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CFA SCHOOL OF MUSIC FACULTY BLOG POSTS

WEEK ONE, REMOTE ONLINE TEACHING

In response to a Mini-Grant opportunity in the CFA School of Music, a group of faculty members will be blogging each week on their experience teaching remotely online to their students at BU. What follows are the individual experiences of talented and dedicated faculty members as they adjust to new pedagogical modalities. Each demonstrates commitment to learning with and frequently from their students. Enjoy, Gregory Melchor-Barz

LUCI LIN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF VIOLIN

March 19, 2020—As I attempt to strive for some sort of normalcy in our new reality, I don't think the whole state of affairs has really sunk in. Every day brings a renewed sense of dread, a more terrifying statistic, a prolonged sense of the unknown, and a definite feeling of powerlessness. With the growing isolation due to social distancing, along with my upended schedule, I find myself spinning my wheels, trying to find something to hang onto. When I ran my first online studio class this week, I saw the relief and joy on my students' faces when they could see each other on Zoom's gallery screen. I realized then, that a priority to my students is to maintain a BU community through weekly meetings. Most of them are spending this week moving from their apartments and dorms. My upended life is no comparison to what they must be experiencing. "How can I perform my recital? Will I be able to graduate this year?" The surety of college life has dropped out from under their feet.

I intend to battle the challenges of online teaching and provide one-on-one private lessons for applied music majors. But it might be helpful to supplement those lessons with some of the advantages that online apps do offer, using them to maintain a community feeling. I am not well versed with technology, but I believe the screen sharing feature on Zoom could be used as a creative teaching tool. We can take advantage of some of the terrific online classical music currently streaming and watch them as a group. How fun to compare an aria from Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* to one of his violin concertos and make direct correlations to articulation, tone, and phrasing? Or to have a lively discussion about different performers' choices in bowings, fingerings, body mechanics, and interpretation? For chamber music, studying scores via screen sharing could be a wonderful opportunity to show students how to use the score to deepen their understanding of the music and to effectively mark up their individual parts. For orchestral repertoire classes, excerpts would have context. I've also assigned the students to study the effect of the pandemic of 1918 on artists, musicians, and composers of that day and compare it to Covid-19's current and future effects in the fine arts disciplines. We have a unique perspective on these extraordinary times. Maybe by seeing our current epidemic as another event in the world's timeline, we will feel a little less overwhelmed.

P.S. Because of everyone's increased screen time, we need to remember to move our bodies and please encourage all of our students as well! For yoga: <https://yogauonline.com> and for Pilates and Gyrokinesis: <https://upwardspiralstudio.com>. There are also many free options via YouTube!

RICHARD CORNELL, PROFESSOR OF COMPOSITION AND MUSIC THEORY

Monday 3/16/20, Zoom platform notes—I had a good experience working with my Elements of Music Theory class yesterday on the Zoom platform. (These are non-majors from all over the university, and this is a Hub course.) Only I forgot to push the record button, and the one student who was not able to attend the session (from Mumbai) is out of luck. I will need to give him a private session at some point to make up for my error. My other Zoom class sessions are all scheduled to be recorded automatically. Live and learn. Otherwise, the students presented projects using MuseScore notation software and critiqued them. Everyone could hear what was going on, as well as contribute to the discussion. So far, we are about where the syllabus says we should be. *Tuesday 3/17/20*—Good session with MT1702, Graduate DMA seminar in preparation for the QEs. This was our first session on Zoom. It went more slowly than we would have managed in person, but that is not necessarily a bad thing. One advantage is that the questions queue in the chat space, and I can go through them all with the class and make sure everyone who's posted a question gets an answer. Comments from the class are generally positive about the environment and the session, but of course, I

