

## OPUS NOVEMBER 2016



The Concord Conservatory of Music

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### **News at CCM**

**Saxophone Master Class & Jazz Concert** – Join us—and bring your saxophone!

On **Sunday, November 20, from 1:00 to 3:00 PM**, our CCM faculty member, renowned Cuban-born tenor saxophonist and contemporary Afro-Cuban jazz composer Carlos Averhoff, Jr., will host a Saxophone Master Class & Jazz Concert.

Averhoff will discuss the instrument, both its history and technique, then perform a selection of old and new music with his jazz quartet. Saxophone players are even invited to bring their own instruments to the event. *If you love jazz, you won't want to miss this one.* **[For more information and tickets>>](#)**

**CCM Concert & Lecture—How Do We Listen to Music?: Counterpoint**—learn, understand and appreciate music! Please join us on **Friday, November 18 at 7:00 pm** for the second part of our 2016-2017 Concert & Lecture Series.

Often involving the interaction of differing melodies within a single piece of music, counterpoint is at the heart of many famous arrangements. This concert will explore how composers throughout history have integrated counterpoint into their work by highlighting melodic counterpoint, timbral counterpoint, instrumental counterpoint, and even visual counterpoint. The CCM string faculty will perform works by J.S. Bach, Beethoven, Prokofiev, and Biggs. [To purchase tickets>>](#)

**Upcoming All School Student Recitals** – Congratulations to those performers who took to the stage at the recitals on October 22, the first of the 2016-17 season. You can help support our students by joining us for the recitals as they practice performing for an audience. As always, whether your child is performing or not, the community is welcome to watch, learn and enjoy!

\* Thursday, November 17, 2016 at 7:00 pm

\* Saturday, November 19 at 1:00, 2:30, and 4:00 pm

**CCM's Facebook page** – When you like our [CCM Facebook page](#), you are kept up-to-date on CCM, our events, and the musical world. We don't want you to miss out on any fun—so please connect to CCM through [Facebook](#). Thanks!

**Pizza Party** – Congratulations to all our students who completed the **October Practice for Pizza Challenge**. Pizza was truly a great motivator!

**Behind the Scenes – On Recitals, Nerves, and Vulnerability**



The thought of performing a recital can introduce herds of butterflies to a student's stomach, thunderclaps to the heart, or an unmistakable weakness in the knees. Students should take heart that they are far from alone: Professional musicians have experienced all of these symptoms and even recognize the importance of adrenaline in performance. But it needn't be crippling. Take it from Yo-Yo Ma, the 17-time Grammy Award winner and recipient of the National Medal of Honor. In a 2014 interview for *On Being with Krista Tippett*, he explains how vulnerability can lend depth to a performance:

*A lot of artists will say, I have to make myself so vulnerable. And that is absolutely true ... [but] weakness can be a strength as a form of expression. If you only show strength, you're showing a one-dimensional aspect of something that you're trying to describe. If you only show weakness, obviously, [you're showing] one thing. But if you show both and you show the variety in between, you're describing a multi-dimensional world.*

Ma goes on to say that when he performs, he imagines that the audience members are his guests:

*I'm the host of a wonderful party.... While I'm on stage, you're all my guests, because that's sort of the unsaid agreement. So while you're my guest, if something bad happens on stage, I often think of Julia Child: Oh, the chicken's fallen on the floor? Well pick it up and put it right back. And you know what? Everybody's with you. Because even if nobody's going to touch the chicken, they're not going to let that moment spoil their evening. They'll remember, oh, yes, remember when Julia dropped that?*

A performance is about sharing an experience, Ma says, not proving something. So whatever technical mistakes a performer makes, "It's all right, because we have a greater purpose," he says. "The greater purpose is that we're communing together and we want this moment to be really special for all of us. Because otherwise, why bother to have come at all?"

We look forward to seeing our students and their families come together over November's recitals. Come what may, our community will gather over a shared experience. Good luck all the same!

### **Student Spotlight**



The power of pizza is a force to be reckoned with: That may be one of the lessons learned from **October's Practice for Pizza Month**, but it won't be the only one. On November 2, students who met the challenge to practice their instruments 30 days in October will celebrate their success with a pizza dinner at CCM. For most students it wasn't easy, which is all the more reason to celebrate.

Emma Peacock practiced her piano dutifully all month, which she says was "a very hard goal." On the upside: "You get good at a lot of songs," says the 8-year-old. The most challenging aspect? "Remembering to practice every day," she says. But the road to Emma's heart is clearly paved with pizza, because she says the reward kept her on task: "I think I am more willing to practice because I know something good will happen," she says. (The good thing being pizza, of course.) And somewhere in October, she says she learned that "if you practice every day you can get a lot better."

The goal of the exercise is to support both students and parents, to see the payoffs of regular practice and learn how to encourage the student to get there. For many students, like Emma, the challenge calendar is an important discovery: "It seems to provide Emma a great sense of accomplishment, seeing the days crossed off," says Emma's mother, Carol Harris. "More importantly, she is in the habit of playing every day and hates the thought of missing a day."

