

# Notes

## CELEBRATION OF STRINGS



Celebrating Our Healthcare Workers for Independence Day / July 2, 2020

***Thank You to Our Healthcare Workers!***

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

## Zooming with Strings in a Time of COVID

On March 8th this year, I got back from the annual American Strings Teachers Association Conference in Orlando, Florida. A few days later, restrictions were applied to Europe travel, so I knew the writing was on the wall. I looked into the different platforms I could use for online teaching, settling on Zoom. I had a meeting with my students and faculty about the situation. Then immediately after our Spring Break, my faculty and I started teaching all private lessons and group classes on Zoom. To my astonishment we segued online without skipping a beat.

To make a smooth transition, we invited our college-student helpers and program parents for a *Chat with Parents*: questions, concerns, and suggestions. We tried to foresee a completely online situation: how to tune your child's instruments, how to set up for a lesson, tips for optimizing Zoom, etc. And off we went into the unknown.

Believing strongly in the importance of group classes, I would not compromise them when we went online. We met as scheduled: 9 different classes per week of around 7–12 students per class. And we found that all our normal fun games, such as *Popcorn Playing*, *Name the Missing Note*, and *Add a Note*, were adaptable to Zoom. I became really good at holding my violin up in playing position, with my bow on the strings, and muting and unmuting students with my left hand—a skillset I never thought I would need to acquire.

We continued working on music theory in each of the classes. It was clearly fun for the students to see me learn how to use the “whiteboard” function on Zoom, and they could also write on it. We enjoyed performances of great artists and watched videos about playing and teaching on my favorite website, [stringpedagogy.com](http://stringpedagogy.com). “Breakout room” enabled students to split into groups and the teachers to have short discussions, fostering teamwork.

Every Saturday at 3:00 pm, I held a Zoom with Strings “recital,” including *not* playing on your primary instrument (but singing, danc-

ing, playing another instrument, or telling jokes), playing movie music, answering trivia questions (about instruments, pieces, and composers), Suzuki Play-Down (all the books, from advanced down to “Twinkle”) with famous guest artists such as Cho-Liang Lin, Noah Bendix-Balgley, and Karen Gomyo!



Throughout the summer, my students and I have Zoomed into local nursing homes. We zoom in with excitement, as if taking part in a real concert. The students introduce themselves and make cute little speeches. Some budding entrepreneurs here! In Fourth of July week, we celebrated healthcare workers.

Since mid-March, I have held a practice session for my students every single day. While my 2-year-old takes her afternoon nap, I open Zoom, and my smiling students “hop” in to practice with me. This structure has helped us to keep on track—and I

haven't practiced this much in ten years!

I want to especially thank my college students—Ethan Berg, Malika Brower, Emily Chambers, Aleka Chau, LeeAnna Delbridge, Srirangan Iyer, Grace Kim, Hannah McCrady, Evan Patriatan, Abby Preston, Danae Ryan-Kessler, Rebekah Soued, and Mariah Thomas—for their support. At the beginning of the pandemic, I imagined I would have to be their heroine, getting them through the hard times ahead. Little did I know that they would be getting *me* through these hard times. I have been greatly inspired by their creativity, their desire to create excellence, and their ability to take charge. Great training for future leaders and teachers!

Of course, we don't know what to expect for the academic year 2020–21. I hope it is filled with music and good spirits. I can't wait to see all of you in person before long, and until then I wish you a wonderful time amid the challenges.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ching-Yi Lin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Ching-Yi Lin

# Notes

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# Student Performances

## Reception for New Americans September 10, 2019

Students of the WKU Pre-College Strings Program were invited to perform at a reception that recognized individuals who had become naturalized US Citizens within the last year. This was the 5th annual reception for New Americans hosted by the City of Bowling Green International Communities Advisory Council.

Elli Trivizadakis, aged 11, remarked: "I felt proud playing. And even though there were LOTS of people present, I still really enjoyed playing for them. It was also a chance to show them what we have been working on in the Pre-College Strings Program and to give them a chance to join Strings and work with our wonderful teachers. A unique experience! I am happy for all those new Americans."

## Halloween Recital October 26, 2019 By Emily Chambers

On the Saturday before Halloween, our students had their first recital of the semester, but this one was



Cellists Performing at SKY Southern Kentucky Rehabilitation Hospital

different from usual: they played in their Halloween costumes, to enjoy the spirit of the festival as well as to celebrate their successes and growth as musicians.

This year's recital consisted of twelve performances: four solo and eight ensembles. The group performers ranged from beginners all the way up to students studying music at the college level here at WKU. Each group sat in the audience and listened to their

peers as they waited for their moment to shine.