cannot see what kind of side chatting is happening “privately.” They are understandably nervous about when and how the QE will be happening. *Wednesday 3/18/20 11AM*—First session with a graduate composer working on a film score. He has a commission for a score for a documentary film, capitalizing on his deep background in folk music (Celtic, etc.) has researched the folk music of the film’s subject (from Quebec), and enlisted his family (all folk musicians) in the pursuit. The project has been impacted by the Coronavirus, with major events being canceled, and is morphing into a piece about how folks are coping with this crisis. The student shared a pdf of his pencil sketch, and we were set to have an intelligent discussion about instrumentation, notion, structure, and process going forward. It was a briefer meeting than our usual hour (about 45 min), but substantial enough to be worthwhile. He was physically located in upstate NY, in the Hudson Valley. At the same time, I had an email from an undergraduate who had so much trouble traveling during and after spring break that she begged off for a week while she attained her objective: home in Chicago. I will reconnect with her during the week by email, but our meeting today is not going to happen. Another graduate composition lesson at 1pm. The student is engaged with two projects, one for flute, the other for 12 voices in three groups...Again able to share pencil sketches, and discuss many details, plan strategically, shared spoken word recordings with text of Akhmatova poetry. It worked, but since there are only short themes yet, we did not need a piano. We are talking about long-range structure and design. *Side note, this student is teaching ear training/ sight singing online at 8 am. Have asked him to share his experience.* Today was exhausting after spending most of it under a headset and staring into the screen. I am worried that the novelty of it will wear off quickly. *Thursday, 3/19/20*—Good session with MT702 looking at Webern and Babbitt. Able to easily send all a pdf, put them in break-out sessions (they seemed to enjoy). Better response with fewer people. More engagement and more involvement. Don’t know how it looks on their end but ok on mine. We’re all getting used to it and the spirit is cooperative. I hope that sustains.

KÍNH T. VŨ, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MUSIC EDUCATION

Social Distance,

A trope inspired by the song *From a Distance* (Gold, 1985)¹

Social distance, BU looks so serene
And CFA looks shiny bright
Social distance, the virus is so mean
And the students take to flight.

Social distance, what’s the policy
You need at least six feet distance
And don’t touch your eyes
Just don’t touch your nose
Please don’t touch your face at all

From a distance: That is where I would like to be standing two, three, four months from now looking back at all that has transpired during this incredibly mysterious and frightening time in world history. Instead, I, like the rest of humanity, am practicing social distancing, something that may not come naturally to those of us in the performing arts. We are used to sitting or standing side-by-side with our friends and colleagues singing and playing music together in the same room. This week has posed several opportunities for growth as an educator. My students have shown each other and me that remote learning can be delightful. While instructing Secondary General Music Methods, the class discussed how to redesign the curriculum so that micro-teaching activities simulate what online music education might be like in the future. We played with Zoom’s mute and unmute function, screen and video sharing, as well as clapping, echoing, and dancing. Yes, the digital interface can be somewhat challenging due to various qualities of learners’ internet speeds or technologies; however, those issues did not inhibit our emotional bond as a class. I might even argue that our digital interactions created touchpoints that were charged with aspects of fear, anxiety, sadness, loss, love, support, hope, and joy much more than we might normally experience in our usual setting on CFA’s second floor. While we may not be able to be side-by-side with our peer musicians, we are standing with each other virtually, remotely, and most importantly, emotionally. We are each other’s voices, violins, drums, keyboards, and trumpets. My students and my colleagues have proven that despite our social and geographical distance, we can and

¹ Gold, J. (1985). From a distance [Recorded by N. Griffith]. On *Lone star state of mind* [LP]. MCA Records.

must come together to musick as one and as many. Gold (1985) reminded us in her song *From a Distance*, popularized by Bette Midler in 1990, that we play songs of hope and peace: I contend that we are hope, and we are peace.

From a distance we are instruments
Marching in a common band
Playing songs of hope
Playing songs of peace
They are the songs of every man