We hope you all transition into November with newfound confidence and insight, maybe some new tunes under your belt, and at least an idea of what motivates your student. For Emma Peacock there is no question: “I think we should have pizza challenges more often,” she says. ***Pizza mission accomplished.***

### **Musical Instrument Highlight - Violin and Viola**



The **violin and viola** are like the fraternal twins of the string family: obviously closely related and perhaps difficult to distinguish at a quick glance, but with a few important differences setting them apart. ***How does a student choose between them?***

Let's start with the similarities: The violin and viola share three strings—A, D, and G—and much of the techniques cross over from one instrument to the other, says violinist and CCM Suzuki teacher Robin Alfieri. But the violin has a higher string (E), while the viola has a lower (C), resulting in a more mellow sound. “There’s a depth and a richness in the viola that’s different than the violin, which tends to be more projecting,” Alfieri says.

From a numbers standpoint, violinists far outnumber violists—twice as many in a typical orchestra. But the viola, which is one fifth lower, “doesn’t tend to carry a lot of the melody—although they can, and when they do it’s very beautiful,” Alfieri says.

Susan Gottschalk, a violist who also teaches at CCM, points out that it wasn’t until relatively recently—in the 20th century—that the viola was a solo instrument. “So violists played (and still play) works written for cello, violin, or even clarinet,” she says. “When I was growing up, a lot of people suggested that a violinist play viola if they couldn’t handle the violin. These days that isn’t the case!”

The violin tends to be a more competitive instrument, given its easy recognition and the sheer numbers of interested players. Which can be good news for violists: For students progressing to the college level, there can be more scholarships available for viola players than violinists. And as a result of their smaller numbers, violists tend to enjoy a strong sense of identity among them. “They’re often a tightknit group,” Alfieri says. “That can come from the teacher, but I think it also comes from being in a smaller program, where they get to know each other really well.”

Choosing a teacher is incredibly important, Alfieri says, but so is finding the instrument that feels right for the individual. “Obviously I chose violin because it matches me,” she says. That’s a choice everyone should make for him- or herself. Gottschalk chose viola because of her love for playing harmony or inner voices in chamber music and orchestra. “I find it a very rich experience to enhance the melody rather than play it all the time though again, there are many opportunities to do both,” she says.

"How do you keep a violin from being stolen?

*Put it in a viola case."*

### **Why Music Matters: Develops Brain Pathways**

*"All that time you spent in piano lessons and dance classes as a youngster may have seemed like a pain, but new research now confirms what your parents claimed: it's good for mind and body".*

**How the performing arts can set the stage for more developed brain pathways**



Researchers from the International Laboratory for Brain, Music, and Sound Research published a recent study showing that, as suspected by parents everywhere, dance and music training are good for the brain—but in very different ways. By comparing the white matter regions of dancers and musicians, researchers found:

“Dancers showed broader connections of fibre bundles linking the sensory and motor brain regions themselves, as well as broader fibre bundles connecting the brain's two hemispheres

in the regions that process sensory and motor information. In contrast, musicians had stronger and more coherent fibre bundles in those same pathways.”

Concordia University. *"How the performing arts can set the stage for more developed brain pathways."* ScienceDaily.

### **Did you know...?**



### **Stop and Smell the Rosin**

Anyone playing a bowed instrument needs to know at least a little about rosin, which is critical for creating an even tone with a bow. Young students need not know about how rosin is made from pine sap (for the curious, *Strings* magazine gets to the bottom of that sticky story [here](#)), but learning how to use it correctly will affect your playing. Your teacher can help. And meanwhile here are a few rosin-related facts:

- Rosin makes the hairs on the bow sticky enough to grip the string, thereby producing a good tone
- Apply an even coat when you first cover a bow with rosin. Too much will create a mess, and too little won't produce enough grip on the strings
- The surface of a new cake of rosin is polished and needs to be scored or scratched before you can use it. Sandpaper will do the trick

### **Upcoming Area Performances**

**Brandeis-Wellesley Orchestra**, Sunday, November 20, 3:00 pm, under the direction of Conductor Neal Hampton

♪ The Brandeis-Wellesley Orchestra (BWO) comprises students, faculty, staff and associates of Brandeis University and Wellesley College. [For more information>>](#)

**Chiara String Quartet**, Sunday, November 27, 2016 at 3:00 pm at the Concord Academy Performing Arts Center preceded at 2 pm by a pre-concert lecture given by musicologist Steven Ledbetter. "Grammy-nominated Chiara String Quartet plays by the heart."

♪ Artists include violinists Rebecca Fischer and Hyeyung Julie Yoon, Jonah Sirota on viola and Gregory Beaver on cello. [For more information>>](#)

**James and the Giant Peach JR the Musical**, November 18-19 at the Arlington Children's Theatre. [For more information>>](#)

**Tufts Music Event - Family and Children's Concert Series: Peter and the Wolf and Other Animals**, Saturday, November 12, 1:00 - 2:00 pm

Distler Performance Hall, Granoff Music Center - Meet the instruments and see if you can recognize the animals! There'll be donkeys, chickens, horses, cows, a duck, a bird, and a cat. Oh yes, also a teddy bear and a very hungry wolf at Solar Winds presentation of Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf." Free and no tickets required. [\*\*For more information>>\*\*](#)