachelor of Music and one Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University, the most rigorous liberal arts program within the group. What struck me as the most interesting was that each spoke with such passion about how right their education had been. The ones who received emphasis on training regimen were all in favor of the traditional type of conservatory education with a training regimen for undergraduate programs. They recognized the benefits of liberal arts curriculum, but they voiced that it should not take away from practice time during the undergraduate years, an important window of time when the students must develop technique while still physically and kinetically agile. Thus the courses for cognitive development should come later in life. One voiced that people do not just learn from classes, but life experiences as well. He mentioned how his playing was never the same after his mother passed away when he was thirteen. Thus, liberal arts classes are not the only means of obtaining cognitive development, but these can be substituted with other experiences. As to the proponent of strong liberal arts programs, the Harvard graduate absolutely believed that his liberal arts education is the basis from where he draws his interpretative skills and artistry, which sets him apart from a myriad of young virtuosos out there today. Therefore, he attributed his international touring career to his liberal arts education and believed it should be an integral part of undergraduate education. The students' responses were similar. Conservatory trained students believed that its system served them well and they benefited more than if they had gone through university curriculum. However, university educated students found



more value and workability in their own educational paradigm, even while admitting they probably could have developed better technically if they went to conservatories.

I could not help thinking if there is some element of cognitive dissonance at work here. Cognitive dissonance is a person's effort to reduce mental discomfort caused by holding conflicting cognitions within oneself by altering one of the existing cognitions. Cognitions can be ideas, values, beliefs, conclusions, etc. Here, an example would be a student who chooses the conservatory education. If the student later recognizes that the university paradigm actually is better education for him, then the student would have to take action to follow his new value. Let's say he didn't due to reasons other than the educational value such as his transfer would prolong one more year of schooling or he felt emotionally overwhelmed thinking about how many changes he would have to newly adapt to. So he decides to finish out the conservatory. Now he has the conflict between wanting to receive university education and wanting to stay in his conservatory. He will reduce his dissonance by rationalizing within himself how conservatory training is better in one way or another. This point would require more in-depth study to arrive at a definitive statement, but in all of my interviews, whether accomplished musicians or students, I have not met a single person who said, "I should have gotten the other education. That would have been better for my playing." Some had some aspects about their education that they wished had been different, but not one mentioned any regrets for having received the type of education they had whether conservatory or university.

Regardless of the consideration of cognitive dissonance, it was evident that different methods worked for different people, and no one paradigm would work for every dissimilar talent.

Hence, I propose four main precepts for higher music education:

#### I. Flexible Education.

Flexible Education would be based on structuring flexible and adaptable curriculums instead of rigid and fixed programs. A humanistic approach to solutions would be sought out instead of computer-fed solutions like processing binary solutions. The flexibility will enable schools to provide individualized and tailored curriculum for different types of talents as well as to admit a small number of special students who may already have performing careers and foreign students who demonstrate the highest level of performance, but do not show English proficiency yet.

- a. Incorporate an option of 1 additional school year as "practical year" at any point of the undergraduate program. This extra time would allow students to work in more practice time, take up outside performance opportunities, try competitions, and prepare for job auditions. For those who would like to start college with better technical development, they can take the practical year before starting the first year. For those who would like to try international competitions or special students who already have professional performances that will take them away from school, they can take it sometime between the first and last year. Also, some could take it after the senior year to prepare for jobs or auditions for

masters degrees. Some could opt out of it completely since many would like to finish undergraduate within four years. On the other hand, foreign students could take it prior to the first year to concentrate on their English skills while attending minimum performing classes that do not require reading and writing.

b. Create liberal arts classes with varying degrees of intensity. At the introductory end of the spectrum, design humanities classes with no homework requirements, but all in-class work. If providing both depth and breadth on a subject are not possible, a course concentrated on the depth would be desirable using a minimum amount of materials. For instance, instead of reading an entire play by Shakespeare, a film could be watched, a scene could be read, analyzed in depth, and a speech and a sonnet could be memorized. An effective introduction can lead to more serious studies later in life so the class value would be based on awakening instead of imparting knowledge. However, at the other end of the spectrum, for students who can manage the time and are interested in rigorous intellectual pursuits, attending classes at outside academic research universities could be arranged.

c. Offer on-line classes for all courses other than performance classes.

d. Create an independent study program in which a student could submit a proposal to design his own study intensive. This would enable a student to create his own syllabus and study material and conduct research applicable to the instrumental playing. An example would be if a student is playing a late Beethoven string quartet, he could propose to do an analysis of the quartet he is playing and also of Beethoven's compositions from the similar period. Another student may propose to conduct research on musical progressions of German composers leading to Beethoven in trying to understand the compositional involvement.

e. Accreditation for professional performances. For special students who have performing careers, they could take credits for their professional appearances. Also, a graduation recital can be waived by submitting a dvd of a professional recital as long as required repertoire is covered.

