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International Journal of Music Education 2010 28: 193

DOI: 10.1177/0255761410362939

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International Journal of
Music Education
28(2) 193–203

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DOI: 10.1177/0255761410362939

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Abstract

Instrumental music teaching occupies a significant portion of the protean career of a musician. Musicians teach their instrument in schools, conservatoires and in private studios. The aim of this paper is to identify educational opportunities available for the education of musicians as instrumental music teachers, to discuss issues associated with their participation in these activities, and the challenges they face as practising teachers in schools and/or the private studio. In Australia, there are a variety of professional learning activities and training courses that the professional musician can undertake to expand her/his skills and knowledge as an instrumental music teacher. Not all of these educational opportunities are recognized as approved teacher education qualifications by the teacher registration boards in Australia. All instrumental music teachers in Australian schools must be registered with the teacher registration authority in the state or territory where they wish to work before they can seek employment. A discussion is presented in this paper on the issues associated with registration. The final section of this paper is devoted to a consideration of the different work environments and cultures in schools that may be experienced by professional musicians.

Keywords

careers, education, musicians, professional learning, training

Introduction

Instrumental music teaching occupies a significant portion of the protean career of a musician. Musicians, irrespective of formal or informal qualifications and training, teach their instrument in schools (primary and secondary levels), conservatoires and in private studios. In the school environment, they may teach in one or two schools for a day or less per week in order to accommodate the other elements of their portfolio career. Most often, teaching duties are negotiated between the school music coordinator and the musician. They may involve individual lessons, group lessons,

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conducting an ensemble, participating in an ensemble as a tutor and completing reports on students' progress. In the private studio and conservatoire, teaching is predominately on an individual basis.

The aim of this paper is to identify professional learning opportunities for the education of a musician as an instrumental music teacher, to discuss issues associated with their participation in these activities and the challenges they face as practising teachers in schools and private studios. This paper builds on the work undertaken by Bennett (2008), Bennett and Stanberg (2008), Burt-Perkins (2008), Huhtanen (2008), Mark (1998), Mills (2005), Myers (2004) and Weller (2004, 2008). These writers have addressed various aspects of the training of musicians as instrumental teachers, being one aspect of a musician's varied career. They highlight the need for professional musicians to have some training and knowledge of instrumental music teaching whether in school or the private studio. Bennett (2008) suggests that 'musicians at all levels teach. The notion that pedagogy is not an essential part of the curriculum I find very bizarre' (p. 66). Through their research, these writers acknowledge the concerns that musicians – at various stages of their careers from students in the conservatoire to experienced musicians – express about including teaching as a major part of their employment. Bennett and Hannan (2008) acknowledge that musicians who achieve great success as performers also teach music (p. iii).

A related body of literature concerns beginning teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of music teacher education courses offered by universities. Some of the writers in this area from an Australian perspective are Ballantyne (2007), Harrison (2004), Rosevear (2006) and Yourn (2000). Although the research on this topic reflects responses from beginning teachers – who have entered teacher education courses shortly after finishing their secondary education – it would serve as a comparison with perceptions of experienced professional musicians completing the same type of courses.

Bennett (2005) published a comprehensive list of the Australian providers of undergraduate performance-based degrees in classical music and the categories of study within these degrees (pp. 85–86) and undergraduate non-classical music degrees (p. 93). According to Bennett, professional musicians entering education and training courses will most likely have completed one or more of these courses. They may have completed postgraduate performance degrees and diplomas offered by examination bodies in Australia, attended professional learning activities, and completed performance qualifications including some courses in education pedagogy in overseas countries.

Generic course types recognized for teacher registration in Australia

Although Australian tertiary institutions offer both award and non-award courses, with some subjects offered as stand-alone short courses that are relevant for the instrumental music teacher, not all are recognized as approved pre-service programs for the purposes of teacher registration. In Australia, a pre-service teacher education program is defined as being of at least one year's duration and includes units of work associated with being a teacher of school-aged students, legal and ethical responsibilities of a school teacher and a minimum of 45 days' professional field experience. Field experience includes a mixture of teaching practicum supervised by a registered teacher (often three-week block placements in a school) and other single-day experiences. State and territory teacher registration boards approve pre-service teacher education courses on a cyclical basis according to their own criteria.