MICHELLE LA COURSE, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF VIOLA

“Viola-Love in the Time of Corona,” Week 1: Prologue—(Wed 3/11, Mid-Spring Break) Sitting in the car repair waiting room on a day full of personal tasks and appointments, I got word that BU was going to remote teaching for four weeks. My mind suddenly sped through lists of new school-related tasks to take care of, and the extensive communication now needed: with all of my viola students, with the faculty and other students of the String Dept (which I chair), and consulting with the other Applied Dept Chairs (since I also work with them as Chair of Performance & Applied Studies, representing the largest group of students studying on-campus in the School of Music). Everything would need to be checked out with the School of Music Director, and countless procedural changes would need to be coordinated with staff, and—OMG—I *have never taught an online lesson in my life, and don’t even know how to use Skype. Hmm...I’ll figure that out by Monday somehow...* Now, what will we do about lessons, chamber music, large ensembles, and especially recitals, since the famous peak of “Degree Recital Season” comes right after Spring Break? (Fri 3/13, What Spring Break?) Many of us hoped (too optimistically) that limited private lessons, on-campus “audience-less recitals”, and other small-group performance classes would be allowed, as they were at several similar music schools *at that time*, but things changed by the hour, and most of those other schools soon banned all in-person teaching, as did BU. *Better to slow the spread of the virus, protect students, staff, faculty, and families (I mustn’t forget that my husband falls into the extra-vulnerable category), and make things as equivalent as possible for all of the students, than to hold on to that hope of any in-person teaching for now. ...and surely I can learn how to set up online lessons by Monday....* After a quick drive from home in Holyoke to Boston to pick up lesson notes, iPad loaded with music in for Score (my only real entry into 21st-century technology), and mountains of paperwork to set up at home for the coming month, I got completely stuck in the weeds of the Zoom online tutorials as I tried to figure out how to set up lessons and Studio Classes with my 15 viola majors, between all of the texts and emails and phone calls, with more still on my to-do list. *I must always remember that my students can usually answer my questions about all-things-online. One of my wonderful grad students came to the rescue by phone and email and explained how to set up Zoom specifically for lessons, did a practice run with me, helped with the audio settings, and showed me how to share invitations for one-click joining of a lesson/meeting or studio class/group meeting. I could now get back to my lists and prepare for a month at home.*

Week 1—All of my students got into our Zoom group meeting with seeming ease, for the Studio Class that starts my teaching week. No playing in class today, but that will start in earnest next week. Today: we all shared where we are and how we’re doing; two of my grad students with online teaching experience shared how to adjust the Audio settings in Zoom (& all made the adjustments to accommodate musical instrument sound) and also tips for camera placement, angle, volume, etc. for playing in lessons and future classes; then we each shared some ideas (I’d asked them by email to think of ahead of time) for staying positive & productive, supporting each other, and organizing our days in this new (temporary!) way of conducting our lives. LOTS of good, thoughtful, and insightful ideas were shared. We next went over some listening assignments each will talk about next week, discussed plans for playing in our Zoom class next week and beyond, confirmed lesson scheduling, and fielded any questions that came up. It was great to have a reassuring “family meeting”, and confirm our availability to each other by text, email, or phone, in addition to Zoom lessons and Studio Classes. This meeting set a comforting, reassuring tone, and reminded us that we’re all in this together. (I couldn’t help but silently recall my BU studio class on 9/11 just as that horrible news came in, and the importance of the emotional support we all provided to one another then.) These amazing students demonstrate again and again how sensitive, supportive, and resilient they are, along with the creativity, hard work, and discipline they’re all expected to bring to their musical studies. Wednesday (3/18) BU announced that distance-teaching would last all semester. Most of us saw this coming, and after dealing with the major disruptions of dorm-move-outs and no access to BU practice rooms for the rest of the semester, all got back to the business of making this work as well as possible. Online lessons this week have been a balance of “taking stock” of individual plans & challenges, and super-focused work on technical items and the music that each student is studying. Tone quality in online lessons is not great (the melted chocolate sound that we love about the viola just doesn’t transmit), but all of the other elements of playing the instrument and making music are clear, and the quick exchange of comments and

demonstration through Zoom are really impressive. I became fascinated with how I could fill the whole screen with my bow hand or with my left hand on the viola to demonstrate concepts super close up and from many angles the students can't usually (or ever!) see in person in a lesson, and I started to realize I could also ask students to show me close-ups of physical/technical items we're addressing. Now to "put the Dept Chair hat back on," work on documents and lists of procedures, and check in with more colleagues. My cat can't decide if it's great to have me home every day all day, or if it's just too annoying to have online lessons disturbing so many of his daily naps. He's resilient too, and will eventually get over it.



GABE LANGFUR, LECTURER IN BASS TROMBONE

The trombone is a social instrument; the more of us are gathered, the better we sound, generally speaking. So this is a difficult exercise for us, and one of the goals I've laid out for my studio is to do our very best to help each other through it by sharing observations, thoughts, and inspirations. In our first attempt at a studio Zoom meeting to discuss strategy, I asked what music they're listening to: one is exploring Beethoven String Quartets; another is listening to Requiems; another is diving into his favorite playlists of funk, 80s-90s pop, and Jason Mraz; my wife and I binged Billy Joel, particularly *The Stranger* – his best album by far in my opinion – until we couldn't get the songs out of our heads.

