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INNOVATE. MUSIC. LEAD.

A magazine of the Institute for Music Leadership at the Eastman School of Music

A Conversation with Third Coast Percussion

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Are You a Musical Code Switcher?

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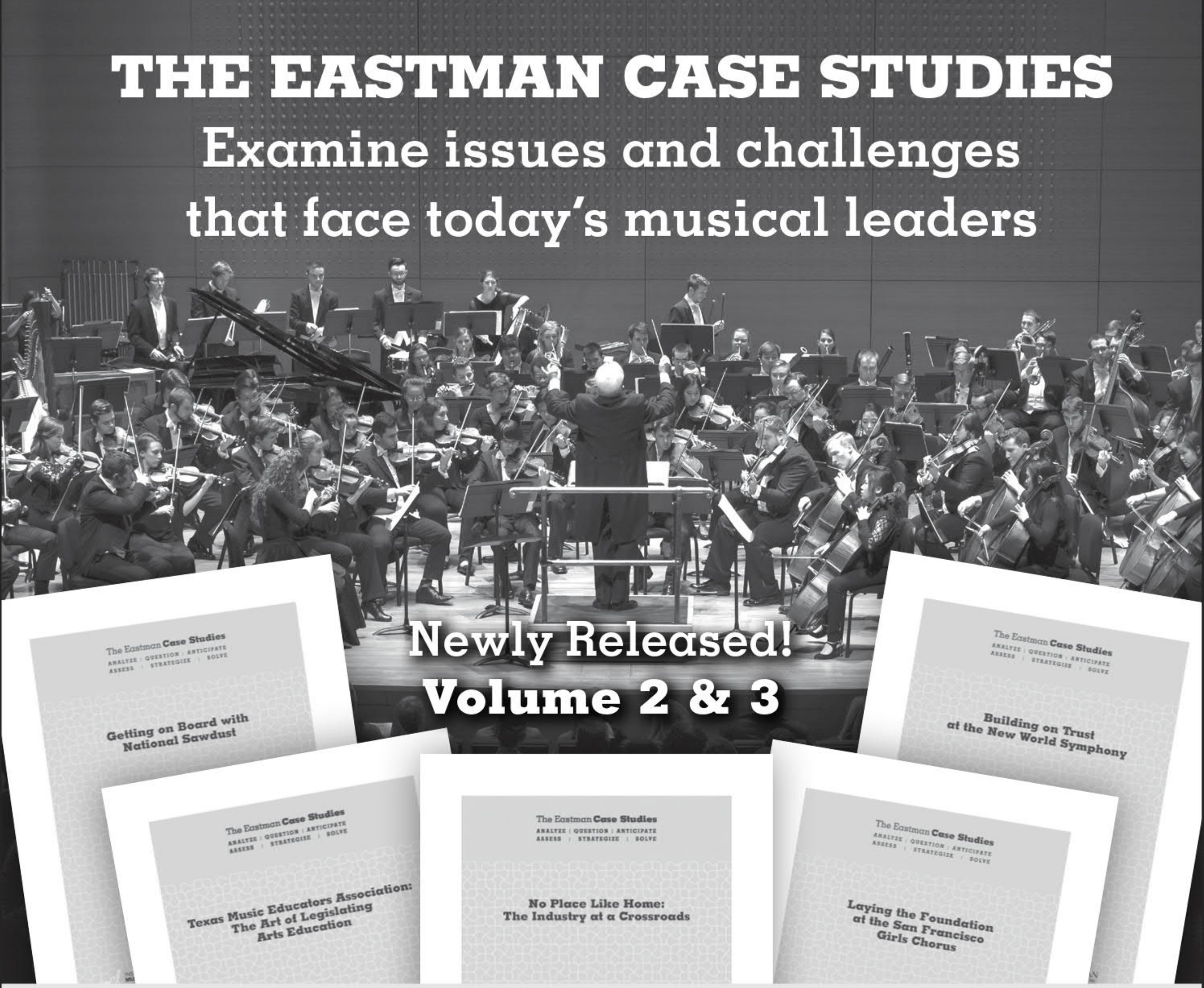
Produced by the Paul R. Judy Center for Innovation and Research at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY



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EDITOR'S WELCOME

When Paul Judy endowed the Paul R. Judy Center for Innovation and Research at the Eastman School of Music he did so because he felt that Eastman was well positioned to synthesize research, support conversation, provide resources, and lead innovation in service of musical arts organizations and musicians.