## II. Generous Education.

Generous Education would be based on providing a comprehensive educational and life-preparatory experience. Students would be supported beyond present means to excel in school and also professionally.

a. Establish teacher-student relationship philosophy where teachers are generously available for students. A form of mentor program could be structured to implement the philosophy.

- b. Provide tutoring services for liberal arts classes on-line and on-site. Students who are away for competitions or performances can take advantage of on-line tutoring services and not fall behind on class work.
- c. Create an administrative department for professional development. The goal of this department would be to procure professional performance opportunities for students. The engagements would encompass a broad range of opportunities from arranging auditions for talent managers to conductors to sending a performer for an outreach activity at a local public school. The department could even attempt to negotiate with local orchestras for playing internship positions. Additionally, serious, on hand professional counseling would be provided to students.

### III. Convergence Education.

Convergence Education would be based on integrating various disciplinary principles, technologies, and philosophies into music classes and vice versa. Furthermore, convergence of civic duty, community service and music could be designed.

- a. An effort to integrate educational theories into major instrument instruction should be made. Because classical music performed today is heavily concentrated on music written between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and since instrumental playing has been basically unchanged from these periods, classical music training is deeply rooted in traditional studies. For centuries, instrumental playing as a tradition has been taught from one person to another. In addition, the individual lesson which is the most important class in music curriculum and the *raison d'être* for students' decision to be at specific schools is taught by masters whose exclusive education is in performance and not teaching. In fact, there will not be one single studio faculty member at any prestigious music school who has an educational degree. Thus, most of the teachers possess distinctly in-depth knowledge, expertise and even profound understanding of their majors, but they are not necessarily familiar with the educational methods and studies. Thus, an effort to apply more modern educational tools such as Bloom's Taxonomy to instrumental instruction would benefit the students greatly.
- b. Create classes, which incorporate other than music disciplines into music classes and vice versa. Business administration can be taught by working public relations and marketing training into a chamber music class. A typical curriculum requires 8 semesters of chamber music for music majors. The students are in an ensemble usually of two to six players depending upon the work they take up and get coached from a faculty member on performance. The last semester can be called "presenting chamber music," and the course requires the students to organize their own concert, make and execute a public relations and marketing plan, and present the concert in the community. On the other hand, a literature class can be built based on a musical context.

Beethoven wrote a violin sonata called “Kreutzer,” Leo Tolstoy was inspired by it and wrote a novella, “Kreutzer” and a Czechoslovakian composer, Janacek wrote a string quartet, “Kreutzer” after reading Tolstoy’s book. Marcel Proust worked in scenes of salon concerts in his book, “A la recherche du temps perdu.” There are certain sonatas from his time that researchers believe Proust based on his description of the music.

- c. A class to teach social and civic duty can be designed by performing for the underprivileged and socially isolated. This can be done by visiting hospitals, elderly homes, orphanages, etc.

#### IV. Divergence Education

Divergence Education would be designed with a goal of providing an intellectual and artistic depository of great wealth for the mind that is unique and distinct to local heritage and tradition.

- a. Create liberal arts classes that are unique to the region, heritage, and tradition. A conservatory in China would teach Chinese ancient literature instead of Greek Classics. A class on ancient local music and sound would be another example in spite of the irrelevance to classical music.
- b. Create specialized classes that would provide unique and distinct life experience. Concert tours can be created based on the concept of a working music missionary. For instance, a two-week long tour by bus hopping from one remote village to the next where live music is not available or a two-week performing residency in a region culturally rich with original ethnic and local aesthetics.