I watched as the children made their way onto the stage with broad smiles on their faces. I was inspired by each performance and by seeing the changes of skill level between each group. I especially loved listening to Handel's Sonata No. 3 in F major performed by Anayah Ricketts, and the Scherzo from Haydn's String Quartet in D major, Op. 33 No. 6, performed by James Han, Zoe Hu, Joseph Breslin, and Morgan Booher.

One of my favorite performances was the beginner violins playing *Ant Song* and *GDG*. Each week, I have the pleasure of sitting in on the beginner group class to observe the children start from nothing and gradually learn the basic skills of their instrument. This has helped me tremendously as a violinist and a future music educator. Watching them perform in the recital was extra special for me, because it celebrated the progress I had seen all the children make.



Students Celebrated the End of the Semester with Solo Recitals



A Performance for New Citizens at the Reception for New Americans



Kylie Hayter Playing for the End-of-Semester Solo Recital



End-of-Semester Quartet Recital

### **Cello for the Holidays** December 3, 2019

Cellists from our program enjoyed sharing some Christmas music with patients at the SKY Southern Kentucky Rehabilitation Hospital this evening. Thanks for having us! And thank you, Professor Sarah Berry, for organizing the event!

### **Solo and Group Recitals** December 7, 2018

Congratulations to our students for their successful end-of-semester solo and group recitals!



Leah Chen, Sarah Pannell, and Elli Trivizadakis at the Nashville Suzuki Playdown



Chloe Hawkins at the Reception for New Americans

### **Suzuki Playdown** February 9, 2020 By Elli Trivizadakis

The Nashville Suzuki Playdown was a joyful and unique experience for me. It gave me and all the other participants a chance to share what we know about the violin and perform the pieces we love. I was fascinated and inspired by the marvelous pieces of the advanced violin players and teachers. I hope that one day I will be able to play those pieces just like them, especially Antonio Vivaldi's Concerto in A minor.

# Faculty Performances

## Performance at Chattanooga State University October 24, 2019

Andrew Braddock and Ching-Yi Lin performed a duo concert at Chattanooga State Community College, sponsored by the Tennessee Arts Commission Touring Grant. The works they performed included Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Duet in G major, a Madrigal by Bohuslav Martinů, Three Caprices by Michael Alec Rose, and Zoltán Kodály's Serenade with Professor Wendy Case of Chattanooga State.

## Viola Festival November 8–9, 2019

Andrew Braddock was a guest teacher at the University of Southern Mississippi Viola Festival in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. On the Thursday evening, he taught a Suzuki Book 1 master class for the young students in USM's preparatory program. Over the next two days, he gave a lecture for pedagogy students, performed W. H. Lee's Rhapsody for Viola and Piano, and gave a master class for college students. Braddock told us: "It was a fantastic experience and a joy to work with all the students in Mississippi. Many thanks to Dr. Hsiaopei Lee, USM Associate Professor, for organizing the event."

Concerts and events scheduled for the rest of the semester were canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



The D'Amici Ensemble after a Concert in Korea

## D'Amici Ensemble US and Korea Tour November 24, 2019

By Srirangan Iyer

On November 24, the Fine Arts Center at WKU was filled with the music of our own as well as visiting faculty. The ensemble consisted of Ching-Yi Lin (WKU, violin), Ji-Myung Kim (Eastern Illinois University, violin), Andrew Braddock (WKU, viola), Yongjoo Ahn (Trivalley Orchestra, violist/conductor), and Wesley Baldwin (University of Tennessee, cello), joined by Sarah Berry (WKU, cello) for the WKU performance. They played music that bridged three centuries: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's String Quintet in C major, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky's *Souvenir de Florence*, and a string trio by Krzysztof Penderecki. I was impressed by the lightness and coordination in the Mozart quintet, the Romantic lushness of the Tchaikovsky

sextet, and the beauty in the dissonance of the Penderecki trio.

*Thanks to a generous Research Creativity Activities Proram grant from Western Kentucky University, Dr. Lin and Dr. Braddock also traveled to and performed this program at both the Seoul Arts Center and the Daejeon Art Center in South Korea.*

## American Strings Teachers Association Conference March 7, 2020

Ching-Yi Lin and Andrew Braddock presented a session at ASTA titled "Building and Growing a Preparatory Program in Your Community," based on their enormous success with the program at WKU. They took the attendees through the nuts and bolts of running a program, covering everything from business plans to branding and fundraising. Dr. Lin also presented a session titled "From Thailand to Tanzania: Unparalleled Passion for Music Seen Around the World" with Meredith Blecha (University of Oklahoma State University), Daphne Gerling (University of North Texas), and Kirsten Yon (University of Houston). The session focused on their experience developing string programs in Honduras, Haiti, Tanzania, Thailand, and several areas in South America. They discussed their pedagogical approaches, program structures, fundraising approaches, as well as the engagement opportunities available through various non-profit organizations.