Under the perceptive guidance of Managing Editor Steve Danyew, the **INNOVATE. MUSIC. LEAD. Magazine** is one more artifact suggesting that Mr. Judy was correct.

In aggregate with the Paul R. Judy Center website, the PRJC conferences, The Eastman Case Studies, and the PRJC Grant program, the I.M.L. magazine offers a combination of reporting, research, and opinion. Thoughtfully curated by Steve, we continue our quest to uphold Paul's vision of providing useful information to a range of musical artists and leaders through this biannual publication.

We invite your comments, submissions, and your participation in all things ***Eastman***.

Musically Yours,

James C. Doser
Director, Institute for Music Leadership
Eastman School of Music
Editor-in-Chief,
INNOVATE.MUSIC.LEAD. Magazine

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Are You a Musical Code Switcher?

DANIEL ISBELL, PH.D. & ANN MARIE STANLEY, PH.D.

Do any of these scenarios sound familiar?

1. You perform with the symphony in the afternoon, then change out of your formal black, throw your music stand in the trunk, and head straight to a gig with your rock band.

2. On Sunday morning, you accompany a gospel church service, then have an intense chamber music rehearsal in preparation for a premiere.

3. You improvise a burning solo with your jazz combo, mere moments before you leave for a folk music gig at the local coffee house.

If you find yourself making radical changes in musical styles in the course of a single day or week, you might be a musical *code-switcher*. And if you're truly proficient at musical code-switching: congratulations! You're a nimble, flexible musician, with great ears, and quick musical processing ability. Chances are you're comfortable in several genres, with and without musical notation. You are socially sensitive, willing and able to adapt to musicians from a wide variety of backgrounds. And you probably also have more gigs than you know what to do with!

These are some of the results from our preliminary research, *Musical Code-Switching: Musical Interactions in Alternative Music Ensembles*, funded by the Paul R. Judy Center for Innovation and Research. We're the first researchers to apply the linguistic concept of *code-switching* to music, and are documenting the hallmarks of this highly beneficial trait. Our key finding is that code-switchers have acquired a deep level of musicianship enhancing *any* and *all* styles of musical performance, and they can transfer their musical skills across multiple settings. We want to find out how educators might help more young musicians develop code-switching skills: the ability to make music in many formal and informal ways, from concert halls and recording studios to churches and clubs.

What is Code-Switching?

In linguistics, code-switching means using more than one way of speaking within a single episode (Heller, 1988). Researchers have applied code-switching theory to understand how people shift between languages or dialects in different situations (Blom and Gumperz, 1972; Lowi, 2005). Code-switching has also been used outside linguistics: NPR's "Code Switch" broadcast explores "the different spaces we each inhabit and the tensions of trying to navigate between them." Writers in the *Harvard Business Review* wrote about code-switching– changing behavior in various situations in accordance with varying cultural norms–as one of the top three skills every 21st-century manager needs.

As professors and researchers in music teaching and learning, we are fascinated by the musicians we perceive as fluent in several musical languages. These musicians shift between styles and genres as effortlessly as a bilingual person leaps back-and-forth between languages in a single conversation. We call these versatile performers *musical code-switchers*, and have observed how code-switchers successfully negotiate musical and social challenges as they move between different groups and genres. But how did these flexible musicians acquire the skills to toggle between various musics? And what specific skills are necessary?

Our Study

Through word-of-mouth, personal knowledge, and recommendations from friends and teachers, we identified 11 Eastman School of Music students that we thought were effective code-switchers: students who perform in multiple genres and move easily across musical worlds. Our participants had to have *documented* success in multiple genres: potential participants that were the proverbial "jack-of-all-trades, master of none" were excluded. We conducted long interviews with each person, listened to their recordings, and attended their concerts on campus and around Rochester. Their gigs covered a wide spectrum of music, including classical, avant-garde, contemporary, jazz, folk, rock, reggae, bluegrass, Celtic, and ska. We transcribed their interviews and analyzed the data for similar themes across participants.

Our preliminary findings indicate that musical code-switchers are alive and doing *very* well at Eastman School of Music. These young musicians derive great satisfaction from their ability to work with varied musical groups. They are proud of their skills, enjoy their gigs, and have an optimistic—and we believe, realistic—outlook on their ability to have a successful multi-genre musical career.

