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# Nuances

## The Newsletter of MAME

January 2021  
Volume 3, Issue 6

### President's Message

It's February! And for the piano community that usually means time to hunker down and prepare for audition season. MAME's Honors Festival is currently going on with the virtual recital coming in a few weeks. In the middle of the month, registrations for District Auditions will be due. Beyond student events, we have various options for teacher enrichment coming up, including a general meeting followed by a masterclass with Christopher Taylor and a PSP meeting for those more socially inclined. Finally, an Adult Music Social (for adult students) has been moved from Spring into February.

Breaking news: Just one week ago Wisconsin Public Health announced that educators (private and public), regulated child care providers, and out-of-school programs will be eligible for the covid vaccine beginning in March. I contacted PHMDC on behalf of MAME members to advocate that independent music teachers be considered part of this group. I have registered our organization with them and will keep you posted on any further directions I receive. For those of you who have struggled with in-person vs virtual lessons, or with parents eager to resume in-person lessons, this is a way for you to begin your return to normalcy. Keep your fingers crossed!



[Denise Taylor](#)  
MAME President

### Masterclass for Advanced and Late Intermediate Piano Students with Christopher Taylor, Professor of Piano at UW-Madison

MAME is excited to present a piano masterclass with UW-Madison Professor Christopher Taylor on **Saturday, February 13th, at 4:00 - 5:30 PM** over Zoom. Participants are asked to arrive 15 minutes early to get tech and camera set up with MAME Programs Co-Chair David Barach. Masterclasses are a great opportunity to learn by watching someone teach. This masterclass is targeted for advanced and late intermediate piano students of all ages, including young students and adults.

All MAME teachers are encouraged to attend regardless of whether their students are playing in the class, and the event is also open to the public.

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)[RSS](#)<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83009377003?pwd=czdIU0lvRXdiTFRyNHhN3M2ISZlZlVUZZ09>

(Note: log in at 3:30pm for a general meeting, where you can learn about everything your MAME board is preparing for this year.)

[David Barach & Jeff Stanek](#), co-chairs of Programs & Masterclasses

## Performers Supporting Performers

Come one, come all, to join in on February's Performers Supporting Performers meeting on **Friday, February 19th at 10 AM** through the link below. You are welcome to share some music with the group (memorization never required) or just come to listen and take part in the fellowship. Our annual recital (a pre-recorded online event) is coming up in mid-March, and we would love to have you join in the fun of performing in that after coming to the February meeting!

Topic: Performers Supporting Performers

Time: Feb 19th, 2021 at 10:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75843753597?pwd=RndBSzYzY21mclZlZDBHbm9vbHBpUT09>

Meeting ID: 758 4375 3597

Passcode: xS3KLY

[Linda Johnson](#)

## Adult Music Social

The next Adult Music Social will be a synchronous virtual event, held at **5:00 PM on Saturday, February 20th, 2021**. Any Adult student (age 18 or older) of a MAME teacher (member/patron) may participate. There is no fee for this event. *If you know an interested adult student of a non-MAME teacher, please email Shad Wenzlaff for more information.*

Repertoire may be of any duration and level, students may use music or play from memory on any instrument of their choice. Teachers of students need not be present during the virtual social.

To register your adult student, please email [Shad Wenzlaff](#) **on or before 3 PM on Monday, February 15th** with the following information:

1. Your (teacher) name and preferred email (to which I will send information and online platform link)
2. Adult student name (spelled as they would like for it to appear in the program)
3. Adult student email address (to which I will send information and online platform link);
4. Title of repertoire and composer.
5. Optional: Any program note or weblink regarding the piece that you would like included in the program (less than 30 words, optional).
6. Any comments, questions, or concerns.

I will reply with the virtual platform link, information and instructions for the virtual event, as well as a digital PDF program.

[Shad Wenzlaff](#)

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Jo Anne Wroblewski – Snad Ryan Wenzlaff – Emily Schuitz

I recently suggested to teachers that exploring alternative methods for intermediate level students could be a useful EMR essay. MAME member Jo Anne Wroblewski responded: "...currently have a student graduating out of Faber 3B. Rather than going into Level 4, a really good resource I have found to follow is: **Classics for the Developing Pianist** - Ingrid Jacobson Clarfield and Phyllis Alpert Lehrer." The STUDY GUIDE FOR PREPARATION, PRACTICE & PERFORMANCE of each piece in the five books explores the background and stylistic qualities of the piece, as well as suggestions for practice and performance. Alfred Publications. Books 1-5. (\$9.99 Level 1 - \$17.99 Level 5).