Following considerable consultation with the profession, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (2008) resolved that a national accreditation system should be developed for pre-service teacher education programs. The Australasian Teacher Regulatory Authorities (2008) represents an incorporated association of the Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions that regulate the teaching profession.

As indicated by Bennett (2005), many professional musicians earn a non-teaching degree of three years' duration. The minimum training for a registered teacher in Australia is four years, including an approved pre-service teaching qualification. The types of postgraduate courses that offer this are the Graduate Diploma of/in Education, Bachelor of Teaching and Master of Teaching. Undergraduate four-year degrees that incorporate a pre-service year such as the Bachelor of Education or Bachelor of Education/Bachelor of Teaching (concurrent) are available for those musicians without suitable prerequisites. The common feature of these courses is that instrumental music teaching units are associated with pre-service secondary education courses and form part of double-method music (classroom and instrumental) where the instrumental music units cannot be separated.

Victoria University (2006) offers an undergraduate course targeted at attracting into teaching, people with substantial professional experience in business and industry to address teacher shortages in particular subjects. In 2004, the Victorian Government Department of Education and Early Childhood Development awarded the university funding to develop a career-change program to meet the needs of aspiring teachers from diverse educational and work experience backgrounds. Music is a targeted subject and is a pathway in the Bachelor of Education P-12 course. Applicants are employed in schools in their curriculum area under the Victorian Institute of Teaching 'Permission to Teach' category. They teach four days a week during the school year and on the fifth day, as well as during school holidays, they complete the course requirements, and undertake the professional experience component as part of their condition of employment.

Other professional learning opportunities

Musicians and teachers can enroll in teaching courses that are appropriate for teaching pre-school, school-aged or adult students, which are provided by examination bodies. Many of these courses are offered at the award level. The studio music teacher associations in Australia recognize these qualifications for the purposes of membership and inclusion in their own lists of registered teachers. However, Australian teacher registration boards do not recognize these qualifications for full registration when teaching in schools. The Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB) (2008) offers the diploma Teacher of Music Australia at three levels: certificate, associate and licentiate. The St. Cecilia School of Music (2008) offers professional teaching diplomas in music for Australian candidates at advanced, diploma and fellowship levels. The Australian Guild of Music Education System (2008) is a registered training provider and provides vocational training for performers and teachers. The Trinity Guildhall's teaching diplomas are available to Australian applicants with the Specialist Music Teaching and the Instrumental/Vocal Teaching diplomas available at the associate and licentiate levels (Trinity College, 2008).

The Suzuki Music Association in Australia offers structured courses in instrumental teaching at primary, intermediate and advanced levels, tailored to its specific teaching philosophy. Applicants range from undergraduates to highly experienced teachers and many are professional musicians. All Suzuki accredited teachers are expected to participate in six hours of approved professional development annually to ensure their professional growth and maintain their accredited teacher status with Suzuki Music (Suzuki Talent Education Association of Australia, 2008). In a similar way, providing a focus on a particular teaching philosophy, the Yamaha Music Foundation in Australia expects its teachers to participate in ongoing training and development programs associated with the system in order to maintain a current license with the Foundation (Yamaha Music Foundation, 2008).

Studio music teacher associations, specific instrument and choral organizations (with a focus on the work of the classroom music teacher, including those representing a particular philosophy) provide a variety of professional learning opportunities for teachers and professional musicians. They usually convene annual conferences and run intensive short programs and activities up to five days in length. One example is the Sydney Conservatorium Open Access Program (2008) that provides intensive annual summer and winter schools covering the topics of instrumental pedagogy, jazz and classical repertoire, and music education methodology.

Issues arising

Six main issues arise from a discussion of the types of courses available to the professional musician training for a career as an educator in Australia. They can be grouped under the headings of professional field experience, teacher registration, employment, the private studio, the school teaching environment, and professional learning opportunities.