We also learned important lessons about the type of *early* musical experiences our participants enjoyed, and uncovered important truths about their in-school musical preparation. The influence of music teachers and the culture of formal music programs, both before and during college, had the potential to positively *and negatively* impact their willingness and ability to explore musical styles. Our findings therefore, have significant implications for music education at all levels. Here are initial findings; an upcoming book project will offer an in-depth look at code-switching featuring extended participant profiles, paired with interviews of some famous, ultra-successful professional code-switchers.

Code-switching: Musical, Social, and Physical

We analyzed the ways these 11 musicians function in various musical groups, and found commonalities in the way they are able to move between them. Three types of code-switching skills—musical, social, and physical—aid their capacity for successful performance in a number of genres.

Musical. Musical code-switching is marked by an ability to rapidly process, comprehend, and react to musical sounds, in a stylistically appropriate way. Our participants are able to change their tone or style immediately based on aural input from collaborators. Their musical code-switching sensitivity isn't limited to merely being sensitive to tempos, dynamics, or rhythms, however. These musicians are capable of *spontaneous musical dialogue*, making and responding to musical statements within the parameters of whatever style of music is being performed. The ability to pick up tunes and progressions by ear, without notation, is a

crucial skill for this musical interaction. It is also significant that our participants embrace improvisation. Not all of the participants consider themselves to be outstanding improvisers, but they all stated it is a fundamental skill and one they are willing to practice.

Several of our participants are able to switch between instruments based on the needs of various groups (i.e. one plays double bass in an orchestra and bass guitar in his rock band; another is majoring in classical piano yet performs regularly on folk fiddle). They have solid, even virtuosic, technique on both instruments. However, even those participants who play a *single* instrument in multiple styles are skilled at adapting their rhythmic or tonal output to match the musical demands of a particular environment. For example, one cellist reports a keen awareness of rhythm—in terms whether she needs to play ahead of the beat, behind the beat, or "in the pocket"—when she moves between new music ensemble Musica Nova, the Rochester Philharmonic, and her cello rock band. Failure to make these intuitive adjustments would quickly stick out to her colleagues and audience.

Social. Our participants have sensitivity to subtle social cues. They adapt their vocabulary, use of musical terminology, and personal characteristics in a chameleon-like way, the better to fit in with any group of musicians. They perceive that some times they are the "college kid," or "that guy with a music degree, " participating with "working musicians" in the community. Other times, they pick up on a different vibe, and believe they are seen as the renegade, the "rock and roll" player in the college ensemble.

These social perceptions are not a new phenomenon with these musicians; they became sensitive to social dynamics early in their musical life when code-switching first began to take place. Social/musical interactions were fostered in tangible ways by their parents and teachers. Some participants spoke movingly about when and how they learned they could immerse themselves in various groups—say, playing for their teacher in school, and with their friends outside of school—and could inhabit different personas for each.

Physical. Participants frequently noted they have different physical approaches as they switch between settings: often a by-product of stress and tension. One participant remarked that she brings more "tightness" to classical performances than to the informal sessions outside of school. She noticed, for example that her "face [was] more relaxed when I played fiddle and more intense when I'm playing classical…When I'm just playing a tune that I know, it's very peaceful." Capitalizing upon this, she learned that applying the fiddle approach to the classical world helped her alleviate tension, injury, and enhanced her expressivity. The aural acuity and clarity of the bow technique she developed in the classical world also allowed her to play with better intonation in fiddle sessions.

Common Themes

More Than One Instrument, More Than One Style, in Childhood. Most of our participants had formative musical experiences in their early years of life, which is probably common among most Eastman students. However, what's different is that these code-switchers learned *multiple* instruments early on, and moved between them often. Most of our participants had a teacher or important family member who encouraged them to learn and perform on more than one instrument, usually before the age of seven.

Informal Music-making With Family and Friends. Starting from late elementary school, our code-switchers had rewarding formal musical experiences in- and out-of-school, but most recall the time spent—*informally* and *with friends*—listening to music, imitating recordings, or composing/arranging tunes as crucial learning opportunities. Most of the 11 participants enjoyed an ever-increasing feeling of musical confidence as they got better at learning *and* teaching tunes informally, without notation.