### **VII. Conclusion**

Flexible and Generous Education can create an overall frame from which to accommodate and foster young musicians in different stages of development, both technical and artistic. Students can create individualized paths of advancement tackling the areas for improvement as necessary. However, the program would be expensive to run and the fluctuations of student body at any given point may be administratively problematic for the school. In addition, some points maybe in conflict with the rules of Middle States Accreditation. More research should be done for the implementation. Nevertheless, under Flexible and Generous Education, music institutions can accept a wider range of talents, especially those at the top who already have professional careers and the extraordinary foreign artists. They would bring rich diversity and creativity into the classrooms and community of the school, and that contribution would be irreplaceable. Convergence and Divergence Education together will provide a basis to

inspire and spark students' creativity. It will happen while they are receiving the education, but also even after they are out of the school and in life.

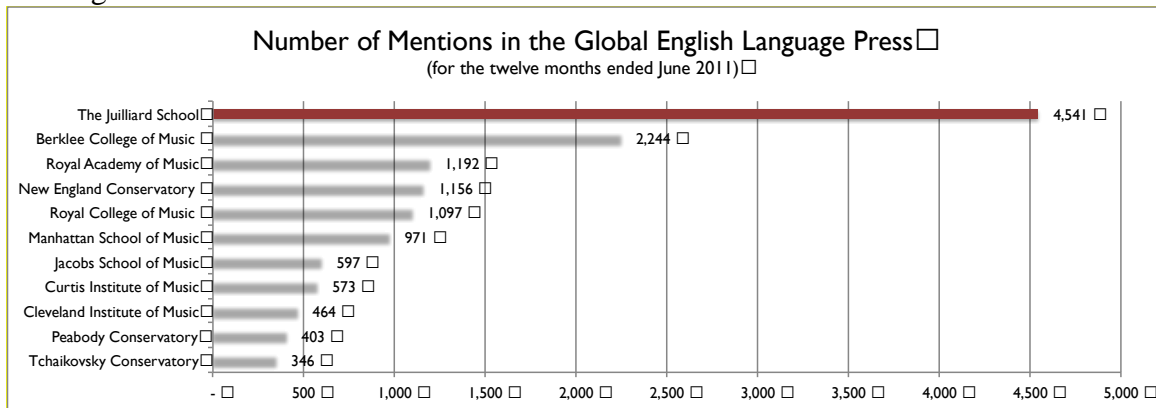
Lastly, today's music schools need to assume a greater role of leadership for the field by taking on responsibility beyond training of musicians. The schools have a wealth of resources, talents, contents, and for some, endowments, to make differences in the community besides teaching. Because if there was no taste demand, there wouldn't be any performing musicians regardless of how "perfect artists" are produced by educational institutions. Robert Blocker (14), the dean of the Yale School of Music, expressed optimism when he said, "many American Music Schools and Conservatories are embracing the future as a time of great opportunity. The European patronage system, such as that of the Medici family, enabled court composers and artists to create, perform, and sustain classical music. Today, the endowments and financial resources of many institutions – for example, Yale, Curtis, and Juilliard – support classical music in similar ways."

Notes:

(1) Plasket, Donna Jean. *Training Musicians and Developing People: Can a Music Conservatory Do It All?* Diss. Harvard U, 1992. Ann Arbor: UMI, 1992. Print.

(2) John Erskine's influence shaped today's core curriculum and affected all of American education. He served as the first president of the Juilliard School of Music from 1928 to 1937.

(3) The Juilliard School achieved the foremost music school branding as the media coverage data shows:



Source: Dow Jones

(4) International Conference of Symphony Orchestras and Musicians (ICSOM)

(5) "Alice Dancing Under the Gallows" Narr. Jennifer Hambrick. Nat'l Public Radio. WOSU, 27 July 2011. Radio

(6) Ross, Alex. *The Rest Is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. Print. P.42

(7) *Rocketboom*, 7 July, 206

(8) From the mission of the Curtis Institute, The Juilliard School, and Yale School of Music.

(9) I worked with Joseph Polisi on his internationalization initiative, Juilliard Global, as Korea Advisor to the President of the Juilliard School for some part of 2010 and 2011, providing council on the arts and education in Korea. Korean students have had the largest foreign representation at the school for approximately the last couple of decades.

(10), (11) Jian Wang and Aldo Parisot were resident artists and faculty at the Great Mountains Music Festival & School in South Korea during my tenure as the executive director. Because we were housed in the same resort and dined together, we were able to

have numerous in-depth conversations over a couple of weeks each summer for six years, in addition to being in touch throughout the year.

(12) Toff, Nancy. *The Flute Book: A Complete Guide for Students and Performers*, p.150. Second edition. 1996. Print.