E.L. Lancaster introduces the idea behind the series, and insight about how the series was compiled:

<https://www.alfred.com/classics-for-the-developing-pianist-book-1/p/00-37284/>

Furthermore, Jo Anne asked an excellent question: "I would love to find a theory book that goes beyond the 3B of Faber. Any ideas as to what to use?"

To this I'd like to respond with several theory suggestions. *If you'd like to respond to Jo Anne, drop me a line and I'll include your response in March!* [wenzlaffsh@yahoo.com](mailto:wenzlaffsh@yahoo.com)

A. The first thing you need to check out is a WMTA resource online:

[https://mcusercontent.com/6561f5728133057d4f26174b9/files/3e17f0a7-2ab9-4f33-8c91-d6859bd93131/Theory\\_Books.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/6561f5728133057d4f26174b9/files/3e17f0a7-2ab9-4f33-8c91-d6859bd93131/Theory_Books.pdf)

B. I've "ranked" intermediate level student theory resources according to, in my estimation, level of student motivation:

1. Relatively unengaged student:

A. John Thompson's Theory Drill Games (Willis/Hal Leonard 978-1-4234-1077-5, Sets 1-3, \$5.99). I have been known to start with Set 1 with an intermediate student for whom theory is simply not a priority.

B. Edwin McLean "Discover Blues Improvisation" from the Faber Piano Adventures catalog is a great way to introduce Blues Piano and primary chord progressions. First published in 1997, IBN: 978-1-616-77156-0 \$8.95

C. Alfred's Premier Piano Course Theory Book 4 - \$7.99

ISBN 13: 978-07390-51498

Features include: I – IV – V7 chord progression review; emphasis on scales; play and count aloud exercises in varying keys and time signatures; one octave arpeggios; review root position and inversions; review Alberti Bass patterns; "imagination station" encourages students to improvise and compose; reviews early intermediate level terminology through games and worksheets designed to engage students.

Notes: This book does not need to be used in tandem with the lesson book. It reviews primary chord progressions, basic scales and the elementary mechanics of relative minor keys. I have a precarious 6<sup>th</sup> year / 5<sup>th</sup> grade student who is hard to keep on track, and this book has been great for him.

2. Moderately engaged students

a. My first suggestion for the "moderately engaged student" is to check out this WMTA resource

i. <https://www.wisconsinmusicteachers.com/district-auditions/music-theory-tests>

ii. Teachers may also download resources from this weblink:

iii. Emily Schulz can also share more about the District Auditions, at which students take a theory test.

Emily shares: "I would also like to point out at the bottom of the WMTA theory page, there are additional supplemental materials to go along with the levels, in addition to the study guides and practice tests - flash cards, worksheets for different areas, like rhythm, transposition, and analysis. I have ALL my students study the WMTA theory throughout the year, whether they'll do Auditions or not; this way, no matter their age, experience, or method book, I know exactly where everyone's at!"

iv. ***You'll want to act on this soon, as that deadline is February 16 – [districtauds@madisonmusiceducators.org](mailto:districtauds@madisonmusiceducators.org)***

b. I am happy to offer these next suggestions if you are interested in setting a student up for success this coming Fall 2021 with our Composition workshop featuring Melody Bober – more on that in future Nuances, and our MAME chairperson for the Music

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- i. Bradley Sowash “Creative Chords Keyboard Improvisation Method” – KJOS 2015, ISBN: 978-0-8497-9794-1
  1. Full disclosure – I have not used this book with a student yet, but if you have – drop me a line at [wenzlaffsh@yahoo.com](mailto:wenzlaffsh@yahoo.com). My initial impression is it’s thorough and integrates everything I love from many different kinds of methods. But, it does feel text heavy, and perhaps it’s useful mostly as a great teacher resource. Your thoughts?
- ii. Wynn-Anne Rossi’s “Creative Composition Toolbox” book 3 (Late Elementary); Book 4 & 5 are also excellent resources – I recommend starting an early intermediate student with book 3 and progress from there.