Motivation from Authentic Performance Opportunities, Not Just Lessons. As teens, all the participants had experiences with preparing for actual gigs and performances unrelated to school groups. They were routinely arranging small-group performances with friends or community members: motivated by upcoming shows to learn repertoire and hone their skills. They were thrilled by feeling a personal connection with demonstrative, even rowdy, audiences in settings *other* than their formal school or studio concerts and recitals. In college, this continued. All participants have frequent opportunities to apply these musical skills in *authentic*, real-world settings of gigs and jam sessions. Certainly, their stable groups rehearse frequently, but participants were quick to tell us that they fearlessly seek and accept opportunities to perform with new people in unfamiliar locations or styles.

Musicianship. Without exception, our code-switchers have excellent musical skills that extend far beyond being good sight-readers and stylistically appropriate interpreters of notation. While they are all technically fluent on at least one instrument and have mastered the basics of good-quality sound production, their musicianship transcends instrumental skills. They are able to hear, identify, and improvise over harmonic progressions. Their comfort with singing and memorizing melodies and bass lines enables them to quickly learn and teach new tunes to others. Several of the participants compose their own music or make arrangements for their ensembles. Their musicianship, accompanied by their social skills, is helpful when they assume leadership responsibilities in a particular group: guiding rehearsals, offering suggestions, or troubleshooting musical problems.

Conclusion*

A core mission of music education at all levels is to help people develop the skills to continue making music successfully throughout their lives. So it's crucial that we understand how and when some people become fluent in multiple musical styles, when others do not. We don't believe that *everyone* has to become a fluent code-switcher. However, greater access and success within multiple musical worlds is a worthy goal. There are many things music educators in studios, classrooms, and rehearsal halls can do to foster code-switching skills in their students. Based on our research, we believe music educators at all levels can encourage music students to adopt a broader, deeper understanding of what it means to be a comprehensive musician.

*[*Click here to read implications and suggestions]*

A Conversation with Third Coast Percussion

Photo by Saverio Truglia

What are a few of the things that you feel makes Third Coast Percussion unique?

I think we do a great job of carrying out both our artistic and organizational work at a very high level. We perform a wide variety of repertoire and maintain an identity that's super professional but also really friendly. We pursue our education and community engagement projects with a real passion, and we get excited about collaborations with all sorts of fields–engineers, architects, astronomers, computer programmers, plus dancers and all sorts of musicians.

How does your ensemble delegate the administrative responsibilities of running a busy ensemble?

Since the beginning, we were an artist-run ensemble, and we've tried to split the administrative workload pretty evenly, especially since we went full-time in 2013. We all really want to be involved in steering the ship, and frankly, we all need (and have always needed) to be working really hard all the time to make this thing succeed, so there was never any room for anyone to

feel like they had less of an ownership stake in it.

Each of the four of us have an administrative title in addition to being Ensemble Members/co-artistic directors. I'm the Development Director, so I deal with fundraising and grant writing; Sean is the Technical Director, so he manages with the myriad logistical concerns we deal with; Peter is Finance Director, so he keeps our books in order and plans our budgets for each season; and David is the Executive Director, so he is keeping track of everything that's going on, managing our relationships with all sorts of partners, and making sure we're looking 3-5 years down the road, working toward where we want to be long-term. He has usually been in charge of booking the ensemble, as well. However, two years ago, we were able to hire our first additional staff member, Liz Pesnel. Liz now works full-time as our Managing Director, and she's taking over a large portion of the booking work, as well as helping to keep things running on a day-to-day basis. We recently hired a part-time Studio Manager, too– Colin Campbell– who helps us keep our equipment organized in Chicago and get instruments set up, torn down, and packed for gigs. We all deal with a lot of smaller tasks as well, but that's the broad view.

How often is Third Coast on the road performing or in residence at a University or venue?

Last year we spent around 150 days on the road, I believe. About 6 weeks of that is our Ensemble-in-Residence position at the University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, and the rest of that time is traveling around for engagements that range from a single performance in a place, up to a full week residency (or occasionally longer). We offer a whole bunch of different residency activities, everything from interactive youth engagement programs for elementary school students, to family concerts, to coachings with high school and college musicians, to outdoor performances with local community members. Residencies almost always conclude with a concert performance. Sometimes we feel like we've met everyone in a town by the time we leave! At this point I think we've performed in 33 states, and are starting to tour internationally as well, with recent concerts in Italy, Germany, Poland, and the Netherlands. It's a real joy to get to visit all of these different places and meet people from these communities.

