NASM
FAEM Brochures
Entertainment, Education, and Music
ENTERTAINMENT, EDUCATION, AND MUSIC
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FOUNDATION FOR
THE ADVANCEMENT
OF EDUCATION
IN MUSIC
Music is a central part of basic education, because musical achievement resolves the conflict between order and reason on the one hand and spirit and emotion on the other. It represents a synthesis where order and reason heighten both spirit and emotion. It constitutes one of the highest pleasures mankind has produced in its ceaseless quest for civilization. It has power to shape individuals and societies.
BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

WHAT COMPELS US TO GIVE NEW ATTENTION TO THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG ENTERTAINMENT, EDUCATION, AND MUSIC? DOESN'T EVERYONE UNDERSTAND THESE CONNECTIONS? AREN'T PROFITABLE DECISIONS BASED ON THESE UNDERSTANDINGS EVERY DAY? SURELY THE ENTERPRISES THAT HAVE BEEN FOUNDED ON THEM ARE FUNDAMENTALLY SECURE AND MAGNIFICENT FUTURES LIE JUST BEYOND THE HORIZON.

SOME READERS WILL PROCEED NO FURTHER. OTHERS WILL BE CALLED ON TO THINK: WHAT DO THESE QUESTIONS MEAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MY WORK, MY BUSINESS, MY COMMUNITY, AND THE CULTURAL FUTURE OF MY COUNTRY? WHILE THESE QUESTIONS AND THE ISSUES THEY RAISE ARE IMPORTANT FOR ALL CITIZENS, THEY ARE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR MEMBERS OF THE MUSIC COMMUNITY. AND IN THE MUSIC COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE, THEY ARE MOST CRITICAL TO THOSE INVOLVED WITH EDUCATION IN MUSIC—STUDENTS, TEACHERS, SCHOOLS, AND BUSINESS.

WHY? WHAT DOES COMPEL NEW ATTENTION TO THESE MATTERS?

SIMPLY STATED, WHAT IS PERCEIVED, THOUGHT, AND KNOWN ABOUT
ENTERTAINMENT, EDUCATION, AND MUSIC CREATES WHAT IS VALUED ABOUT

EACH OF THEM. WHAT IS VALUED, IN TURN, INFLUENCES DECISIONS —

DECISIONS ON WHICH THE HEALTH AND SCOPE OF MUSIC, MUSIC TEACHING,

THE MUSIC INDUSTRY, AND OUR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT DEPEND.

THIS PAPER EXPLORES THESE RELATIONSHIPS AND INFLUENCES AND

ASSERTS THAT A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THEM PROVIDES A MORE

SECURE FOUNDATION FOR PROMOTING AND DEVELOPING MUSIC AND MUSIC

STUDY. ITS APPROACH IS REALISTIC, YET GROUNDED IN HIGH ASPIRATIONS

FOR A BROADLY BASED, MULTIFACETED MUSICAL CULTURE. ITS FOCUS IS ON

BUILDING CAPABILITIES, ON EXPANDING CAPACITIES, ON BRINGING A MORE

COMPLETE RANGE OF MUSICAL ACTIVITIES TO OUR NATION’S ATTENTION,

AND ON REFLECTING THAT RANGE IN OUR NATION’S VALUES.
ENTERTAINMENT, EDUCATION, AND MUSIC

ENTERTAINMENT
Entertainment is an important and powerful force. The word signifies unrestricted enjoyment—pleasure without struggle, fulfillment without risk. It is comfortable, friendly, and benign. We accept entertainment on our own terms and on our own time, without fear of consequences. Entertainment is thus central to the human condition; as the opposite of work and study, it provides balance: “All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.”

Most of us would agree that all play and no work makes Jack (and Jill) even duller—unproductive, potentially alienated, prone to internal or external violence. Clearly entertainment, while vitally important, is not enough to sustain the human spirit. To forget this truth—which applies to music as much as to other pursuits—is to lose balance, to stumble and fall into a trap from which there is no easy escape.

Those concerned with education in music must continue to act on this truth as technologies, trends, and our times evolve. Such action is not always easy, since music is one of the most effective entertainment media. Music provides both a respite from, and an enhancement of, the workaday world. Its transporting power is apparent in all cultures and, like other awesome powers, must be handled with care, particularly given the nature of its source: sounds and rhythms organized abstractly in the air, here and gone in a moment, creating logics that can have an impact long after the music is over.