1. Professional field experience

Instrumental music is included in music courses that prepare teachers to work in secondary schools. Students select to study and teach two methods. The four prescribed music discipline units, which pre-service teachers may elect as their teaching methods, must be studied in sequential order, with classroom music (two units) followed by instrumental music (two units). The associated professional experience (or practicum) cannot be undertaken in instrumental music only. Unless completing the qualification part time, most applicants undertake professional experience in both classroom music and instrumental music each time they complete a practicum block in a school.

Access for the pre-service teacher to give instrumental lessons to school-aged students is generally limited during practicum, especially as the supervising instrumental music teacher may only be in the school one day a week. For the pre-service teacher, combining classroom music (which is often considered more important by professional experience supervisors) and instrumental music is difficult, as classroom music has a set timetable whereas instrumental music lessons often rotate through the day. This situation is compounded when classroom music may only be offered as a one term (10-week) or semester program. The opportunities for the school students as well as the pre-service teacher are limited. Following through with the same group of instrumental students who have their lesson on a fixed day of the week is nearly impossible when consecutive lessons with classroom music is a necessary requirement for successful completion of professional experience. Most often, pre-service teachers teach a collection of 'one-off' lessons to different individuals and groups of instrumental music students as part of this section of their practicum. This issue is only resolved through careful planning by the music coordinator working with both classroom and instrumental music timetables, while considering the particular needs of the pre-service teacher.

Secondary school teachers in Australia are required to train in two discipline methods. This may be in two different disciplines (e.g., music and history) or a double method in the same discipline (e.g., classroom and instrumental music). In some Australian education jurisdictions, students are actively discouraged from taking a double method in any discipline as it limits their employment opportunities. This advice is particularly evident in music education, where secondary schools offer one-semester music courses as both a core subject and an elective from the commencement of the secondary schooling years. It is not possible for the pre-service teacher to study only the instrumental music units of a course.

2. Teacher registration

Teacher registration for instrumental music teachers (without classroom teaching qualifications) in Australia is a major issue relating to employment in schools. All teachers in Australian schools, and from 2011 in the Australian Capital Territory, must be registered and pay a registration fee. Schools that employ teachers who are not registered with their state or territory registration board face heavy monetary fines and the personnel concerned are not permitted to teach in schools. In addition, and linked to registration, all teachers must comply with a National Criminal History Record Check (NCHRC), renewed at least every five years, involving the payment of a fee each time the check is carried out. If applicants for teacher registration cannot meet the requirements for full registration they may be granted restricted registration, although access to the full range of the pay scale is capped along with the potential for professional advancement being limited. Restricted registration involves renewal every one or two years, with applicants completing the same paperwork for each renewal and sometimes paying an application fee. Teacher qualifications granted by music examination bodies are not recognized for full registration by Australian teacher registration authorities, and only restricted registration is available. Similarly, the musician who has undertaken advanced study cannot be granted full registration.

The issue of teacher registration for musicians without an approved teaching qualification who wish to teach in schools is a complex and controversial one. States and territories grant musicians (and teachers specialized in other disciplines) without a teaching qualification 'permission to teach' (PTT) or place them in a category with a similar name. This type of category was designed for a specific time-limited reason in an identified school, for example, a visiting artist-in-residence who works in classroom settings in one school alongside a qualified teacher for one semester. Instrumental music teachers work in a number of schools during a week, change schools each year and require global registration for their jurisdiction. One example is the state of Victoria, where 3862 teachers¹ are classified with PTT and most of these are instrumental music teachers. This category was never designed for ongoing employment in schools and making arrangements for issuing a state-wide registration for musicians has not been a smooth process for some. At the point of their renewal of registration after a period of five years, they will be required to have either completed a teaching qualification or enrolled in a suitable pre-service course with the planned phase out of the PTT category. The substantial numbers coupled with a population nearing retirement age, who have no desire to complete a teaching qualification, does not lead to an easy resolution. The review of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (2008) has recommended splitting PTT and registration, an action, if implemented, which should resolve the current situation (King, King, & Associates, 2008).

Some anomalies exist and two examples in Victoria are highlighted. Upon establishment of the Victorian Institute of Teaching in 2003, any person who was teaching was granted full registration, as qualifications were not cited. It is possible that these people act as supervising teachers for those undertaking their teaching practicum as part of their pre-service course. The other concerns the requirement that teachers must complete a set number of hours of professional learning in the previous five years before renewal of registration can take place. Each board of registration is developing a process, but in Victoria, at present, only fully registered teachers must comply. Teachers with PTT registration are not required to complete this process and some are employed in a full-time capacity in schools.