# Caring for the Community with Music

BY ZOE HU



Celebrating Healthcare Workers

2020 has been a crazy year so far. Going virtual for several months and having limited contact with people in the community has been a huge challenge and change for everyone. However, one thing has stayed the same: the power that music has to create a sense of community. Although the pandemic has separated our community physically, music has brought us together, if only virtually through Zoom.

Playing for nursing homes and healthcare workers has been a great

way for many students to connect and reach out. Participating in scheduling some of the nursing-home concerts and performing for residents and healthcare workers has been a special experience for me. I'm grateful for everything I've learned during this time in both music and project management.

The nursing-home performances encouraged me to explore pieces beyond the repertoire I learn in my lessons, including some Taiwanese folk songs that taught me about my parents' heritage and connected me

with family and friends in Taiwan. These performances also gave me the opportunity to learn how to work musically with a pianist: my mom!

Scheduling the performances taught me what goes on behind the scenes of a performance, including effective communication and organization. During the first few calls, I was afraid I would embarrass myself by saying the wrong things or set up a performance that would fall through. As I gained experience, the process became less intimidating, especially because so many kind people were willing to work with me. I quickly came to understand what questions to ask of nursing-home directors and how to arrange a performance. After a few failed attempts, I found it exciting to schedule a performance that was successful from beginning to end. When I had the opportunity to host the event I had scheduled. I confess I was timid and tense, but I realized how I could do a better job next time. It warmed my heart to see all the smiling faces of nursing-home residents and healthcare workers watching us play through Zoom.

As I wait for this pandemic to end, I continue to practice my violin and think about how I can help more people in the future. Let's stay strong and healthy. We will make it through this pandemic together.

James Han adds:

I, too, had the wonderful opportunity of learning how to schedule events. After several successful performances for nursing homes, we held a special concert for the healthcare workers at The Medical Center/ Graves Gilbert Clinic to celebrate their dedication and sacrifice. I was grateful to be able to thank them directly for their services by giving what I could offer. The concert reminded me that not all heroes wear capes.

# Violin Fest

November 11-12, 2019

## Faculty Recital

By Malika Brower

The Violin Fest Faculty Recital opened with a performance of Dimitri Shostakovich's Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano, featuring violinists Tim Kantor and Ching-Yi Lin with Justin Bartlett on piano. In these pieces, the fear and anger evident in other works of Shostakovich are replaced by an uncomplicated charm as well as joy and sorrow, well brought out by the three musicians. The evening continued with a performance of Manuel de Falla's *Suite populaire espagnole* for Violin and Piano by Tim Kantor and Justin Bartlett. Falla published his *Seven*

*Popular Spanish Songs* in 1914, inspired by folk music from various parts of Spain. Six of them were transcribed for the violin by Paweł Kochański in 1926.

Tim Kantor then played Richard Strauss's Violin Sonata, a work noted for its lyrical beauty and technical demands. To conclude the recital, violist Andrew Braddock joined Ching-Yi Lin and Tim Kantor in Zoltán Kodály's String Serenade for Two Violins and Viola (1920), the last of the composer's chamber compositions, written for an unusual combination of instruments. The performers reveled in the rich melodies, intricate dialogue, and dance-like rhythms.



Tim Kantor and Justin Bartlett performing the Strauss Violin Sonata

## Master Class of Christina Hightower (Indiana University)

By Danae Ryan-Kessler

This class worked on the pieces *Musette* and *Hunter's Chorus*. In *Musette*, the engaging Ms. Hightower started with the history of the piece and how it was meant to imitate a small bagpipe. She then focused on teaching the group how to play together effectively by watching each other and using the same part of the bow. The group also worked on dynamics and making repeated music interesting. In *Hunter's Chorus*, Ms. Hightower focused on similar techniques as well as putting words to the rhythms to make them easier to understand. The exercise helped the students be more together, more dynamic in their playing, and clearer with the rhythms.

## Master Class of Tim Kantor (University of Arizona)

By Aleka Chau

Tim Kantor's afternoon was a combination of a Suzuki Book Four group class and a master class for five performers. The Suzuki class performed Vivaldi's Concerto in A minor, movement I, and Seitz's Concerto No. 2, Op. 13, movement III. Dr. Kantor's main point was to teach the seven musicians how to breathe and move together. He also gave suggestions about the interpretation and direction of the pieces.