This power of music has given it many different roles throughout human history. Some societies regard music primarily as a cultural aspect of folk traditions. Others regard it as an aesthetic medium for the conscious application of intellectual skills and techniques. Music may be treated as a therapeutic force by some, or as an entertainment commodity by others. In contemporary Western societies such as the United States, all of these values are present and contribute to the sum total of culture. Music based on any one of these values has the power to be entertaining, but music that is entertaining does not necessarily achieve cultural, intellectual, therapeutic, or marketing objectives. With this truth, we have an insight into why an
Entertainment and work are no monoliths; both can be good but both are not always good. Content makes the distinction case by case: some entertainments support education while others are hostile to the life or even the health of the mind. Common sense tells us that an overall policy toward music in general, and education in music in particular, ought to be both pro-work and pro-play, both pro-study and pro-entertainment — positive content in each supporting the other, not one at the expense of the other.

Several present conditions hamper an effective pursuit of this balanced approach. Perhaps the most prominent is the tremendous cultural and financial impact of music-as-entertainment on the perceptions, thoughts, knowledge, and values of musicians, music teachers, those engaged in the business of music, and the public at large. Incredible wealth, fame, and images of power are conjured across the spectrum of musical content, from jazz to classical, rock to country. Because focusing on music as entertainment is perceived to be so much more satisfying and profitable, an imbalance grows: the work aspect of music is at first tolerated, then ignored, then denied, and finally opposed for fear that by associating effort with musical activity, the entertainment-only market in personalities, goods, and services will be damaged. This viewpoint is costly because it restricts the potential of listeners and performers alike by keeping the markets for musical events, products, and services smaller than they should be. It has a particularly devastating effect on the teaching and learning of music because it denies the important connection between music and work in order to reinforce the connection between music and play.

The good news is that there are ways to support the idea of work in music without denying its entertainment connection. This can best be done by embracing two objectives for public involvement with music: entertainment and education, two different enterprises with many positive and productive connections. Fortunately, the United States has a massive and powerful infrastructure that supports quality music study in every state and region. While the connection between work and music is not as strong as it should be, it has not been neglected. Excellent teaching and substantive learning are taking place throughout the nation. Our concern is not so much with the past or present, however, but with the future — the future of music, the future of education in music, and the relationships between the two.
EDUCATION

Where is education in music most in jeopardy? School-based music programs are under severe pressure in many areas, and the pressures on all music teaching can be expected to increase. A primary reason is that much of general education is perceived to be spectacularly ineffective in conveying even the most basic skills needed by the future work force. As politicians, the business community, parents, and teachers sustain an education reform movement of unprecedented duration, the rhetoric continues to escalate in favor of disciplines that are perceived as broadening knowledge and developing skills. Areas of study that are regarded as frivolous are in greater danger than ever before of being cut. The more severe the crisis in basic knowledge and skills, the more danger of such cuts.

Exactly how basic is music study perceived to be by the general public, by politicians and business leaders, by educational policy makers, and by policy intellectuals who generate much of the reform rhetoric? A review of the facts shows that while no one opposes music per se, it is not considered vitally important, not central to the development of mental capacities. The entire music community knows this; polls continue to prove the existence of this crippling attitude. The music community is thus left with two options: 1) to let this attitude stand and attempt to follow wherever it leads, losing, preserving, or expanding programs as conditions allow; or, 2) to change this attitude and to expand the vision, potential, and markets for music.

While each option has its partisans, let us assume that we embrace the second and become active on our own behalf. We soon find that there is no quick fix, no single answer; no specific set of words or images that will effect massive change right away. The general perception that music is nice but not basic has been in the making for decades, and it will take decades to reverse it. But one thing seems clear: If the music community wishes to become more active in preserving and expanding the multiple benefits of education in music, it must carefully monitor the relationships among entertainment, education, and music. It must also manage these relationships wisely, keeping in mind the long-term goals of changing the public's perception of music study.