In some ways, we are enjoying the enforced reflection, relishing the extra time to walk more, read more, cook for ourselves more. One of my sophomore students expressed how much he is appreciating the time to "go deep" into particular aspects of his playing without the everyday demands of ensembles. A graduate student did several audition recordings for summer festivals before spring break and then took a real break for that week, practicing little but starting some arrangements for trombone choir that had been on his mind. Another was already deep into preparations for his second Master's recital scheduled for the end of this month and is now taking the opportunity to step back and refine even more slowly and deliberately. I am already generally a teacher who, rather than dictating a program of study, encourages students to set their own goals and let me help facilitate them, and I love hearing the creative ways they are finding to motivate themselves at this time. Finally, and most importantly, I have realized even more than I knew previously how grateful I am to my students. Their energies and their desire to continue improving are more than inspirational. My own mental state in this very strange time has been up and down, and my responsibility to them has at times been the only thing keeping me from putting my trombone away and simply going into a dark hibernation. With the mutual support of our community, acknowledging the difficulties along the way, I'm sure we can all create value from this strange situation. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sc2BK09eKhk>

KARIN HENDRICKS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MUSIC EDUCATION

Here we go, with Week 1 of our experiment in remote learning. I appreciate that our university administrators use the term "remote" instead of "online." Bonafide online courses take several months to plan and develop – and often involve professional staff designing modules and other mechanisms that would be absolutely impossible to create in the short timeframe we have. We are not teaching online courses; we are teaching traditional courses remotely. I am grateful, too, when Rebekah Pierson uses the word "triage," reinforcing that our administrators at all levels are realistic about what we can accomplish here.

I once attended a workshop presented by a songwriter who taught three steps to creativity: **FILL, CHILL, and DRILL** (Actually, he taught us to fill, chill, and kill – but because I am married to a pacifist, I changed the last one). If I were writing a song, I would first need to FILL by listening to all sorts of music to get an idea of what

possibilities were out there. Next, I would CHILL - rest and give my brain time to process all that it had taken in. This leads to DRILL – when the magic happens and the song flows from somewhere inside of me and I start playing or writing it. But this “drill” stage can’t happen if I force it, or if I skip the “chill” stage and let fear overwhelm me.

I keep these steps in mind whenever I stare at a blank computer screen with a need to write, or when I am otherwise challenged with something that seems impossible to do with my rather linear, uncreative brain. I also offer these steps to my doctoral students who are trying to figure out what research topic they want to “marry” for the next several years. I think of these steps again now, at this unprecedented moment in academic history, where we are asked to be creative in ways that we didn’t necessarily sign up for.

According to my songwriter friend, we can’t be creative until we have first filled up with resources, ideas, models, etc. so that we have an idea of what the possibilities are. Week 1 could perhaps be named FILL week. Rebekah Pierson has spent the week compiling all sorts of resources for us. At the same time, music teachers across the world have also been compiling other resources and sharing them through various associations such as ASTA, CMS, and NAFME. There are also Facebook groups that have popped up, including one for music educators (unfortunately this Facebook group didn’t get the “remote” vs. “online” memo, but there are some ideas worth considering). Rebekah is continuously updating our own resource page, shouldering the burden of vetting resources for quality. We also have some great technology folks who are generous and patient as we “fill” with pedagogical ideas while simultaneously “filling” with new technologies. After “fill” comes “chill” – a necessary stage to keep us healthy and sane before we can effectively “drill.” My hope is that everyone can get some downtime this weekend to rest, to settle, to relax, to take in all that is happening around us, so that we are centered enough to be present and compassionate with our students as well as ourselves. Ready, set, FILL!

EMILY RANII, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, WHEELOCK FAMILY THEATRE, LECTURER, OPERA INSTITUTE

We (Allison Voth and I) emailed the students in advance of class with a series of articles addressing the impact of COVID-19 on individual artists and arts organizations along with a series of questions to frame the class discussion:

- What is the artist's role in a time of crisis?
- What are innovative and virtual ways that we can continue to produce and experience art in the midst of COVID-19?
- What is the impact on the livelihoods of artists and the financial health of arts organizations?
- What is the impact on our identities as artists?
- What can we do to stay safe and take action through our art?