Margaret Wilkerson (studio of Amy Britton) started the master class with *Perpetual Motion* in Suzuki Book Four. Dr. Kantor encouraged her to play more freely in her body and showed her some techniques for obtaining a soft and balanced bow hold. Ella McCutchen (also studio of Amy Britton) performed the same third movement of the Seitz Concerto No. 2 in G major. Dr. Kantor worked with her



JEFF SMITH

Suzuki Book Three Group Class

on finding an appropriate arm weight to get the best sound from her violin. Anna Zhou (studio of Zach Ebin) played Corelli's *La Folia*. Dr. Kantor helped her fit the violin and piano parts together with some flexibility, despite the fast rhythms. Laura Grube (studio of Mikylah Myers) came next with Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*. The two deciphered the complex piece and its musical gestures to determine how the sections could vary. Dr. Kantor also helped with "techno-musical solutions," where the violinist can take liberties with the tempo of the cadenza. To end, Miranda Rojas (studio of Elisabeth Small) played Wieniawski's Violin Concerto No. 2, movement III. Dr. Kantor facilitated Ms. Rojas to figure out where she could be more flexible with the piece and also give it more depth, especially in the cadenzas.



Paul Kantor,  
Professor of Violin,  
Rice University



Paul Kantor, Professor of Violin, Rice University



Dr. Brenner leading a  
Suzuki Book One Master Class



Violinfest Faculty Recital

### Morning Classes by Brenda Brenner (Indiana University)

By LeeAnna Sewell

Dr. Brenda Brenner’s focused and fun attitude was evident from the moment she started teaching. I was particularly impressed with how she made everything musical. Even setting up to play became a song. She reviewed pieces with the students, worked on tapping rhythms, and did some ear-training. After everyone was warmed up, she worked with vocabulary words such as *staccato*, *legato*, *allegro*, *adagio*, *piano*, and *forte*, demonstrating them aurally and vocally using the *Sunflower* song. This exercise was a big hit. Dr. Brenner’s “super-secret bow glue” helped the students have better bow control. You could see and hear the difference these methods made. Dr. Brenner also worked with the students on bow circles, string-crossings, plopping fingers, and stepping in time. I learned so much just by watching her.

### Master Classes of Paul Kantor (Rice University)

By Ethan Berg

Audrey Cox and Emily Monroe exemplified several playing skills we strive to achieve. Audrey performed Khachaturian’s Violin Concerto,



Movement I, demonstrating great use of the bow. Her spiccato at the beginning of the piece was controlled and projected a great sound quality. She

had significant flexibility in her bow arm. Throughout the piece, she showed purposeful bow placement, effective dynamics, and varied timbre, and she engaged emotionally with the audience.

Emily performed the first movement of Sibelius’s Violin Concerto in D minor, also demonstrating great use of her bow. She rolled her bow hair to create the quiet and somber opening of the piece. Her crescendos were pronounced, using her entire bow. The balanced pressure in her bow allowed her double stops and chords to have a clear and harmonious quality. I was also impressed by her confidence and accuracy when making large shifts. She gave a compelling performance.

Violin Fest 2019 concluded with a Violin Fest Participant Recital on Saturday afternoon at 5:00.

#### We would like to thank the following teachers for sending their students:

Andrew Braddock, Western Kentucky University  
 Brenda Brenner, Indiana University  
 Amy Britton, Private Studio Teacher  
 Zachary Ebin, Vanderbilt University  
 Cornelia Heard, Vanderbilt University  
 Christina Hightower, Indiana University  
 Carolyn Huebl, Vanderbilt University  
 Mircea Ionescu, Private Studio Teacher

Marcela Joachimstaler, Western Kentucky University  
 Ching-Yi Lin, Western Kentucky University  
 Christina McGann, Vanderbilt University  
 Mikylah Myers, West Virginia University  
 Elisabeth Small, Belmont University  
 Zhu-Zheng Yang, Nashville Symphony  
 Mimi Zweig, Indiana University

# Cello Day

The mellow sounds of cellos filled the music hall on Saturday, September 28, when cellists of all ages from around the region came to WKU for Cello Day. Professor Dan Allcott of Tennessee Tech University was the guest artist. He kept everyone on their toes (and bows) for a fun time of music-making.

Prof. Allcott chose a pleasing variety of music for cello choir, from Scott Joplin's *Maple Leaf Rag* to a Serenade for four cellos by Georg Goltermann and an original composition by Dan Allcott that included electronics, hand motions, and chanting! Prof. Allcott challenged everyone with his wealth of ideas about music, cello technique, and listening better when playing in an ensemble.

He also gave an inspiring master class during the day. Amelia Allen, a student of Sarah Berry, performed the first movement of Edward Elgar's Cello Concerto. Two students of Dr. Nathan Jasinski from Eastern Kentucky University were heard as well: Andrew

Garcia in the first movement of Joseph Haydn's C-major Concerto and Caroline Geyer in the first movement of Camille Saint-Saëns' Cello Concerto No. 1. The day ended with a concert in which all the participants played their hearts out.

WKU Pre-College cellist Aletheia Burt told us: "I had a wonderful time at Cello Day! It was amazing to be surrounded by the sound of such a large group of cellists. Prof. Allcott was inspiring about how to practice and enjoy doing it. The final concert was really fun."