How does Third Coast make artistic decisions such as what repertoire to include in an upcoming performance?

This is a great question, and there's no hard-and-fast system for making those decisions. There are a lot of conversations, and some general principles that guide the process. The four ensemble members each bring ideas to the table at one point or another, and everyone feels free to voice their opinions, but we all also are happy to defer to the strongest feelings. If someone else has something they're super excited about, I'll get behind it even if it's not my favorite, and the other guys are the same. At some point or another, we'll all get a project we're passionate about to come to fruition, and at some point we'll each have to let something go. We do a good job of balancing everyone's interests and maintaining a variety in our repertoire.
In recent years, we've developed more detailed long-term strategic plans for our organization, so projects that hit multiple goals from that plan tend to get more preference. And of course, we're perpetually balancing artistic ambitions and logistical considerations, so that some times plays a role, especially in terms of choosing repertoire to tour. We've also created ways to ensure we have room for

those projects that are artistically important for us but are maybe not as practical. For instance, we started a brand of concerts for our Chicago season where we specifically aim to program music by emerging composers and experiment with repertoire we don't necessarily think we could tour, or otherwise stretch ourselves artistically. We call these shows "Currents," and we generally do one a year. By creating a structure and brand around it, it gets built into our planning every season now.

Third Coast interacts frequently with audiences around the country. How would you characterize the current appetite for contemporary music?

It's a constant surprise to us what communities will have a strong turnout for adventurous programming. Of course Chicago has a thriving community for new music right now, and is generally viewed as a hub for arts and culture, but we've also played concerts for great audiences in Arkansas or Missouri or South Carolina. It seems like what it takes are some supporters who are willing to put their resources behind the arts, and a presenter who has developed a strong relationship with their community, and built a trust that whatever they bring in will be interesting and well presented, even if it's unfamiliar. So, people come and they're not necessarily there because they wanted to hear contemporary classical music, or because they want to see a piece by Thierry De Mey or Donnacha Dennehy. But when they come up to us after the show and say "I've never heard anything like that before," they say it with a smile. There are a lot of people out there who are excited to experience something different, and who love to see live performances.

Do you brand yourself as a contemporary music ensemble, a band, a percussion quartet, a classical music ensemble, or do you use other terms? Does your branding or marketing change based on whether you are reaching out to different audiences such as the academic audience versus the general public?

I think we call ourselves all of those things at different times, and think of ourselves as those different things internally as well, based on different contexts and different facets of our mission and artistic goals. It's a challenge trying to come up with a label that accurately portrays us and also states it in terms that will be meaningful to the person we're talking to. In our bio we now say "a quartet of classically-trained percussionists." Maybe that captures it? Honestly, I think a photo or short video can communicate a lot more about what people are coming to see– at least the energy and personality of our ensemble– than any description.

Congratulations on your recent Grammy award! What was it like to perform at the Grammy Awards?

Thanks a lot! It was a totally surreal experience. Really exhilarating, a huge honor, and so sleekly produced. We performed the last movement of Steve Reich's Mallet Quartet, which was on our album that won the Grammy, and Ravi Coltrane played an improvised solo over the top. Ravi was a joy to work with and awesome to meet, and it felt like a really unique performance that might only happen in this context. The whole event is cool in that it brings together artists from all of these different genres to one occasion. People from all of these disparate styles are honored with the same award, and the ceremony creates a lot of these "Grammy moments" where artists perform together who might not ordinarily.

Given your recent big accomplishment of winning your first Grammy, what is next for Third Coast Percussion? What do you want to be doing five years from now?

A Grammy is something that everyone in the world recognizes, even if they have no idea who we are or what this music is that we play. We're hopeful that it will help open some new doors for Third Coast Percussion– allow us to pursue all of our projects at a higher level, get in front of new audiences, and build some new collaborations.