There are 18 students in OT. All arrived on time to class (an improvement on our in-person sessions) and the most extreme time difference was 3 hours earlier in California. For most of these students, our class at 11:15am EST on Monday was their first Zoom learning experience. Allison and I opened with a 3-question check-in for each student: 1) Where are you? 2) How are you and what is daily life like in your location? 3) Are you wearing pajama pants? Their answers to question #3 yielded some much-needed comic relief. Allison called on students during the check-in and we shifted to students gauging for themselves when to participate by listening/speaking in the discussion portion of the class. Surprisingly, everyone navigated the needs of the ensemble and Zoom supported this kind of intentional listening and responding. The takeaways from the discussion were hope (find moments to give gifts of beauty from afar), innovate (music via Zoom and from porches/balconies), and take solace in opportunities for laughter. We will revisit this conversation throughout the semester and move into acting coaching for monologues from plays along with text work on arias (approaching arias as monologues).

LYNN EUSTIS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF VOICE

“We are so small in front of the virus,” said my student from China, which seemed an accurate summation of our new reality. Music students are both overwhelmed and curious about how our content can be covered virtually. They mourn the loss of the performances for which they have worked all year, and they long for the chance to celebrate each other’s work. Each student reacted a bit differently to the first virtual voice lesson. Some just wanted to talk while others wanted to dive right into vocalization, attempting to reclaim normalcy. There were connectivity issues (minor) and keyboard issues (major if neither of us had one). A few were concerned about not having a private space to sing (or a lease that prohibits practice). Following my comment that I was now spending up to nine hours a day at the computer, one kindly showed me how to adjust my settings to Night Shift, warm. I was surprised to find that several students found a new sense of vocal freedom, perhaps as a result of both the relaxed environment of their home and their lowered expectations for the lesson in general. For others, the absence of the keyboard accompaniment exposed the need for better discipline in pitch and rhythm.

Our first virtual studio class meeting was something of a tragicomedy. Using gallery view, I was daunted by the sea of anxious faces, all looking to me for comfort and answers. The students were devastated by the news that BU would remain closed for the remainder of the semester. But they were heartened to hear that for some students, virtual lessons had changed the game in a positive way. There was much hilarity around virtual backgrounds; I highly recommend asking your students how to change yours. We read a poem, as we always do (this time using screen share), we listened to some St. Patrick's Day recordings of the Irish tenor John McCormack, and we brainstormed ways to maximize the next seven weeks. And they were not surprised to hear me say, "The coronavirus is not going to get you out of doing Vaccai [exercises]." Life goes on and so must our pursuit of musical excellence.

JUSTIN CASINGHINO, LECTURER IN COMPOSITION AND MUSIC THEORY

For this first blog, I've decided to start with some general comments, and then a few specific to each of the four courses I'm teaching this semester. I used Zoom meetings for all classes, and am continuing my normal practice of posting all materials and assignments on Blackboard, with all assignment submissions now being moved to this platform. I regularly use Zoom to teach one-on-one composition lessons outside of the university, to expand my available office hours, and have used it to cover classes that would otherwise need to be canceled (at a separate institution), so I felt reasonably familiar with the application. The first week of a full schedule online proved to move along reasonably successfully, with many expected outcomes and a few surprises. The main thing I did in all classes was to listen to my students – to let them help me shape the trajectory of how best to continue in the online format moving forward, from large-scale issues like pending performances to the minutia of how to best deliver the material. I regularly asked what was working well and took note of the feedback and their concerns both in regards to the courses and the situation in general. What I found in all classes was that the students did not want a shortened time just to touch base as was generally suggested to us, but rather wanted to use the time to learn - likely a nice distraction from current events. I continued accordingly, and offer details in regards to each course as follows:

MP 705: Writing for the DMA Recital—This course is SoM's research and writing class designed to guide our doctoral candidates in music performance in their lecture-recital projects. This is a small group, where I have implemented Zoom several times to accommodate individual meetings around students' busy schedules. Via screen share capabilities, we were able to cover material as we normally would have done via projector, and also talked as a group about expectations and realities of moving forward. One of the biggest concerns for students was acquiring further physical resources for their research – a matter we are continuing to investigate as libraries close their doors. In a small group setting like this, I did not find it an issue to have everyone in the group unmuted, allowing us to have a reasonably regular conversation. *MT 435/635: Electronic Music I*—This course meets as a mixed undergrad and graduate level group and is available for Hub credit in digital multimedia expression. This is a tricky course to move online, as the work for it is expected to be done within our electronic music studio. To move forward, I first sent out a Doodle poll to gauge which students currently had the needed software installed on their personal computers and if they felt ready to move forward with the one-on-one project meetings we had scheduled for the week. Based on a near 50/50 split response, I spread individual meetings out over the next two weeks. By first meeting the students for this course one-on-one, I have been/will be able to assess both the hardware and software that they each have available and to give time to students who need to settle these two issues. By doing these individual assessments, I will be able to better adapt my teaching to each student, rather than forcing them to try to adapt to my needs. One instance of this is being willing to discuss similar material within different software programs that the students have readily available. *MT 436/636: Electronic Music II*—This course involves the design of interactive musical environments in the software Max/MSP. Since our general procedure is sharing students' individual work with the class, I had envisioned this being a reasonably easy switch. However, it proved challenging when realizing just how many open windows I switch between during a class. The screen sharing in this became difficult, and as the next step in this course is individual projects, we decided as a group to move to one-on-one meetings for the coming few weeks. This will not only be helpful in terms of content but also assessing and implementing the hardware that each student has available to them. *MT 602: Analytical Techniques II*—This was my largest student group of the four classes, a three-hour graduate-level course in post tonal theory with 20+ members and additional auditors. We found it a necessity to auto-mute this large-sized group, but we were able to continue lessons in a reasonable manner, easily sharing scores and finding the whiteboard function to be particularly useful. I was able to call on individuals as I would in class, allowing everyone to participate by both audio and Chat comments. Rather than going for a full three-hour session, we found that breaking at about two hours, and then remaining on for anyone who wanted some extra time for further questions to be very effective. Rather than listening to pieces as a group – I set this up to be done on the students' own time, offering some listening guides with information that we would have regularly talked through. I am also

beginning to record some short videos for students to refer to for extra explanations, an addition that I think will also benefit the course in the future.

BAYLA KEYES, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF VIOLIN

Here is an assignment I gave my students this week—Compare the three versions of Samuel Barber's Adagio for Strings (string quartet, orchestra, and chorus—all three arranged by the composer) and tell me which is your favorite and why. All my students wrote back with differing and beautiful answers, but below is my favorite, from my sophomore double major (in biology). “Barber's Adagio for Strings has been one of my favorite pieces since my freshman year of high school (when I was 14), and I lost one of my close friends to suicide. I led my high school chamber orchestra in performing this piece for our entire student body after the loss of our fellow student, and I cannot describe the impact this piece has personally had on me in such a traumatic and sorrowful time. Once again turning to this piece for solace in such a difficult time feels natural, and it touched my heart deeply when you assigned us to listen to these recordings. I was familiar with the Dover String Quartet recording of this piece, and it is one of my favorites. However, I was surprised to find that my favorite recording of the three you sent was the Rotterdam Symphony Chorus. Before now, I had never heard the Adagio for Strings arranged for choir, and although strings are so near to my heart, there was something so deeply touching about Rotterdam's performance. The first thing I noticed was the space in which they performed the adagio matched exactly what I feel when I hear this piece. The dark cathedral, dimly lit, and filled with black-clothed people gives the feeling of deep pain, but in a collective mourning. There is something so chilling, yet beautiful and comforting about the human voices in this performance. The message of the piece and the tone are captured so perfectly in the human voice--depicting even more realistically tangible, human sorrow that strings can't quite replicate. I enjoyed the performance of the Rotterdam Symphony Chorus, and was brought to tears in how perfectly the human voices depict allowing ourselves to feel pain in these difficult times.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lKrxPTePXEQ>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAoLJ8GbA4Y>,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVowLNuV4Zk>

MIKE REYNOLDS, PROFESSOR OF CELLO

As we all adjust to our new reality, I've been talking to my class not only about how to navigate the virtual world to continue our work, but also encouraging them to take the time to further explore their inner worlds. Time they may not have had before to be more aware and thankful for the gifts they already have. Telling them my parents' stories of living through the Great Depression and WWII. Sharing bits of wisdom and humor that pass my way (as appropriate). We're working together to stay in close touch as a class, confirming group studio class (with guests from my private studio, other cellists around, or students considering BU). We're also setting up a series of group recitals toward the end of the semester for those who had recitals scheduled (or not) that can be enjoyed by the class and any invited guests on Zoom. I've attached a nice message below.