A Stage Full of Cellists for the Final Cello Day Recital



Guest Artist Dan Allcott Leads a Morning Master Class

# Guest Artist Master Classes

## Wendy Case Master Class

By Srirangan Iyer

The WKU Violin Studio was treated to a master class with Dr. Wendy Case on October 23, 2019. Dr. Case teaches at Chattanooga State and has studied acoustical physics intensively in addition to the violin. In this master class she used her understanding of both science and performance in educating the participants.

Starting with J. S. Bach's Sonata No. 1, Adagio and Fugue, performed by Malika Brower, Dr. Case introduced a continual essential point: how to relieve tension. An exercise she used to achieve a relaxed arm was circular bows, which ensured there was motion at every point in the bow stroke.

Grace Kim performed the first two movements of Ysaye's Sonata No. 2, *Obsession* and *Malinconia*. Dr. Case discussed how the string vibrates circularly and that should make us think about how we pull and push our bows. She had Grace experiment with a number of contact points, bow speeds, and hair angles to achieve various tone colors.

For Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major, performed by Ying Cheng, Dr. Case suggested several practice methods, including using a pseudo-ricochet as a way to get used to the lightness that Mozart requires.



Malika Brower after a Master Class with David Kim in Paducah

## David Kim Master Class

By Malika Brower

I performed in a master class at the Paducah Symphony in Paducah, Kentucky on November 16, 2019 with David Kim, concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra. I played Bach's Adagio from Sonata No. 1 in G minor. Kim focused on smooth bow

connection and clarity with my bow changes. He emphasized playing with rhythmic accuracy, understanding the harmony, and seeing the direction of the music before incorporating any free improvisatory impression. Then you have freedom to stretch certain notes, pull the music forward, and experiment with longer phrases, all to create meaningful and enjoyable music.

## Yongjoo Ahn Master Class

By Danae Ryan-Kessler

On November 22, 2019, Yongjoo Ahn, conductor of the Trivalley Symphony Orchestra, led the WKU violin studio in a rich and thorough master class. Lea Sewell and Danae Ryan-Kessler both chose Bach. Danae played Partita No. 1 in B minor, *Allemande* and *Corrente*. Mr. Ahn focused on the wide musical and expressive range of each movement, helped Danae to discern the high and low voices, and discussed where stretching time is appropriate.

Lea played the *Grave* from Sonata No. 2 in A minor. Mr. Ahn focused on what Bach was conveying in the piece, and recommended a deep understanding of the Baroque style as a starting point for determining the best kind of sound for Bach. Finally, Joseph Breslin played Bach's G-major Suite, *Prelude* and *Gigue*, on the viola.



Malika, Ying, and Grace Performed for Guest Artist Dr. Wendy Case

# Bridging Cultures with Music



Teachers and ESL students at Bowling Green High School

## **Bridging Cultures with Music**

*By Rebekah Soued*

Bridging Cultures with Music (BCWM) was started by Dr. Ching-Yi Lin of Western Kentucky University, initially funded by a grant that she received in 2017 through the WKU Sisterhood. The aim of this program is to provide high-quality violin instruction to English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) students attending Bowling Green High School. This program is also designed to provide WKU violin students an opportunity to teach and do community outreach.

I had the blessed opportunity to teach these kids this past school year. Many of them are refugees, yet they had a wonderful attitude towards life and the world that brightened my day every time I saw them. I loved their enthusiasm, from the basic violin setup to tapping all our rhythms and playing our songs. This spring, we began learning the Tanzanian National

Anthem, a song from their homeland, which elicited enormous excitement. I do hope the state of the pandemic allows me to work in person with these students again in the fall.

## **Working with the Students**

*By LeeAnna Delbridge*

Teaching violin to students in the English-as-a-Second Language program at Bowling Green High School has been a priceless experience for me, giving me a chance to see how much of an impact I can make in my students' lives. It has been immensely rewarding to watch students grow from not knowing how to hold a violin to being confident in playing many pieces, and to witness them blossom as individuals and grow in self-confidence on the violin and as people.

This opportunity has made me think differently about the world around me. I grew up in a homogenous school, knowing nothing about

Uganda, Vietnam, Somalia, Tanzania, Burma, or Namibia. Now when I hear about these countries, I have a face to go with them, and suddenly the world is a lot smaller. I have been thrilled to enrich the lives of others and surprised at how enriched my own life has been in return.

While teaching I have learned that saying things in multiple ways, trying new ideas, and modeling how to play are vital to developing good teaching rapport. Teaching has also helped me understand how important it is to connect with students. I gained so much from connecting with the ESL students, and I feel sure they will always remember their new connections, too.