To misjudge the place and intensity of the entertainment connection in the promotion of education in music can be devastating, particularly over the long term. Our purpose is not to undermine music's value as entertainment, but to add new education-related dimensions to the public's understanding
of music. For while music is entertainment, it is also more: it has cultural, intellectual, and psychological connections that are as worthy of educational pursuit as mathematics or the sciences.

A major policy question arises: How can the entertainment connection best be used in the promotion of music study?

We must avoid two pitfalls. The first is attempting to support music by denying the value of entertainment. The second is attempting to use the entertainment connection in ways that reinforce the perception that music consists of nothing else. To deny the value of entertainment is foolish and unnecessary; but to misuse the entertainment aspects of music is even more shortsighted: such a strategy abandons any hope of bringing music into the family of basic studies, of ensuring that all children study music in school, and of making private study a higher priority for more students and parents. Work in music is neglected for entertainment from music. There may be little obvious short-term loss to entertainment, but tragic losses to education, to music development, and to civilization. This is a course we cannot afford to take.

MUSIC

If we argue that music has value beyond entertainment, we must be prepared to make the case for music study in terms that are compelling both to the public and to policy makers in education. To be successful, we must become teachers, expanding the general knowledge of music and of its personal and cultural influence.

Work with music can produce many benefits. Promotional campaigns for music study traditionally feature such attributes as self-discipline and the ability to work as part of a group. Other important rationales center on the issues of cultural and intellectual heritage, the place of music among civilization's great achievements, and the role of music in providing a sense of cultural continuity from the past to the future. These arguments are powerful, based in fact, and worth repeating. However, other benefits of education in music also need to be articulated:

- The study of music introduces concepts and means for using the mind. These concepts and means are unique in how they work in music, but they have broad application to other areas of life.
- Music study teaches ways of using creativity within a set of principles. It teaches the relationship between individual creativity and governing
principles and thus encourages habits of thought that make our individuality more productive.

- Music study teaches the relationships among physical skills, intellectual organization, problem solving, and strategic planning. It teaches individuals to find uniquely correct answers for given situations by employing the mathematical certainty of music in creative ways. These lessons are central to artistic thinking and have applications beyond the arts. (It is no accident that we speak of the art of government, the art of business, or the art of negotiation, for example.)

- Music study teaches the relationship between technique and results. While music study is centered in the quest for ever-higher levels of technical skill, work in music proves over and over again, at every level, that technique alone is not enough. Important lessons can be learned about the nature of technology, technique, and technological solutions. Music study thus provides a magnificent lesson about the vital role that technique plays – and also about its limits.

- Music study provides competence, and eventually fluency, in one of the most important communication media of the modern era. The powerful psychological impact of music on our times is unquestioned. The power of music to communicate important ideas is obvious. Given this power and influence, musical competence and fluency are essential to good education.

QUESTIONS
The relationships among entertainment, education, and music pose many questions for those seeking to promote music study in schools and private settings. These questions address themselves to a wide range of organizations with a variety of objectives.

The organizations and individuals most directly affected by public perceptions of entertainment/education/music relationships are those whose life's work is tied closely to education in music. Composers, performers, and presenters of music also have a tremendous stake in the development of an informed public, whether that public regards their work as entertainment, art, or a mixture of both. The community least affected is the music entertainment industry concerned solely with producing a stream of commodities with high return and short shelf-life. Put more directly, strong, work-based educational programs in music are more important to some segments of the music community than to others.
This leads us, once again, to a governing question: to what extent can the music community find greater comfort in the coexistence of two objectives—entertainment and education? Further, what are the next steps for the music community in addressing this most fundamental question? We believe that when a powerful case is made for the importance of work, the public will respond. Americans are willing to do all sorts of difficult things to improve their health, their state of mind, their mental capacities, their knowledge, and their prospects for advancement. Music education can bring these same benefits in addition to, not in place of, the benefits of entertainment.

Another important question is how to generate initial interest in music in a way that leads to long-term commitment. How can more individuals be moved from using music solely as entertainment to working with music, thus enriching their musical experience?

A final question concerns the nature and content of messages that are used to advance the cause of music among education policy makers. The values about music held by those able to shape decisions have a powerful impact on the scope and health of music study in our nation’s schools.