“And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently. And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal. And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live.”

BRITA HEIMARCK, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MUSICOLOGY AND ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

I am preparing to teach my Balinese music ensemble online today... The challenges are clear and present every moment for each of us. But I will briefly summarize some of the strengths in our resources, the resiliency of our students, and the challenges that have presented themselves in this first week of online teaching...First, I took the Zoom Training offered Friday, March 13th and that was Very helpful. They explained how to set up zoom meetings, how to indicate the meetings on our blackboard sites, how to share our screen with the students, how to break into small groups and come back into the whole group for small group discussions, and other concerns. Getting this training at the end of our spring break enabled me to write all of my students on Saturday before classes resumed to explain the plan going forward and to enable them to join me for classes online at our regular class times. All of this went well. To my amazement, almost all of my students were there online for our first class on Tuesday, March 17; one missed the class because she was on a flight to Virginia, and our Evergreen student had some technical difficulties, but everyone else was there. So nearly full attendance is a tribute to our tech-savvy students and their resiliency in this crisis. The biggest challenge is how to teach my ensemble today. I have altered my syllabus to shift from hands-on performance of Balinese shadow play music to readings about Balinese music and culture and we will

now emphasize reading and discussion much more than before. However, I also took one of my Balinese instruments home so that I can play the piece they were learning for them on the zoom meeting, and we can record the class including the musical portions, and we will discuss together today exactly how much time they want to allocate to reading, how much to music, and how much to developing our multi-media presentation. Each student may be responsible for locating video footage, news stories, and photos that represent climate change, and we will combine our efforts to make a multi-media presentation that our new composition (already created in the first 7 weeks of class) can accompany. We were engaged in that effort before, but now they will have to do it on their own. That is the plan, now we'll see how it goes!

I guess the lessons for Week 1 include adaptability, creativity, compassion, and support to all. Each online class I take time to find out how all the students are doing, how they are coping with their new situation and locations, how they and their families are managing health-wise, and then we dig into the readings for that week and extensive discussion of the meanings therein. I believe this "food for thought" will help them in the end. Best of luck to All of you in this crazy and uncertain time.

GREGORY MELCHOR-BARZ, PROFESSOR OF ETHNOMUSICOLOGY, DIRECTOR CFA SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Gentle CFA School of Music Students: Thursday Musings—Each day (each hour?) we expect to receive email messages chock full of *logistics*, right? What's open. What's closed. Instructions. Expectations. Safety issues. Guidelines and directives. That the faculty and staff are facing similar challenges must bring little solace, but... We are surrounded by wonderful humans in the School of Music, and each of us is blessed with talents that seem to be limitless. But...it is hard. Challenges are hard. Yes, yes. I know that we can all do this. It's just getting a bit harder to do it *all together*, isn't it? We will, however, find ways of doing things all together. We are musicians. We rely on our instincts. We improvise. We create. I need to help faculty learn how to Zoom, just as each of you needs to help your colleagues, your classmates, your chums learn to collaborate remotely and...learn together.

We are all attempting to figure out how to be musically-in-the-world while maintaining a social distance. If we get weary and frustrated, trust me, I get it. I wake up at 5 a.m. each morning to dozens of emails (keep them coming!) spelling out challenges. Some of the challenges can be addressed and fixed. Other challenges represent roadblocks that must be enforced to help keep all of us safe and healthy. Frustrations? Yeah, I get it. Sometimes the tension can be like listening to a Maria Callas recording, wondering if she is actually going to make the high B at the end of the aria (hint: she *always* does!). I'm not saying, "relax, it's all gonna be fine." Quite the contrary. I'm suggesting that it's OK to need help right now. Let's get in the habit of reaching out to each other, reaching out to your professors, reaching out to your School Director (cough, cough), if you need help, guidance, or support.

So, let's make music!