## **Potter Children's Home & Family Ministries, A New Program this Year!**

*By Emily Chambers*

Before starting college, I expected that I would not be able to teach until I was almost done with my degree. But, thanks to a new program at the Potter Children's Home and Family Ministries in Bowling Green, I have been able to teach as a freshman. I first observed the beginner violin group classes led by Dr. Lin in the WKU Pre-College Strings program, where I learned how to keep young students entertained, engaged, and developing good technique from the beginning. Then I could put my own twists on teaching various skills the students will carry with them throughout their musical lives.

# Special Recognition

## Nashville Suzuki Play Down

February 2, 2020

Congratulations to Dr. Zach Ebin for a wonderful Nashville Suzuki Playdown. Our students enjoyed being a part of the program. What an amazing and inspiring way to spend the afternoon!

## Alec's Performance

February 5, 2020

Alec Ramos performed at the Proclamation Ceremony for Gifted Education Month at the Capitol Rotunda. This event was organized by the Kentucky Association for Gifted Education. Alec played *Jerusalem Ridge* and *Orange Blossom Special*.

## Seniors

The WKU Pre-College Strings Program would like to congratulate the following graduating seniors. It's been



Thank you, Karen Gomyo, for meeting and inspiring Kylie Hayter after a performance with the Nashville Symphony

a blast to make music with you! All the best as you move on to college.

Nathan Jones, *violin*  
Alec Ramos, *violin*



Alec Ramos

## All-State Symphony

February 5–8, 2020

By Morgan Booher

I had a fantastic time at All State this year. The two pieces the Symphonic Orchestra performed were *La forza del destino Overture* by Giuseppe Verdi and *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story* by Leonard Bernstein. Our conductor was Dr. Michael Hopkins. He did a wonderful job leading us, getting to know us, making us laugh, and guiding us to discover what each composer wanted from his piece.

I met many cool people and talented students from a variety of schools. I also became closer to my peers from WKU's String Program and was grateful for their presence, humor, and support. I had countless opportunities to be challenged musically, as well as become more comfortable with the stress of performing a masterpiece such as Bernstein's on three days' rehearsal. It was exciting and fast-paced. How inspiring and motivating it can be to play in an orchestra!

## All-State Symphony

February 5–8, 2020

By Joseph Breslin

Every day was challenging and seemed to never stop. Practice went on from 8:00 in the morning to 10:00 or 10:30 at night, with only breaks for meals. But the teachers made everything enjoyable. The week ended with a concert at the Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts. Great fun!



All State Photo from left to right, Morgan Booher, Amelia Allen, Zoe Hu, Joseph Breslin, Mr. Patrick O'Rourke, James Han, Nick Kang, Curtis Lin, and Noah Morsi



2020 Greater Nashville Suzuki Play-In hosted by Dr. Zach Ebin



Dr. Sarah Berry Leads Cellists in a Rehearsal

# Spring Semester on Zoom

## Saturday Recitals Breakdown

By *Srirangan Iyer*

In the midst of the pandemic, I was delighted to witness how we all, students, teachers, and student teachers, continued to have opportunities to perform and experience creative ways to keep growing as musicians. Performances took the form of seven Saturday Zoom Recitals, organized, hosted, and created by Dr. Lin. Her dedication was matched by the students' enthusiasm week after week.



The Spring 2020 Violin Studio, Practicing Social Distancing



The Beginner Violin Class Working on their Bowholds

The first recital on March 28th was the Suzuki Book Back Recital, where we played all the Suzuki books from most advanced back to “Twinkle,” one of the few positives in the earliest weeks of isolation. Seeing dozens of young

musicians perform for and support each other was heartwarming for me. Steven Stewart (WKU alumnus) enthralled kids and parents alike with his magic and fiddle playing for the second recital, while the students

showed off their own “extra-curricular” talents the next weekend for the “Wrong Rep Recital.” The wide variety of performances included Dr. Berry singing, balloon animals made by Sarah Panell, and a dance performance worthy of the concert hall by the entire Ricketts family.

The last three weeks were all about showing off each student: in movie music (4/18), their own picks then their solos (4/25 and 5/2), and finally playing alongside some famous artists for the Suzuki Play Down (5/9). It was an amazing feeling to be sitting at my desk at home and seeing so many young musicians performing: a bright spot at the end of each interminable week.

When I left WKU in March, my plan was to spend just one week away

from my classmates and teachers, a breather to make me appreciate the extraordinary community at Western. Then one week turned into two, and I was on campus for the last time in the semester, moving out of my dorm. I could not imagine how the rest of the semester was going to happen in any

of my classes, much less pre-college and music classes. Even after classes started online, I missed those now-empty classrooms that used to be filled with music and life. The Saturday recitals were not distractions: they were educational, entertaining, and rays of hope.

## Recital Reimagined

By Kylie Hayter (aged 9)

The spring 2020 recital on Zoom was unlike any other I have ever participated in. I found it amazing that it happened at all. I was so happy to see everyone who came, and to listen to pieces that I have played and ones that I haven't (yet). I will remember it forever.

