

Harold Brook Porter

*An Integrated Course in Music Literature,
Theory, and Ensemble Performance for
Talented High School Students*

Ann Arbor: University Microfilms (UM order no. 64-10,462),
1964 (University of Arizona diss.)

Cortland Hultberg

In an age in which one is too often assailed by educational panaceas to offset or destroy the sins of our stumbling forebears, it is refreshing indeed to read a fully-baked plan that makes a good deal of sense and offers some very practical advice to music educators. Mr. Porter's dissertation is commendable not only for its knowledgeable appraisal of the problems inherent to the high school music program but also for a well-conceived, scholarly, and thorough plan of action which could do much to foster, at long last, musicianship in the school program.

Well aware of the almost insurmountable difficulties in curriculum changes and scheduling, Mr. Porter plans to inject already existing high school ensembles with a good dose of music history, practical theory, and performance practices. Although not completely original with Mr. Porter, the idea of integrating literature, theory, and performance on a chronological basis appears to be a very useful approach. It provides musical materials in an easily assimilated form; and running as it does from Gregorian chant through the Renaissance, Baroque, and Classic periods, it gives the student an opportunity to identify with some of the most important contributions to the musical art of the Western world. Mr. Porter lists nine works from this period to be listened to, studied, taken apart, synthesized, rehearsed, and finally, performed in a sort of secondary-level collegium musicum lecture-recital.

Like all good educational schemes, Mr. Porter's is dependent upon a rare ingredient: effective and dedicated teaching. The instructional staff is, in Mr. Porter's words, the "single most important factor to be considered" in implementing his program. The lack of suitable teachers for such a program is quite understandable when one considers the number of graduates each year from our institutions of higher learning who are really not prepared to enter into any program of integrated study, since such integration is almost unknown on the university campus. "Splinter" courses in theory, ear-training, solfeggio, keyboard harmony, period history courses, and isolated performance ensembles have actually discouraged students from viewing their university experience as an integrated whole. If we believe in the ultimate effectiveness of Mr. Porter's plan for the high school music program, then we must take steps to provide this type of instruction at the college and university level.

However, the state of music at the North American university is not as abysmally black as might be inferred from the preceding. A few signs of change

away from the "traditional" splintered program are in growing evidence. The trend which now seems to be asserting itself is towards exactly that which Mr. Porter urges, a plan which integrates music theory, history, and performance. Universities that are starting or have already begun such programs will be producing a brand of high school music teacher who will more easily be able to fully implement the "Laboratory in Musicianship" that Harold Brook Porter describes.

At institutions such as the University of British Columbia, evidence of the superiority of an integrated program is already at hand after only two years of operation. Through its chronological organization from ancient Greece to the present, students in this comprehensive plan are well aware of historical development. As an important adjunct, especially in the light of Mr. Porter's dissertation, they can take with them into their subsequent teaching a better understanding of a wealth of musical literature.

CORTLAND HULTBERG is professor of music at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

John Malcom Tait

*The Significance of Musical Understanding
in Music Education*

Columbia University Ed.D., 1963

Gary M. Martin

The purpose of John Tait's study is to examine authoritative views regarding musical understanding and to propose a definition of the same. He then attempts to relate this definition to the educational process of the public schools. Musical understanding is defined as a process in which a person re-creates the sounds he hears in terms of his own feelings, knowledge, and imagination. Five areas of musical understanding are identified as follows:

- (a) Hearing music: aural recognition of the components of music, such as, rhythm, melody, harmony, form, and so forth.
- (b) Seeing music: visual recognition of musical relationships when they are presented in a musical score.
- (c) Imagining music: (see below)
- (d) Feeling music: imagining and feeling music are the most intangible of the five aspects of musical understanding. Music elements suggest to individuals concepts which may form a bridge between the music and life itself. These concepts (or bridges) are formed by individuals as an out-growth of the interaction between music and their feelings and background.
- (e) Knowing music: knowledge of music history, music theory, musical instruments, and musical forms.

Tait acknowledges that, in the opinions of some musicians, more than one