
THE STRING SECTION

The Florida American String Teacher Association



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The American String Teacher Association, Florida Chapter

ASTA is a non-profit organization devoted to enhancing the future of string teaching and playing in the United States; by increasing the amount of string teachers. Fortifying this commitment to the string community, ASTA has introduced many programs, services and foundations throughout the years. Among these outlets include the National String Project Consortium; assisting universities in enhancing the training of string music education majors. Therefore producing qualified string teachers for private and especially public schools.

ASTA has also developed programs for professional development and instrument and bow outreach for schools, studios, and students in need. More recently, ASTA developed The National Foundation to Promote String Teaching and Playing. This segment executes grants, awards, and competitions enriching the quality of string education. In addition to advancing string education and performance throughout America, it fosters a variety of projects around the world. ASTA keeps thousands of string educators connected through The American String Teacher, a quarterly journal that keeps ASTA members informed on the latest news on teaching, products, and the string community as a whole. For more information about ASTA please visit www.astaweb.com.

Message from the President

Greetings FL-ASTA members!

I hope that everyone is doing well and getting through all your wonderful winter performances. I am Vivian Gonzalez, the newly elected FL-ASTA Chapter president. Our FL-ASTA board is working on several surveys and projects that you will be seeing in the near future. We want to make sure that we know the needs and wants of our membership and that we are spending our resources on what will benefit you and your students the most. If you have any suggestions, or would like to be part of our core group of volunteers, please email me at givian3@gmail.com. Again, I wish you the very best, and I hope you all have a fantastic (calendar) year!



Vivian Gonzalez
President, FL-ASTA

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I would like to congratulate our new FL-ASTA Executive Board: Vivian Gonzalez, President, April Queen, President-Elect, Silvia Cisneros, Secretary, and Angelica DeJesus, who will be staying on as Treasurer. I will also continue to be involved in this wonderful organization as a member-at large on the national board of ASTA. Thank you for allowing me to serve our state organization let's work together to put Florida on the forefront of string education!

Sincerely yours,

Kasia Bugaj
PastPresident, FL-ASTA



National ASTA Conference

Albuquerque, New Mexico | March 6-9, 2019

Join hundreds of string musicians and teachers like you at the ASTA 2019 National Conference. With more than 170 sessions and a variety of learning styles — from deep dive workshops to hands-on master classes, facilitated roundtable discussions, new music reading sessions, listen-and-learn sessions and more — there is something for everyone. Connect with colleagues and friends as you gather new ideas and repertoire. Visit with vendors in the ASTA Exhibit Hall to try out products, learn about the latest industry advancements, and make purchases. Below is a list of performances and sessions showcasing our Florida colleagues! We hope to see you there and remember to bring your winter coat.

Presentations by Florida Members

Build from Scratch: A Panel Discussion on Successful String Recruiting

Ka-Wai Yu, Dixie State University Meredith Blecha-Wells, Oklahoma State University Alan, Rafferty Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Sarah Kim, Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Nick Curry, University of North Florida

Take Note of the Basics! Ten Favorite Teaching Techniques

Pamela Ryan, Florida State University



A Gift from Dr. Drew

Many of you know Dr. Lucas Drew personally or have received his short pieces throughout the years from FL ASTA. Dr. Drew has generously made these resources available to our membership. These pieces can be found on our website, Flasta.org/sheetmusic, use the password “floridastrings.”

To String Teachers:

These lessons were initially written for the beginning string students of the afterschool program of the Flagler County Youth Orchestra, Caren Umbarger, Director. The short pieces emphasize the following: Intonation; tone production with bow placement, bow weight, bow speed; bowing styles such as detache and martele; dynamics such as piano to forte and crescendo and diminuendo; string technique such as pizzicato, col legno, ponticello, and Penderecki effects such as between the bridge and tailpiece.

I express my appreciation to Dr. Brian Powell and Dr. Kasia Bugaj for their assistance and interest in this project. It is hoped that these lessons will be helpful.

