

— Boston —
**NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY'S RESEARCH CENTER
 AND GUIDED INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN GREATER
 BOSTON AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**TAKING A PERSONAL APPROACH:
 WHEN MUSIC PERFORMANCE
 MAJORS PREPARE TO TEACH**

by

LARRY SCRIPP

The MIE Concentration, based on the Artist-Teacher-Scholar model, is New England Conservatory's version of a music education program for performance majors. Our students find this program *inclusive* because we give credit for any pedagogy, education, residency, and music education course. Pedagogy courses can come from any department of the school of music: that is, music history, theory, contemporary improvisation or any instrumental degree program. Guided internships can be a cooperative venture between the Music-in-Education program and any department at the conservatory. Courses at Tufts University, Harvard, Northeastern and Simmons College may all count toward the Concentration.

Our students can take advantage of the program's *flexibility* by taking courses in any order and freely choosing pedagogy or cross-listed courses as long as one core course is completed. Guided internships can be taken at any time. Courses can be taken for zero or two credits, whatever works best for the student. The School of Continuing Education also gives the students credit for all these courses after they graduate.

Our students find that these courses are *rigorous*, because in order to receive the Concentration the students are required to keep portfolio documentation of each course and guided internship. The final portfolio submitted for the Concentration is a "cumulative portfolio" that students construct by choosing the most important elements of each course and guided internship they complete. The portfolios are assessed according to the evidence of the students' understanding of concepts and practices as identified by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. All these portfolios are kept in the MIE office and are used for points of discussion in the Exit Interview required of every student wishing to graduate with the Concentration listed on their diploma [see articles by Wong, Pauta, and Umbro in Part IV of this issue].

Part of the added value of the MIE Concentration is how it prepares young artists through course work and guided internships to think about their education as they are preparing to teach others in any number of circumstances: as higher education teaching assistants, as private lesson instructors, as outreach coordinators, as researchers, or as faculty members in public schools, community schools, adult learning centers, after school programs, arts organizations and higher education.



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Alumni reports contribute particular insight into the efficacy and value of the program for performance majors. One such letter arrived recently from a voice major (RER below) who received the Concentration (had extensive guided internship experiences) and who, like most of our alumni, is now teaching. In her words:

"...I am currently working at the Somerville Public Schools as a general music teacher. I am so glad I took all the music in education courses I could and had my Concentration from NEC, because it has really meant a lot in the professional world outside the Conservatory. Thanks to that, I am in the highest salary level possible and have a nice although hectic job. I have found teaching music to elementary grades is quite a challenge but very rewarding.

"I also wanted to ask if there is still that [Performing Artists in Schools] course that I did when I was at NEC with Paul Burdick, where we went to do assemblies in schools?...Since I am now in charge of several schools, if it is possible we would like to host one or couple of assemblies. Several teachers have asked me about of the possibility of doing this..."

— RER

This letter is not atypical of the many responses to the MIE program we have received over the past few years. For this student, who continues to pursue her artistic career after graduation, the MIE program was not only a rigorous and productive preparation for life after NEC, but *continues* to be a resource for her col-



MIE interns encourage classroom students to approach music learning through multiple arts domains and entry points. In this picture, Randy Wong uses his MIE principles and practices to teach a class in English at the South Ocean School Dalian in Dalian, China. English Language Learners work together to build "log" cabins in an activity that helps to make concrete a metaphor linking musical forms with English grammar and sentence construction - and also ties in with a unit on American history in which students learn about colonial America through traditional American songs. (Photo: Randy Wong)

leagues in public schools who want MIE community programs.

We have learned to measure the effectiveness of our program by paying attention to what NEC students say and learn through their portfolio work. Rather than waiting for unsolicited letters from alumni, however, we thought it better to require the students to do extensive reflective writing as part of the MIE portfolio process during their MIE classes and guided internships. A Guided Internship Reflection Sheet (see excerpt in Sidebar

following) was created by Andreea Pauta, the MIE Coordinator, in order to encourage students to develop reflective thinking skills and to prepare for Exit Interviews prior to receiving the Concentration.

Although all of our Concentration students are challenged to reflect systematically on their learning on every course as part of their portfolio requirements, three students were challenged to contribute to this *Journal* the particular insights they gathered from their MIE program experiences.

PART OF THE ADDED VALUE OF THE MIE CONCENTRATION IS HOW IT PREPARES YOUNG ARTISTS THROUGH COURSE WORK AND GUIDED INTERNSHIPS TO THINK ABOUT THEIR EDUCATION AS THEY ARE PREPARING TO TEACH OTHERS IN ANY NUMBER OF CIRCUMSTANCES: AS HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING ASSISTANTS, AS PRIVATE LESSON INSTRUCTORS, AS OUTREACH COORDINATORS, AS RESEARCHERS, OR AS FACULTY MEMBERS.