In the immediate future, we've got two new albums coming out: an album of works by Philippe Manoury– this crazy intricate French music that's VERY different from the Steve Reich album we put out last year– and an album coming out in the winter called "Paddle to the Sea" which corresponds to a new project we'll be touring next season and beyond. That includes water-themed music by Philip Glass and Jacob Druckman, a little bit of Shona Mbira music from Zimbabwe, and music the four of us co-composed. Writing music together as a quartet is a newer pursuit we've been diving into recently. We've also got some big commissions coming up: Georg Friedrich Haas, Missy Mazzoli, Ryan Lott, Tyondai Braxton, and Philip Glass, as well as a concerto from Augusta Read Thomas, who's been a long-term collaborator of ours, and a new project with Hubbard Street Dance.
Over the next five years, we hope to create projects that build meaningful bridges to other genres and communities: non-Western musical traditions, hip-hop, and more. We're also working to make our educational work as meaningful as possible, and commission a wide range of composers, from emerging composers to "household names," especially if they've never written a percussion ensemble piece. Imagine how different the percussion world would be if Stravinsky or Berio had written a percussion quartet!

What advice do you have for younger musicians who want to start their own ensemble?

So much! Our mantra is, "have a plan, be flexible." Always work to be as prepared as you can for every opportunity, but be adaptable, because inevitably something won't go according to plan. Be organized, be professional, and be a pleasure to work with.

Whatever you're really passionate about doing, get started right now, because it'll take time to get things going and figure out where you're headed, much less make any money from it. And choose your own model; you don't have to do things the way Third Coast Percussion does it or anyone else does it. You have to decide what's most important to you and how to structure your endeavor to make it work for you.

Remember it's all about the art. The administrative work can be daunting and take a lot of energy and time, but it's all there to support the art. So make sure you're doing work you really believe in.

Lastly, remember that there are a lot of people out there who love the arts and want to see them flourish! Our ensemble's success owes a lot to friendly musicians and non-profit administrators who were willing to sit down for a coffee and give advice, arts supporters who were willing to make a donation to support our work, and presenters who were willing to take a risk. Share your excitement about what you're doing and ask people for their thoughts.

Spinning Plates, Entrepreneurship, and the Social Relationships of Ensemble Residencies

JOHN PIPPEN, PH.D.

Over the last few decades, many American schools of music have embraced the repertoire and missions of new music ensembles. Boundaries are broken, venues explored, students challenged, and new sounds ring out. What a change from the 1980s, when musicologist Susan McClary argued that "both popular and postmodern musics are marked as the enemy, and there is still considerable effort exerted to keep them out of the regular curriculum" (1989, 67). A manifestation of this shift is the ensemble residency. Institutions across the country routinely hire musicians to teach students both the art and business of professional new music-making. Last year, I had the opportunity to explore the interaction between ensembles and institutions. I spent time with three groups at different institutions: Third Coast Percussion at the University of Chicago, the Playground Ensemble at Metro State University Denver, and eighth blackbird at the Curtis Institute of Music. I begin with a scene from my fieldwork in Chicago with Third Coast Percussion:

Composer Jonathan Pfeffer (grey hoodie) guides the members of Third Coast Percussion through a series of musical ideas. Ensemble members from left to right: Robert Dillon, David Skidmore, Peter Martin (kneeling), and Sean Connors.

It's 5:25 P.M. and Third Coast Percussion is running through their music. The quartet has spent most of the day here in their studio space on Rockwell Avenue in Chicago, collaborating with composer Jonathan Pfeffer. The composer prefers to write music for people he knows well, and he has spent the last two days experimenting with the group and discussing how the piece might work. Pfeffer left a few hours ago, and the quartet has since moved on to music for an upcoming concert. A brief pause lingers after they finish the piece, the members gathering their thoughts.

"We kind of settled into a tempo, and I think we should just roll with that" says Peter Martin. David Skidmore observes that the crescendo at measure thirty could grow louder. They discuss the dynamics and phrasing for a few minutes, but at some point, without my realizing it, the conversation drifts to the old Nickelodeon show, *You Can't Do That on Television.* This type of break is not uncommon for these good-humored performers, but it lasts only a few minutes.

"We should, like, take a day off," David says.

"Like in 2017?" replies Robert Dillon, a sarcastic grin spreading across his face.

Pfeffer working with Percussionist David Skidmore on the Kalimba.

The joke is funny, but rings true. The past week had been especially busy, with residency activities at the University of Chicago, a rehearsal with the Chicago Youth Symphony, and the collaborative project with Pfeffer. Besides late night meals and occasional rehearsal jokes, the four percussionists have gone without a break for about nine days, often working long hours and hauling equipment from one locale to another. Phones are always close at hand as members check the progress on upcoming projects, contracts, and gig schedules. After laughing off Rob's joke, they run the piece again, this time with the lights out as they'll perform it.