(13) Monique Devaux was a panelist and also took a residency at the Festival one summer. In addition, we were able to discuss many issues facing young artists today during our collaborations on various projects.

(14) Robert Blocker participated at the Festival for two summers and also performed in concert with and made a recording with Sejong Soloists, a string orchestra I am the executive director of. During these projects, which lasted several consecutive days confined in one area, he provided insights to a wide range of subjects from young artists education to their career development to fundraising.

## **Appendix A.**

### **Job Categories**

As mentioned earlier, competition for performing jobs is fierce and tougher than ever for music school graduates in America. For today's young artists, there are two ways to go about pursuing careers; one is to find existing performance opportunities and employment and the other is to be entrepreneurial and create one's own job.

Existing opportunities can be divided into the following categories:

#### 1) Soloist Career

Job description: The artist performs solo works with orchestras or in recitals. At the height of one's career, those most in demand will perform around 100 concerts annually.

Requirement: An artist is engaged purely based on performing ability. As most concert halls for orchestra performance are in the range of 2,000 seats, the soloist has to be a powerful artistic communicator capturing the attention of the audience. Huge sound projection, technical mastery, virtuosity, originality/individuality, and artistic personality are some of the mechanics.

Employment procedure: A full-fledged solo career is possible only through having a management company that is regularly booking concerts for the artist. Usually, a promising young artist is noticed early on by leaders (teachers, artists, administrators) in the industry. As public repute increases, management companies become interested and ultimately sign on the artist.

#### 2) Chamber Music Career

Job description: The artist performs in a chamber ensemble. The most common forms are piano trios (piano, violin, cello) and string quartets (2 violins, viola, cello). A full-fledged career quartet maintains an active performing schedule with a teaching/performing residency at a university.

Requirement: Chamber music performance demands special musical sensitivity because constantly listening to other players and playing precisely together in every way such as intonation, articulation, and quality of sound, to name just a few, are necessary.

Employment procedure: An artist auditions for existing ensembles or forms a new ensemble and builds its career. Performance is a pure basis of evaluation for management companies looking to sign on the group in order to book concerts. Once known, university residency positions become available, but rarely a degree would be a consideration as the group's repute in public is the drawing point for the university.



### 3) Orchestral Career

Job description: An artist performs in an orchestra in leadership positions such as concertmaster and principal as well as in a section.

Requirement: Masterful technical command over the instrument, proficiency of orchestral repertoire, accurate playing, and an ability to follow the conductor are necessary. The leadership positions, especially principals in winds and brass who have many solo moments, need to be able to follow and feel with the conductor who leads with his musical concept, style, and taste.

Employment procedure: American orchestras announce the openings and hold formal auditions.

### 4) Teaching Career

Job description: There are several types of teaching careers: a) a professional music school that is an institute of higher education, b) pre-college music schools, c) secondary and lower schools, and d) private teaching. The starting position at a professional music school can be an assistant to a professor and could advance to a full-professorship. Although there are various music teacher positions for secondary and lower schools, there are fewer and fewer of these jobs because of funding cuts, and the positions are mostly filled by education majors instead of music school graduates. Some teachers build successful private studios on their own.

Requirement: For a recent graduate to be hired by a university-level institution, a master or doctoral degree is almost always required unless one has been established already as a renowned performer.

Employment procedure: Most music schools announce the opening of teaching positions and conduct the search through a committee, but a few adopt various closed-processes.

### 5) Freelance Musicians

Job description: Freelance musicians do not have full-time contracts, but they are hired per concert/project. These musicians combine various performing opportunities that are short-term and also teach to increase their workload. Broadway shows, commercial recordings, and music for ceremonies and events as well as traditional classical concerts are part of freelance work.

Requirement: Performing ability is the most important criteria.

Employment procedure: Usually, for each project, there is a contractor and/or subcontractor responsible for hiring musicians, and they build and maintain a pool of musicians.

Today's artists are increasingly combining diverse professional work although the main line of work lies in one particular area. For instance, a concertmaster is in demand, within the community, to perform solo and chamber concerts and to teach at a local institute of higher education. Renowned soloists form their own chamber groups and fill their season calendar with a certain number of its performances and also may accept a few students for teaching or give master classes.

In addition to the above, there are administrative and arts management careers, but American music schools do not provide formal education for these jobs. The music school graduates who become successful arts administrators get their business training either by obtaining related degrees or learning on their own on-the-job.