Individual school principals (in the non-Government system) can make it a compulsory requirement that they will not employ any instrumental music teacher unless they have an approved teaching qualification or have enrolled in a suitable pre-service course. Also there is a belief that instrumental music teachers are 'instructors' (similar to specialist sports coaches) as they perform less work and have less responsibility than administrative support staff in schools and do not need a full NCHRC

when a police check using appropriate state or territory legislation is sufficient, for example a Working with Children Check. This lower-level police check was designed for school-based, non-teaching employees and volunteers.

3. Employment

For musicians employed in the Government school system (i.e., those schools accountable to the state and territory education departments), the different state and territory jurisdiction requirements lead to inconsistencies, irrespective of their teacher registration category. In Western Australia, permanency cannot be granted unless the instrumental teacher is fully qualified. In Victoria, many instrumental music teachers have been granted ongoing status irrespective of holding a teaching qualification. In this environment, the inability to access equal pay and entitlements when working alongside qualified teachers, with the same years of experience, continues to affect harmonious working relationships in school music departments. For those with ongoing status, pay increases won through union action do not automatically flow on, and pay levels are capped even though they perform the same work as a teacher with a higher degree. Teachers that are employed by Government school councils receive different rates of pay between schools, and the same situation exists in the non-Government systems. To cover the cost of local salaries, all students who study an instrument at school are charged tuition fees. Some instrumental music teachers are paid directly by each student and as such work in a studio environment within a school setting. In all states and territories, Government schools opting to employ instrumental music teachers on the education department payroll must be able to prove that no other suitably qualified teacher is available before permission is granted to employ a musician with PTT registration.

4. Private studio

The other major employment opportunity for instrumental music teachers is the private studio environment, providing regularity of work with a relatively stable timetable in blocks of time out of school hours. Studio teachers are often self-employed and have practices in all Australian states and territories. The teaching of music at home or in a private studio is a cottage industry and is, to date, unregulated. Anyone can set themselves up as a studio music teacher regardless of their qualifications and competence. Consequently, the quality of their work is variable. Studio teachers also teach at schools and music conservatoires where their practice and quality of work is more regulated, as they are required to meet expectations of curricula and course requirements.

The music teacher associations in Australia exist primarily to support the studio music teacher in improving the quality and status of the profession. They offer categories of membership accreditation based on qualifications, experience and referees. They recommend fee structures for lessons and accompaniment for examinations, provide professional development, and maintain a register of accredited teachers. Tertiary-awarded teaching qualifications are recognized for full registration of a music teacher association, and agreements have been made recognizing teaching awards from examination bodies. All music teacher associations accredit the teaching diploma awarded by the AMEB.

5. School teaching environment

The work of a school teacher is significantly different from that of a performer or studio teacher. Although there is a perception of a flexible professional life associated with the portfolio career of a professional musician, it is in many ways restricted, as life behind the school gate is regulated

with timetables, curricula, assessment and reporting requirements and student extra-curricula activities. The professional musician may find it difficult both to accommodate the demands of the non-negotiable school routines, such as attendance at evening parent–teacher meetings and concerts, combined with the short-notice nature of other career opportunities, and to maintain stable attendance as a teacher. The first priority is often professional activities, and many musicians decide to terminate a teaching commitment in a school after one year. The disadvantage is an unstable workforce in the school with students being allocated a different teacher every school year.

The professional musician who teaches in a school, even if only one day each week, needs to adapt to the culture of school life and the school music program. It is a requirement that instrumental music timetables are published one term (approximately 10 weeks) in advance and alterations to the day or specific lesson time may be at the discretion of the school principal or music coordinator. The musician who changes her/his teaching day, puts in another musician to cover their unavailability for a weekly lesson, or even gives multiple lessons in a week to satisfy a lesson contract with parents/guardians or the school, is not conducive to a productive learning environment. Students' instrumental music lessons are disrupted, the lesson rotation may not run smoothly, students need to adapt to personalities and teaching styles of another teacher, teaching rooms may not be available requiring a shift every lesson. These actions also disrupt the routines of other instrumental music teachers and their students and result in friction within the music department.