“I AM CURRENTLY WORKING AT THE SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AS A GENERAL MUSIC TEACHER. I AM SO GLAD I TOOK ALL THE MUSIC IN EDUCATION COURSES I COULD AND HAD MY CONCENTRATION FROM NEC, BECAUSE IT HAS REALLY MEANT A LOT IN THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD OUTSIDE THE CONSERVATORY. THANKS TO THAT, I AM IN THE HIGHEST SALARY LEVEL POSSIBLE AND HAVE A NICE ALTHOUGH HECTIC JOB. I HAVE FOUND TEACHING MUSIC TO ELEMENTARY GRADES IS QUITE A CHALLENGE BUT VERY REWARDING.”
—FORMER MIE GUIDED INTERN

Max Schreier’s essay reflects his background in music composition as a first-year student at New England Conservatory. He had heard about this program from his composition teacher in high school, Shawn Crouch, an NEC



MIE Guided Interns at NEC frequently choose to do part of their internship work at the Boston Arts Academy (BAA), an arts-based pilot school within the Boston Public Schools system, where Interns are paired with mentoring classroom teachers like Allyssa Jones (pictured above at far right). At BAA, MIE Interns have the opportunity to do classroom observations, work as teaching assistants in music history and digital music technology classes, teach private lessons, or design their own modules that both enrich BAA students’ curricular learning and help to expand the Interns’ own experiences as teachers. Past modules created by MIE Interns include Randy Wong’s “You Too Can Be A Solfege Superhero,” which connected music literacy skills with performance practice, and group keyboard classes by David Kim and Cicilia Yudha. (Photo: Randy Wong)



One of the many strengths of the NEC Music-in-Education Guided Internship program lies in the versatility that its students bring to their internships. MIE Guided Intern Randy Wong brought NEC teaching artists The Solfege Five to Boston Arts Academy to serve as a model for BAA students who were learning to connect performance practice with music literacy skills and Solfege. Members of the Solfege Five, shown left to right: Ashley Vandiver, Courtenay Vandiver, Randy Wong, David Fulmer, and Ben Levy. (Photo: Randy Wong)

graduate who co-authored a piece on portfolios for *The NEC Journal for Learning Through Music* [2000]. Max’s first two experiences were the Introduction to Music-in-Education course and a guided internship involving curriculum writing for “Create Your Own Radio Show” for the *From The Top Radio Show* in Boston.

Max’s entry point into the MIE program concerns a subject close to the heart of most

composers: the matter of interpretation. His essay illustrates how this topic can be approached in terms of creating lesson plans that are enacted in class. Assuming that interpretation is a worthy topic of study for both music and English language arts classes, Max uses the concept of ‘ridiculousness,’ the exaggeration of elements of interpretative reading, to set the stage for understanding the difference between composition and performance. Using the e.e. cummings poem

“fallen leaves” and a musical piece “Clapping music” by Steve Reich, his points engaged the entire MIE class.

Sara Leib is a recent graduate from New England Conservatory. She acknowledges in her essay how guidance from Warren Senders’ courses on improvisation and cross-cultural alternatives to music impacted her understanding of how others learn. Her reflections on Music-in-Education courses during her Exit Interview illustrate how different students use the Concentration for different purposes. As a jazz voice student, she appreciates the flexibility of a Music-in-Education program that stresses creativity-based approaches to music education prior to learning standard pedagogical methods courses.

Melanie Howell has an undergraduate Music Education Degree from Lawrence University and a graduate degree in saxophone from New England Conservatory. In her essay she describes the sense of second-class citizenship and low expectations held for music education majors at many conservatories and music programs. Not only did she find that Performance majors had developed a negative perception of Music Education majors, implying that they “couldn’t hack it” as performers, but that Music Education majors had internalized this sense of “failure,” admitting that their shortcomings as performers were precisely why they were becoming teachers.

At New England Conservatory, the Artist-Teacher-Scholar emphasis in the MIE program allowed her to reconcile this conflicting view of performance and education. While embracing her performance studies with great enthusiasm and success, she also was able to draw on her background as a music education major to learn about learning in MIE classes. In time she became a research center assistant, collecting and analyzing data from the Laboratory School Partnership Schools and creating a portfolio of her work. Her testimony is inspirational for those who think that the synthesis of the Artist-Teacher-Scholar model can be effective in integrating the conservatory curriculum during graduate studies. ¶

SIDEBAR

Reflections/Self-Assessment on Work Accomplished in an MIE Guided Internship

EXCERPTS FROM A REFLECTION SHEET
 CREATED FOR THE MIE PROGRAM BY ANDREEA PAUTA

Looking back on your Guided Internship through the documentation in your portfolio, what was the contribution of this experience to the way you view:

- Engagement in and/or commitment to teaching and learning in the field of Music-in-Education, and its importance to the NEC graduate as an “Artist-Teacher-Scholar”
- Knowledge of music’s role in education as both a subject for its own sake and as a resource for interdisciplinary learning, and an understanding of how to apply that knowledge to personal teaching and learning experiences
- Personal responsibility for and/or capability of managing, monitoring, and assessing student learning both musically and with respect to interdisciplinary connections with music
- Systematic and reflective thinking about practice, experience, and literature related to the field of Music-in-Education
- Your role and skills as an Artist/Teacher/Scholar within one or more learning communities or contexts.

Portfolio Content: Please use documentation examples from your portfolio to show evidence of skills and understanding associated with the guided internship:

- Evidence of Outside Collaboration
- Evidence of Diversity Appreciation in Curriculum
- Awareness of Learning Environments
- Evidence of Facilitation of Learning
- Evidence of Planning and Implementation of Assessment Systems
- Evidence of Knowledge and Skills (in teaching music and music-integration)
- Evidence of Student Knowledge (developmental and individual differences)

The Future: Please answer the following questions in regards to your next steps within the MIE Concentration. If you are graduating, please describe the steps you’ll be taking after you graduate.

- Now that you have completed your internship, what are your next steps toward your development as an Artist-Teacher-Scholar?
- How do you plan to incorporate what you have learned during this MIE Internship after you graduate from NEC? ¶