## **Appendix B.**

### **A Sample of Liberal Arts Curriculum: The Juilliard School Courses**

#### **Liberal Arts Core**

- • [LARTS 101 — Ethics - Conscience and the Good Life](#)
- • [LARTS 102 — Society, Politics, and Culture](#)
- • [LARTS 121-2 — Writing Seminar](#)
- • [LARTS 201 — Genres and Generations](#)
- • [LARTS 202 — Arts and Aesthetics](#)

#### **Liberal Arts Electives: Humanities (Art History, Literature, Philosophy)**

- • [LARTS 303 — Medievalism and the Middle Ages](#)
- • [LARTS 320 — Ancient Greek Philosophy](#)
- • [LARTS 321 — American Philosophy](#)
- • [LARTS 323 — Metaphysics](#)
- • [LARTS 327 — Existentialism](#)
- • [LARTS 328 — Freedom and Self-Determination](#)
- • [LARTS 329 — 20th-Century Philosophy](#)
- • [LARTS 338 — Proust, Music, and the Arts](#)
- • [LARTS 339 — Romanticism and Realism: Literature, Philosophy, and the Arts](#)
- • [LARTS 340 — Frozen Music: On Interrelating the Arts](#)
- • [LARTS 344 — 20th-Century Art: Modernism in Europe and the U.S.](#)
- • [LARTS 345 — Art in New York: Gallery Tours and Museums](#)
- • [LARTS 346 — American Art from the Revolution to World War II](#)
- • [LARTS 347 — Focus on a Major Artist](#)
- • [LARTS 348 — Opera: Music and the Visual Arts](#)

- • [LARTS 352 — Noonday Demon: Depression in Literature](#)
- • [LARTS 353 — Against the Grain: Sexual Transgression From Euripides to Albee](#)
- • [LARTS 355 — Psychology: Schools and Theories](#)
- • [LARTS 359 — English Romantic Literature of the 19th Century: Sublime, Gothic, Heroic](#)
- • [LARTS 362 — Contemporary American Literature](#)
- • [LARTS 366 — Terror and the Imagination](#)
- • [LARTS 370 — Perfect Storms: Environmental Literature, Ethics, and Politics](#)
- • [LARTS 371 — Ethics and Religion in American Political History](#)
- • [LARTS 372 — Religion, Science, and Literature](#)
- • [LARTS 380 — Shakespeare and the Performing Arts](#)
- • [LARTS 385 — Modern European Drama](#)
- • [LARTS 386 — American Drama and the American Dream](#)
- • [LARTS 392 — Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism](#)
- • [LARTS 394 — Norse Mythology: Roots and Influence in the Present](#)
- • [LARTS 470 — American Society and the Arts](#)

#### **Liberal Arts Electives: History and Social Sciences**

- • [LARTS 319 — Justice, Equality, and the Law](#)
- • [LARTS 336 — Marriage and the Family in Transition](#)
- • [LARTS 360 — Europe and the World: 1914 - Present](#)
- • [LARTS 367 — African-American Literature: Special Topics](#)
- • [LARTS 369 — Civil War, Reconstruction, and Slave Emancipation](#)
- • [LARTS 374 — History of American Women and Gender](#)
- • [LARTS 375 — Feminism in the 20th Century and Beyond](#)
- • [LARTS 376 — United States History to 1877](#)
- • [LARTS 377 — United States History from 1877](#)

#### **Liberal Arts Electives: Writing and Languages**

- • [LARTS 151-2 — Russian I](#)
- • [LARTS 161-2 — English and Composition I](#)
- • [LARTS 171-2 — French I](#)
- • [LARTS 181-2 — German I](#)
- • [LARTS 191-2 — Italian I](#)
- • [LARTS 271-2 — French II: French Language and Culture Through Film](#)
- • [LARTS 281-2 — German II](#)
- • [LARTS 291-2 — Italian II: Intermediate Italian Through Film](#)
- • [LARTS 315 — Writing Poetry and Flash Fiction](#)
- • [LARTS 322 — Critical Thinking](#)
- • [LARTS 561-2 — English and Composition II](#)

**Liberal Arts Electives: American Studies**

- • [LARTS 390 — Introduction to American Studies: The American Self](#)

**Liberal Arts Electives: Gender Studies**

- [LARTS 350 — Introduction to Gender Studies](#)

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