## My Spring

By Lydia Miner (aged 7)

I had a lot of fun at the events and with the guest performers. I played *Allegretto* as a solo at the Zoom recital and enjoyed that a lot. I am glad that I participated. Even though I missed being able to take part in lessons, ensemble, and events in person, I would say that overall it was still a very good semester.

### We thank our special guests for the Suzuki Play Down Recital, May 9, 2020:

Atar Arad, Professor of Viola, Indiana University Jacobs School of Music

Noah Bendix-Balgley, First Concertmaster, Berlin Philharmonic

Karen Gomyo, Concert Violinist

Jun Iwasaki, First Concertmaster, Nashville Symphony

Cho-Liang Lin, Concert Violinist

Jim Przygocki, Professor of Viola, University of Wyoming

Sherry Sinift, Professor of Violin, University of Wyoming

Ed Sprunger, Suzuki teacher and teacher trainer

Yuuki Wong, Professor of Violin, University of Lausanne

Mimi Zweig, Professor of Violin, Indiana University Jacobs School of Music



Final Violin I Group Class in March 2020

# Summer Zoom Festivals

## A WKU Summer Institute

By Srirangan Iyer

From July 20th to July 24th, ten young dedicated musicians spent the week learning from various teachers and musicians through the WKU Summer String Institute. Of course, this year's institute was virtual. But it succeeded in retaining the personal connections that everybody makes at a summer camp. Each day was full of fun activities; the whole week felt immensely productive and engaging.

Each morning's activities consisted of a presentation by Dr. Braddock on Béla Bartók, the composer spotlight for the week. Yes, five presentations all together! He made them special with his multi-faceted descriptions of how Bartók's ancestry and education affected the type of music he wrote. Then we had lunch and practice time, and each day concluded with a special event.

These events ranged from master classes to speakers to Zoom recitals. The camp hosted

some great teachers. Dr. Brandon Christensen, Dr. Katie Palmer, and Dr. Erin Aldridge all brought expertise and impressive knowledge to their sessions. In particular, Dr. Palmer's talk

about ethnomusicology illuminated a side of the music world that is not taught much. Both Drs. Christensen and Aldridge gave master classes that revealed a lot about the music each

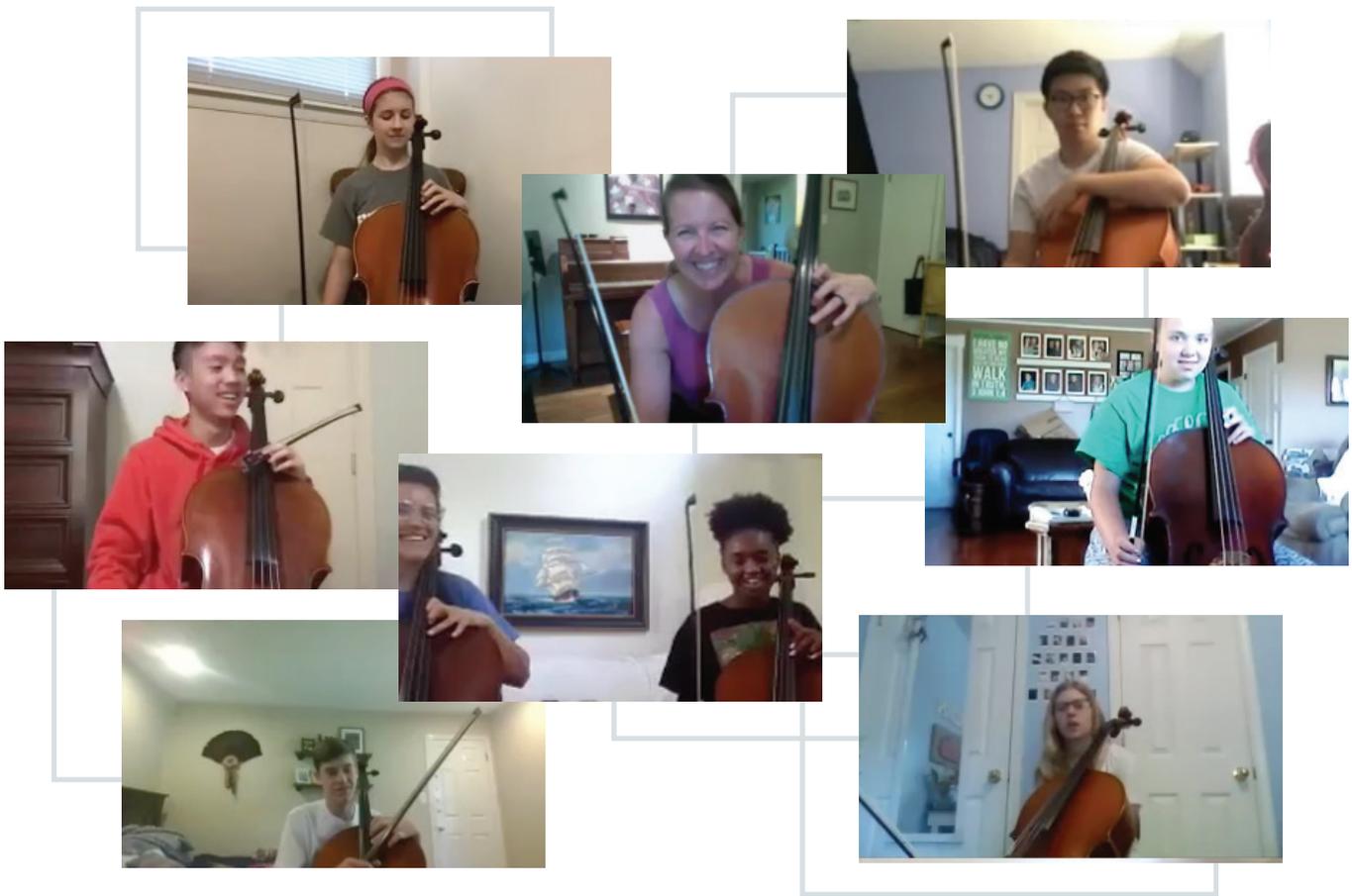
student played. Dr. Christensen's unique perspective as a Baroque period-practice violinist provided a new perspective on some students' pieces. All of the classes and talks were perfect for broadening the students' horizons, despite the wide age range.