I describe this scene in detail because it is common to Third Coast Percussion, eighth blackbird, and the Playground Ensemble. Long days of work followed by rehearsals for quickly approaching gigs was common to all three ensembles. Performers strive for a high level of musicianship that requires focused attention and lengthy rehearsals of difficult music. Humor is frequently used to lighten the mood, but

nothing can stop the relentless approach of deadlines.
These musicians are, to invoke the buzzword of our time, entrepreneurs. They "create success" for themselves (Baumgartner, 2014), innovate, collaborate, and tout what psychologist Carol Dweck (2006) dubs the "growth mindset." Obstacles are transformed into creative guidelines, and programs created to attract audiences with enticing themes. Entrepreneurialism is celebrated by many in the arts scene, but the reality of entrepreneurialism is less sunny than the image projected by consultants and administrators. Because it valorizes flexibility, opportunism, and social relationships, entrepreneurialism demands constant work. When every moment has potential meaning, it can be hard to relax.

During an open reading session for student compositions, cellist and Playground Ensemble member Richard vonFoerster gives feedback to the composer.

And work *is* constant in a small flexible ensemble. During my fieldwork with these three groups, I saw people working at all hours of the day, often leaving one site of activity to report to another. Even breaks could be filled with work: phone calls to arrange the details of an upcoming gig, meetings with collaborators or students, or attending the premier of a friend's piece. The flexible nature of these ensembles, a seeming hallmark of the new music scene today, requires constant attention to the dozen or so obligations that, like plates spinning on poles, are poised to fall without warning. A grant application is due. Did you send me that budget? Can you help set up chairs for a second? I need to practice that one part. We have a concert and need some spoken notes. Could you prepare something?

Members of the Playground Ensemble prepare for the evening's Colorado Composers Concert. From left to right: composer (non-member) James David, clarinetist Brian Ebert, pianist Josh Sawicki, cellist Richard vonFoerster, and violinists Sarah Johnson and Anna Morris.

Within the residency, tailoring is the working method of the flexible ensemble. Like consultants in the business world, these musical entrepreneurs maintain an influential if somewhat ambiguous relationship with host institutions (Sennett, 2006). At each residency musicians designed projects (concerts, presentations, and teaching activities) that were somehow tailored to the needs of the institution and the abilities of the ensemble. Work included a variety of teaching and performing activities, as dictated by the nature of the institution and the contract of the residency (see the complete grant report for a detailed description of activities). This tailoring required regular communication between ensembles and institutions, a somewhat challenging prospect depending on the number of people involved on each side of the consultant relationship. Furthermore, an ensemble's impact upon an institution

was confined by the temporary nature of the residency itself. None of these musicians were actually full-time faculty members, and their ability to shape institutional policy and goals remained limited by their transience. Nevertheless, it was clear to me that ensembles have a strong and infectiously positive impact upon an institution's students.

For all three groups, residencies are a major part of professional life and economic livelihood. The two touring ensembles, Third Coast Percussion and eighth blackbird, rely heavily on residencies for their income. Residency activities such as teaching and master classes are often important offerings used to secure gigs within the network of music institutions. Such work varies greatly in length, ranging from a few hours of teaching, lecturing, or coaching all the way to weeks of activities spread out throughout the year (or years as in the case of eighth blackbird's Curtis residency). For the Playground Ensemble, a single residency provides limited financial support, but gives the group access to percussion equipment, rehearsal space, and performance venues.

eighth blackbird fits in a rehearsal during the Curtis Residency. The ensemble enjoyed a dedicated room during their residency. From Left to right: Lisa Kaplan, Yvonne Lam, Nick Photinos, Matthew Duvall, Michael Macceferri, and former member Tim Munro.

In addition to economic and logistical support, residencies provide crucial symbolic capital. The currency of the entrepreneur, symbolic capital takes the form of prestige and reputation. Ensembles leverage relationships, prizes, grants, and endorsements from critics and other influential taste-makers to secure future work. The prestige ascribed to a given institution can serve as a sort of sociomusical business card in conversations with insiders and outsiders, as Third Coast Percussion member Robert Dillon told me of their Notre Dame residency:

There's nothing better than being able to go somewhere and say that you're tied to this larger reputable institution. For people who know nothing [about new music], if we walk in someplace and say we have ensemble residency at the University of Notre Dame, it's like, "Wow, you guys must be great!" And if you're talking to presenters or managers, then they know the person who runs the [DeBartolo] Performing Arts Center [at Notre Dame], and so that's even better (R. Dillon, personal communication, November 5, 2014).

members of eighth blackbird rehearse with conservatory students for that evening's concert of music from 1924 at the Curtis Institute of Music.