All of these questions bring us to the heart of the matter: many of the positive activities currently associated with education in music reinforce the public’s perception that music is solely entertainment. This does not mean that we should respond by dismantling marching bands and concert performances. It does mean that these activities should be presented to the public in ways that reinforce their educational content and objectives. We should be careful, for example, when using stars to promote music and music study. If such tactics focus on the personality as an entertainer and feature his or her career, they may obscure the importance of music study for everyone, no matter how gifted or fortunate.

The educational activities of professional performing organizations also need careful scrutiny. If students are taken to concerts or interact with artists in ways that are unrelated to ongoing study, then each event becomes another in a long series of entertainments. When prior study and classroom follow-up are involved, these experiences are placed in an educational context, and important connections are made between entertainment and the life of the mind, between work and play, between practice and accomplishment.

The entertainment, music, and education relationship is especially important in developing the content of music instruction and in national
efforts to promote the work of music teachers. Every class or private lesson, every rehearsal, every press release, and every musical event allied with education represents an opportunity to teach vital lessons about the balance between work and play in musical life. Given that those who teach music know what an uphill battle they face regarding the general public's perception of music study, it is doubly important to consider what teachers themselves can do to remedy this situation.

We believe that much can be done. Five years of steady effort will produce small glimmerings of progress, ten years will demonstrate that the effort is succeeding, twenty years will show significant gains in changed public perceptions of music education, and fifty years could see a tremendously enriched musical culture where entertainment and education coexist, each flourishing and contributing to the other. A primary question is whether musicians – noted for their ability to sustain difficult efforts in their art forms over long periods of time, driven by faith that such efforts will produce magnificent results – can muster the same perseverance, energy, and faith to address the public values that have so much influence on the climate for their work.

Businesses and industries closely tied to the teaching of music also have a tremendous stake in enlarging public perceptions about the capacities of music and music study. But it is essential to remember that success in the world of entertainment and success in education are often measured very differently. Music industries that are allied to education need to understand how to use the entertainment connection without obscuring the serious content of music study. The future of these industries, who depend on a growing population of music students and amateur musicians, is on the line.

The questions and issues posed in this paper are extremely difficult, but they lie at the heart of the problems that the American musical community has in advancing the cause of education in music. There are individuals in this community who, for various reasons, do not want to acknowledge these challenges as an aspect of professional responsibility. At present, there is still no powerful advocate working on the public's perception of the relationships among entertainment, education, and music. Thus, the music community continues to find itself reacting to events rather than shaping them. Either we continue in this way or we change: it is up to us to decide, and up to the individuals and businesses most closely allied with education in music to make sure that the decision is the right one.
The Foundation for the Advancement of Education in Music was established to fulfill a single purpose: to assist the music community in its efforts to increase public understanding of the importance of education in music—education which stresses the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills in both public and private settings.

Recognizing that many music organizations and companies are already engaged in programs and campaigns that promote music study, the Foundation works to provide a background of ideas and information as a basis on which long-term promotional planning and action may be formulated. The program of the Foundation focuses primarily on analysis, research, and the development of recommendations concerning policy issues surrounding the promotion of music study. In this work, the Foundation seeks to:

- Maintain a forum among organizations and industries concerned with music study whereby analyses and recommendations about policy issues can be broadly shared and discussed.
- Encourage the development of common ground on policy issues, thus establishing a basis for increased cooperation and collaboration among groups and individuals in the music community.
- Provide ideas and assistance concerning the promotion of music study to music organizations for use in their ongoing promotional programs, long-range strategic planning, and with their memberships. The Foundation's role is noncompetitive and nondirective in nature.

The Foundation also distributes general promotional materials targeted to a variety of audiences that describe connections between the study of music and the fullest development of human potential.

The Foundation is funded by the contributions of organizations, companies, educational institutions, and individual professionals who are concerned with music study. The Foundation and its members share three objectives:

- To assure that every individual has an opportunity to study music,
- To increase the time devoted to teaching and learning music, and
- To enhance the quality of music instruction.
The Foundation gratefully acknowledges the contributions of volunteers and staff who compiled this text, and the assistance of the participating individuals who provided invaluable input. We extend our deepest thanks to all those who contributed to this project.

For further information, contact the Foundation for the Advancement of Music, Office Box 60, 3700 NE 11th Avenue, Miami, Florida 33137, or visit their website online.

W. Keith Edwards, Editor