Lucas Drew, Ed.D.
Professor Emeritus, University of Miami
National ASTA President (1982-84)

The Conductor's Podium

Ensembles, organizations, and events highlighted here are recipients of the FL-ASTA Special Project Grant. This grant is awarded near the beginning of each calendar year. If you wish to apply for the grant, please visit the website for more information. If you have any highlight you wish to add for the next issue, please contact us at Florida.ASTA@gmail.com

Jazz Workshop with Tim Kliphuis Gypsy

Gainesville: The workshop started with some introductory tunes played by Tim Kliphuis, from the Netherlands, and his musical partner and guitar player Alfonso Ponticelli, from Chicago. Then, for the next two hours, Tim used two Gypsy Jazz standards to explore innovative licks, bowing techniques that included intriguing ghost-strokes, and the use of harmonics. He engaged each of us in melodic improvisations over iconic Gypsy Jazz chords, played on guitar by one of the participants. Along the way, Tim craftily illustrated how jazz phrasing on the violin has been shaped by the pioneering horn players of the genre, who had to pause intermittently to draw a breath. This simple necessity resulted in one of jazz music's distinguishing traits. When jazz violinists combine this phrasing with their signature short bow-strokes and the freedom to improvise, spaces are created in the music where players and listeners can savor the rhythmic syncopations and underlying harmonic structure that give so much color and texture to this music.

It was a very exciting workshop. Everyone obviously took away new skills and ideas, and a constructive understanding of improvisation and its applications within the style. It definitely broadened everyone's horizon as a musician.

The next evening, Tim and Alfonso gave a Gypsy Jazz concert at the Thomas Center as part of the Jewel Box Series, thanks to Evans Media Source. As with the workshop, the concert was very well received by an excited audience that simply could not sit still.

Our goal of fostering an increased presence of violin and fiddle music in the area certainly was advanced by these paired events, thanks to the support of the ASTA's Florida Chapter. By making this less-familiar musical style accessible through local workshops and concerts, the perspective and skill sets of teachers, performers, and students were joyfully expanded. We feel very fortunate to have been able to capitalize on Tim's visit to Gainesville, and his skilled and dedicated teaching, to organize and host such a successful workshop.



A Two-Year Plan

Do you have thoughts, ideas, and needs from FL-ASTA? Send us your two-year plan at givian3@gmail.com.

Florida Southern College String Orchestra Camp

Lakeland: On behalf of the Florida Southern College String Orchestra Camp, we wish to thank you very much for the generous FLASTA special project grant and support of our new project. The grant contributed greatly in the support of The Florida Southern College (FSC) String Score Composition Competition, held through the FSC String Camp, which I direct and conduct. The FSC String Camp took place this past June 17-22, 2018 with 135 participants this year, our largest string camp yet.

The Florida Southern College String Score Composition Competition was the first contest for young emerging composers of its kind in the Polk County area and central Florida. The competition was open for any students currently in middle school, high school, or the college/university. The composition had to be an original and new work for string orchestra. The winner of the String Score Competition would have his/her piece premiered and conducted by myself at the FSC String Camp final concert in June 2018



Be Better with Bergonzi at the Alhambra Orchestra

Miami: The Alhambra Orchestra's fourteenth annual weekend chamber music workshop, "Be Better with Bergonzi," was held on January 5-8, 2018, at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music, with 25 participants in seven groups. The FL-ASTA grant helped us cover instructor fees. Altogether, we provided scholarships for six high-school students, who are all members of the Greater Miami Youth Symphony. The adults represented all age groups, with the oldest in their 80s. Participants studied and performed pieces by Vivaldi, Schumann, Beethoven, Dvorak, Haydn and Mendelssohn. Our three pianists received instruction from Tian Ying, an acclaimed performer on the University of Miami faculty. The Bergonzi String Quartet members provided the rest of the instruction. The Saturday session included a group class where the instructors "sat in" with the various groups to work on ensemble pieces in a master-class format. For Saturday evening, Prof. Scott Flavin gave a seminar on baroque performance style, and rehearsed the attendees in the Vivaldi concerto that they would perform the next day. The weekend was capped by a participants' recital on Sunday afternoon, to which the public was invited. And as soon as the recital ended, participants were invited free to the Miami Friends of Chamber Music concert a few steps away, featuring the Kalichstein, Laredo, Robinson trio. Our participants had a wonderful weekend.