Alfred ISBN 13: 978-0-7390-8238-6 - \$6.99

Features include: Reviewing eighth notes; syncopation; sequences;

phrasing; crescendo and diminuendo; primary chords; pandiomaticism (the book references the Beatles’ use of non-primary chord progressions – this has engaged more than one of my students!); upbeats and downbeats.

2 footnotes on this thought:

- a. I’d love to hear what your favorite Beatles book to use in lesson is – last summer, I used the “Creative Composition Toolbox” alongside “Beatles Best” – Hal Leonard, ISBN 13: 978-0-7935-2031-2, \$14.99 – perhaps that student now overuses the word “pandiomaticism”, but I digress...
- b. This approach can be useful for “that” student who likes to change a piece of music because they either disagree with the composer’s suggestion or they are reluctant to fix a wrong note – let’s just call them creative!

### 3. Ambitious students

- a. This suggestion may feel like busy work to some students – but I have students who loved this book (especially a high school student, or intermediate level adult): “Basics of Keyboard Theory” – Level 2. Julie McIntosh Johnson. J. Johnson Music Publications.
  - i. ISBN 13: 978-1-891757-02-0; \$10.95
  - ii. This method is keyed through level 10; I like to use level 1 with transfer students as a way of establishing a base line for theory.
- b. This next suggestion has also felt like busy work for some students, but it’s tried and true for many of us in MAME - Keith Snell and Martha Ashleigh have keyed an excellent Fundamentals of Piano Theory method from Preparatory through Level 10. \$6.99
  - i. For the intermediate student, I recommend jumping in at Level 3.
  - ii. Features are far too many to list, but it starts with a basic time signature review, and I will note that I enjoy using a method that will introduce a concept such as the augmented triad and give you an examples of a few bars to play and explore. This is a workbook, and students will most certainly need their own copy. Teachers who are anxious about their own knowledge of theory may also purchase the “answer book” separately for \$5.
- c. Excellence in Theory – Ryan Nowlin and Bruce Pearson.
  - i. Book 2: KJOS 978-849705236 - \$6.95
  - ii. Features: Includes Music Theory, Ear Training, and a History Workbook.
  - iii. I recommend this book if you struggle to bring music history into your lesson, and would like an integrated supplement. Book 1 is very useful, Book 3 is quite advanced.

### 4. Enthusiastic students

- a. If you have a truly dedicated student and parent who is willing to invest money in their child’s music education, it is very much worth your time to explore either the ABRSM (Associated Board of Royal Schools of Music – UK) theory exams; or the Royal Conservatory of Music / Frederick Harris (editor) “Celebrate Theory” program. There is far too much to cover – but suffice it to say these are superb members in MAME who would be willing to share their experiences:

- Helga Swatzak – ABRSM. [hswatzak@yahoo.com](mailto:hswatzak@yahoo.com)
- Denise Taylor – Royal Conservatory of Music - [dtaylorpiano@gmail.com](mailto:dtaylorpiano@gmail.com)

[Shad Ryan Wenzlaff](#) - EMR Chair

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We welcome the following members who have joined or renewed their membership to MAME after August 2020:

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[John Scoville](#)

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## Do You Teach Voice?

The Philharmonic Chorus of Madison offers a number of scholarships each year to high school choral students to attend the UW-Madison Summer Music Clinics. They'd like to do some outreach on the scholarship to choral teachers in the greater Madison area. They hope to award at least 6 students with scholarships this year. If interested, please contact [Marty Gustafson](#)

[Denise Taylor](#)

Are you curious about what happens at our board and/or general meetings? Please click [here](#) and [here](#) to check out our most recent board and general meeting minutes.

[Morgan Hansen](#)

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## Additional MAME Resources

Make sure to like and follow us on our [Facebook page](#), and check out our [website](#) and [Google calendar](#).

[Mickey Lytle](#)

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Email [mame@madisonmusiceducators.org](mailto:mame@madisonmusiceducators.org) for more information.

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**Submissions:**

Complete submissions of articles, events and other music-themed features are welcome. All submissions are due by the 21st of each month to be considered for publication.

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Nuances Editor: Yana Avedyan ([nuances@madisonmusiceducators.org](mailto:nuances@madisonmusiceducators.org))

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