Members of all three ensembles described a similar view of residencies. The prestige and respect perceived to be held by the institution was in effect transferred to the

ensemble and provided evidence of the ensembles' legitimacy and respectability (see further Kingsbury, 1988, and Cottrell, 2004).

Like other aspects of entrepreneurial life, residencies are developed through and contribute to social relationships. They allow ensembles to foster new contacts and project ideas. During fieldwork, I witnessed current plans come to life, while plans for future project ideas where planted in institutional spaces. At all three institutions, ensemble members became, to varying extents, part of the educational life and community of the institution, carving out nooks and crannies, as it were, for themselves and for interaction between themselves and students. These types of social relationships were viewed by all as highly valuable when considering the overall value of the residency. The residencies thus reified these relationships into contracted work.

Third Coast Percussion and eighth blackbird worked together in the summer on creating a special touring show for the upcoming season. From left to right: Third Coast Managing Director Liz Pesnel, percussionist David Skidmore, eighth blackbird percussionist Matthew Duvall, and stage director Rachel Damon.

For over thirty years now, musicians, arts workers, and presenters have been building a vibrant scene of musical activity that provides much needed relevance to classical music and an alternative to the stodgy programming common within classical music. Creating this scene requires constant energy, constant work, and constant maintenance of social relationships. Projects and programs must be tailored to unique needs, tweaked after they start, and thrown out when they falter. Though rarely examined in the popular press, residencies are an important site in the production of the new music culture so many of us love.

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Thinking Long Term

A young musician once asked an established, entrepreneurial musician a great question: "What do you think is the biggest mistake that young musicians make?" The older musician answered without hesitation, "thinking too short term." They went on to explain the importance of thinking long term and not only focusing on the immediate future.

I like to think about making investments in ourselves, in our organizations, in our ensembles. Doing little things that might pay off in the long run. Like taking the time to go to that concert that someone invited you to – taking time to cultivate that relationship and perhaps meet others who could offer you an opportunity or collaboration down the road. Take time to plan and set goals for the long term – 5, 10 years. But also take advantage of little opportunities to invest in yourself now in ways that might yield returns in the long term. I think this concept is most true with people – don't think only short term when interacting with people. The music world is small, and they will likely come back around in the future, or at a minimum interact with others that you know. So think long term – invest in your work, cultivate relationships with people, and you will be planting seeds for your future.

What Makes Your Work Different?

Are your concerts just like everyone else's? Are your compositions or arrangements? Is your improvisational style? Your teaching? If not, what makes your's different? What makes it unique? This is essential knowledge. And sometimes it takes a while to really figure it out.

You need to know what makes your work different from your peers, whether those differences are intentional or not. This helps you define what you do, why you do it, how it might be perceived by your customers, and why they might support you. And it helps you answer questions that might seem easy but are actually pretty tough, such as, "tell me about what you (your organization, your ensemble, etc) does?" Sounds easy right? Try to answer that in a way that only you could answer. If you can read your response and imagine someone else giving the same answer, start over and think harder about what makes your work different!

3 Tips for Speaking with Audiences

In an age when we want to have "behind the scenes" access to everything, audiences at concerts don't want artists to simply walk on stage, play music, bow, and leave. They want to hear from you – they want to hear something, anything, about why you love this music, where it came from, how there is this captivating moment of peace in the middle of complex music, SOMETHING. They want to see behind the tuxedo and be able to relate to you and your craft. So, here are three tips for speaking with audiences:

Have a story. People love stories. Period. Tell a story about the music or yourself or both and don't worry about making it educational or witty or complicated. Just be yourself and tell a story.

Keep it simple. Sometimes, less is more.

Practice it. Musicians practice their music a lot – why shouldn't we practice speaking if we know we will have to speak to a large group of people? Create an outline (do not write out full sentences) for what you want to say, and practice speaking out loud, by yourself or with a friend. Keep your outline as simple as possible – maybe just 3 points – and memorize those so that at any point during your talk, you can call those three main points up in your mind and remember where you are and what is left to say.

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