

STEELE ORCHESTRA

Newsletter

Why do you not see left-handed violin players in orchestras?

Several reasons account for the lack of left-handed violin players. For one thing, the bows would be moving in opposite directions. This would ruin the visual symmetry of the orchestral experience.

Another reason is the construction of the violin. Even though a violin looks symmetrical from the outside, the inside is not. There is a wood bass bar glued inside the violin that runs along the G-string. The sound post seats under the D-string. To accommodate a left-handed player, these parts would require a fairly costly and delicate move by an experience violin maker/repairman. Also, the fingerboard would need to be changed since the curvature of the fingerboard would need to match the reversed string sequence.

Some present day performers

The following names and website addresses are from Teen Strings magazine (www.teenstrings.com). These string players span various musical styles from jazz to classical, bluegrass to rock. Students may find it interesting to checkout these musicians. Most of them started on their chosen instrument at an early age.

Joshua Bell, Violinist, www.joshuabell.com
 Joanne Pelletier, cellist, www.jorane.com
 Zach Brock, violinist, www.zachbrock.com
 Leigh Mahoney, violinist, www.toscastrings.com
 Perttu Kivilaakso, cellist, www.apocalyptica.com
 Eric Gorfain, violinist, www.thesectionquartet.com
 Caitlin Tully, violinist, www.imgartists.com
 Jeremy Kittel, fiddle, www.jeremykittel.com
 Chris Maas, string bass, www.phenomenauts.com
 Brittany Haas, fiddle, www.brittanyhaas.com

Practice Cards

Students are to record and turn in their practice times on weekly for the time they practiced the prior week. The weekly goal for 2nd year students is 90 minutes a week. First year students should strive for 60 minutes a week. 15 - 20 minute sessions spread throughout the week make for better learning than one long stretch of time.

Teen composer

Jay Greenberg, has been called the modern day Mozart. By the age of 14 he had written five symphonies and a number of solo and chamber pieces, many performed by leading orchestras. In 2004, he appeared on CBS-TV's *60 Minutes*. Search him out on the web.

An inexpensive **music notation** program is available from Finale at <http://www.finalemusic.com/NotePad/>. Students who are interested in composing their own music will find this music notation program very helpful.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, March 14

2009 All District Eleven Mass Orchestra Concert at Mitchell H.S.

String students from all the D11 elementary schools will join together for this special event. Imagine 700 plus students playing together! The schedule is as follows:

9:00 to 10:40 am - Beginners rehearse.
 10:00 to 11:45 am - Intermediate students rehearse.
 1:30 pm - all students arrive for tuning and seating. Concert starts at 2:00 pm.

If you are interested in hearing our D11 middle school orchestra students, their **Middle School Stringathon** concert will follow at 7:00 pm at Mitchell H.S.

Tuesday, May 5

7:00 pm - Steele Band and Orchestra Spring Concert in the gym.

Reminder...

Elementary Instrumental Music Participation Fee

As in years past, School District #11 has an elementary music participation fee of \$45.00 per student. This fee covers the entire school year. Families with two or more students in our instrumental programs need only pay one fee. If your student is on the free or reduced lunch program, the fee is waived. Paid fees are not returned for any reason. Checks should be made payable to School District #11.