The week concluded with performances of pieces from Bartók's 44 Duos for Two Violins.

Dr. Braddock presented the challenge to each pair of students to record and put together a duo to present at the end of the week. This was a highlight of the camp, as it really brought everybody together, working hard and struggling through the new skills that making the videos required. The entire amazing experience was one that Dr. Braddock deserves a resounding "thank you" for putting together.



The poster features a red-to-orange gradient background. At the top, the text 'WKU SUMMER STRING INSTITUTE' is written in a stylized, white, outlined font. Below this, the dates 'July 20-24, 2020' are displayed in a white sans-serif font. The central part of the poster is a collage of six photographs showing students of various ages playing string instruments (violin, viola, cello, and double bass). At the bottom, the text 'Enroll in one of the following programs: Twinklers (Ages 4 & up) / Half-Day Young Musicians (Elementary–High School) / Full-Day' is written in white. Below the program list, it says 'BEGINNERS WELCOME!' in a smaller font. At the very bottom, there is contact information: 'Visit us online at [wku.edu/strings/ssi.php](http://wku.edu/strings/ssi.php). For more information, contact Andrew Braddock at [andrew.braddock@wku.edu](mailto:andrew.braddock@wku.edu) or call 270-745-5939.' To the right of the contact info is the 'Strings Program' logo, which includes a stylized 'S' and the WKU crest.



## Zoom Cello

In June 2020, most summer camps were canceled, swimming pools were closed, and travel plans were halted. But for Professor Sarah Berry and a group of cello students, June was a month of concentrated focus on cello technique. Prof. Berry put together some cello fun aptly named “June Cello Zoom,” which comprised weekly cello-technique classes for students of all ages. Two cello groups met every Tuesday during the month to work on scales, fast left-hand technique, bow technique, vibrato, shifting and a lot more.

One of the benefits of Zoom learning is that classes, camps, and concerts are easily available to students from all over the region, the state,

and beyond. June Cello Zoom hosted around 20 cello students, from Bowling Green, Edmonson County, Glasgow, Owensboro, Leitchfield, Franklin, and Nashville, TN!

Susan Abell, WKU alumna and now Orchestra Director at Grassland Middle School in Tennessee, told us: “I loved June Zoom! My favorite part was getting to play with others virtually and learn so many great techniques from Mrs. Berry. We had a lot of fun with games and fun music.” Susan joined three of her own cello students to participate in June Cello Zoom.

The June Cello Zoom group for younger cellists had fun taking Aunt Rhody on some cello adventures through the month. Starting with *Go*

*Tell Aunt Rhody*, students worked on the basics, but soon they found her riding a camel in Arabia, running into some bad tornado weather with *Trembling Tremolo Rhody*, and finally, getting thrown in jail with *Jailhouse Rhody*.

The advanced June Cello Zoom group got their bows and fingers zooming—pun intended—with exercises from the Feulliard, Starker, Piatti, and Jensen technique and etude books. Morgan Booher commented: “It was fantastic to still have the opportunity to continue progressing while also making connections with other cellists, all of us staying safe at home.”



Pre-College Strings Program  
Department of Music  
Western Kentucky University  
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For more information, visit [wku.edu/strings](http://wku.edu/strings)