Instrumental music teachers need to adjust to school assemblies and ad hoc activities such as evacuation drills, appreciating that they cannot teach students during these times. Students may also be unable to change their instrumental music lesson time to accommodate excursions, tests, presentations of projects to their class in another subject and other special activities. The curriculum for instrumental music studies in schools, especially in Government schools and schools affiliated with the state and territory Catholic Education Offices, is required to comply with the authorized school curriculum. This does not preclude teachers from teaching the grade syllabus and entering students for assessment offered by the examination bodies, external to the school. There remains a requirement for them to assess their students within the school to comply with the school policy.

Sessional teaching in the conservatoire is more flexible, with professional musicians able to contribute effectively to a full-time position in a symphony orchestra or ensemble and teach as a specialist in this setting. Students are able to accommodate flexible appointment times for lessons and routines are less rigid.

6. Professional learning opportunities

Many opportunities are available for the instrumental music teacher in Australia, each contributing to ongoing professional learning. These include study to develop advanced skills, attendance at master classes as a performer or listener, participation in teacher development and taking qualifications in other disciplines. The instrumental music teacher in a school can find their access to these activities restricted for a number of reasons. These include the sometimes prohibitive cost of short courses and conferences and limited access to school funding, the inability to obtain release time from a school if not indicated in the timetable, and the requirement to give a specific number of lessons each term with any missed lessons made up by the teacher, including student absences for any reason. Musicians may find they are pressured into participating in professional learning during school holidays, which may not be the best option when, as part of their portfolio career, the professional musician may be using this time for performing opportunities and dedicated practice. Those who are self-employed in private studios will be restricted in attending professional learning activities that occur after school hours as this time coincides with their teaching commitments.

Conclusion

Although there is an array of pre-service education and training courses in Australia for the professional musician who chooses to specifically qualify as an instrumental teacher, the requirements of the state and territory registration authorities limit the type of training a person might take. In the Government school system, a teacher who does not meet the requirements for full registration has restricted access to ongoing employment and the full range of pay increments. No matter how well qualified or experienced as a professional musician or teacher these people may be, they are burdened with ‘paperwork’ as they re-apply for registration. This aspect discourages the professional musician from completing a self-funded course to gain the necessary approved teaching qualification, in favor of a course that has a focus on performance that may bring them a greater income and professional satisfaction. In an attempt by the authorities to standardize teacher registration, groups such as professional musicians are to an extent, disadvantaged.

There are currently programs available to facilitate a change of career, including financial incentives; however, these are directed from the ‘profession’ into education and not the other way. The teacher who may want to re-activate her/his performing career through participation in professional learning needs to reduce her/his teaching load to accommodate a relevant fee-paying course offered during school semesters, and is not currently supported by the school system.

The existing legislative requirements of the state and territory teacher registration boards do not address a means by which musicians can receive approved pre-service teacher education for instrumental music teaching only. The core activities of the new Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership² to include pre-service teacher education accreditation and registration of teachers are unknown at this stage. One Australian teacher registration board initially provided separate legislation for instrumental teachers; however, this has been withdrawn and is under review. Another, following review of its practices, has recommended a special registration category termed ‘para-professional’ to accommodate those who teach in schools without an approved teaching qualification. This group includes many instrumental music teachers, some school chaplains and sporting coaches, and no action has occurred so far. The solution is a complex one and any single decision needs agreement by a number of jurisdictions. Two possibilities are the completion of supervised school professional experience in instrumental music – issues about this topic have been addressed early in this paper – or the establishment of a common separate registration category.

Notes

1. As at 30 June, 2008, Victorian Institute of Teaching Annual Report 2008–2009, p. 18.
2. See reference: Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth affairs (29 September 2009).

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Biography

Amanda Watson is an instrumental music teacher with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria, Australia. Her research interests include values education, music and arts curriculum development in schools and developing professional standards for music teachers. She is a fellow of the Australian Society for Music Education and the President of the Council of Professional Teaching Associations of Victoria.

Abstracts

Les musiciens en tant qu'enseignants de la musique instrumentale: Une perspective australienne

L'enseignement de la musique instrumentale constitue une portion substantielle de la carrière protéiforme d'un musicien. Les musiciens transmettent leurs connaissances instrumentales dans les écoles, dans les conservatoires, et dans les studios privés. Cet article a pour but d'identifier dans un premier temps les opportunités pédagogiques disponibles pour la formation de musiciens dans l'enseignement de la musique instrumentale. Il explore ensuite la nature de leur participation dans ces programmes et les problèmes qu'ils affrontent après avoir terminé cette formation en tant que professeurs dans les écoles et dans les studios privés. En Australie, il existe plusieurs types de formation continue qui permettent aux musiciens d'élargir l'éventail de leurs aptitudes et leurs connaissances afin qu'ils puissent devenir professeurs de musique instrumentale. Toutefois, l'organisme qui vérifie les qualifications des professeurs en Australie ne reconnaît pas toutes les formations comme légitimes. Tous les enseignants de musique instrumentale en Australie doivent s'inscrire à la branche de cet organisme dans l'état ou le territoire dans lequel ils souhaitent travailler avant de pouvoir chercher de l'emploi. Nous discutons dans cet article des problèmes qui se révèlent lors de l'inscription. Enfin, nous considérons les divers environnements de travail ainsi que les différentes cultures dans les écoles auxquels ces enseignants en musique peuvent se heurter.

Los músicos como profesores de instrumento: Una perspectiva australiana

Los músicos enseñan su instrumento en clases particulares, conservatorios y escuelas, y eso ocupa una parte importante en sus cambiantes carreras. El propósito de este artículo es identificar las oportunidades formativas disponibles para la preparación de los músicos como profesores de instrumento, analizando las cuestiones relacionadas con su participación en esas actividades y los problemas que encuentran al enseñar en escuelas o de forma particular. En Australia existe gran variedad de actividades formativas y cursos para que el músico profesional pueda ampliar sus habilidades y conocimientos como profesor de instrumento. Todos los profesores de instrumento en las escuelas australianas deben estar registrados ante la autoridad educativa del estado o territorio en el que desean trabajar, antes de que puedan buscar empleo, pero no todas esas oportunidades

educacionales están reconocidas como formación del profesorado oficial por las autoridades educativas australianas. Este artículo presenta un análisis de las cuestiones relacionadas con ese registro, y su parte final considera los diferentes entornos de trabajo y culturas escolares que pueden experimentar los músicos profesionales.

Musiker als Instrumentallehrer: Ergebnisse aus einer australischen Betrachtung

Der Instrumentalunterricht nimmt einen bedeutenden Teil in der wechselhaften, vielseitigen Karriere eines Musikers ein. Musiker unterrichten ihr Instrument in Schulen, Konservatorien und privat. Das Ziel dieses Berichtes ist es, die Unterrichtsmöglichkeiten die den Musikern als Instrumentallehrer zur Verfügung stehen, festzustellen; Ergebnisse die im Zusammenhang mit dieser Aktivität stehen und den Herausforderungen, denen sie in Schulen und privatem Unterricht ausgesetzt sind, zu besprechen. In Australien gibt es vielseitige Aktivitäten zur beruflichen Aus- und Weiterbildung, die der Berufsmusiker nutzen kann, um seine Fähigkeiten und seine Kenntnisse als Instrumentallehrer zu erweitern. Aber nicht alle diese Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten sind als anerkannte, qualifizierte Lehrerausbildung von den "Teacher registration boards" in Australien erfasst. Alle Instrumentalmusiklehrer in australischen Schulen müssen von der Lehrerregistrationsbehörde ihres States oder Territoriums wo sie arbeiten möchten erfasst werden, dies bevor sie eine Stelle suchen. In diesem Bericht geht es um eine Diskussion die sich mit diesem Thema der Registration befasst. Der letzte Abschnitt in diesem Bericht widmet sich der Betrachtung der unterschiedlichen Arbeitsumfelder und Kulturen in den Schulen, die von Berufsmusikern erfahren werden.