Thoughts on Popular Music Education…

Where do we go from here?

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Why adapt now?

- *Research shows that secondary music programs frequently serve 20% or less of the student population*
- *5,053 music education undergrads in 2015*
- *Diversity - NAfME preamble states "Music allows us to celebrate and preserve our cultural heritage."*
- *Developments in neuroscience, technology, and pedagogy*
- *Number of universities and secondary schools developing PME programs*
- *Our current students will be the consumers and audiences of the future*

Elements of Popular Music Education

- *utilizes a variety of styles of music the majority of our students already consume and enjoy*
- *instills business skills including knowledge of social media promotion/marketing, contracts, licensing, copyright, etc.*
- *includes multiple opportunities to write, arrange, perform, and record music – both original and existing material*
- *offers an opportunity to explore the social and cultural aspects of music as it relates to our student's lives*
- *provides a space for students who do not want to solely participate in traditional band, choir or orchestra to pursue a love of music*
- *uses more informal pedagogies that involve student-centered and peer-to-peer learning when compared to traditional, teacher-centered pedagogies*

The questions, oh the questions…

- *Why not a marching band, concert band, orchestra, or concert choir?*
- *Why non-traditional or popular music?*
- *What are the benefits of PME?*
- *You don't consider PME to "real" music education, do you?!*
- *So you just want to teach people how to be in wedding bands?*

*Traditional music education hasn't changed a great deal since the late 1800's. Brass Band music was all the rage and, as new, educational ensembles were added, they mirrored the **popular** music of the day.*

How do we, as educators and performers, go about shifting the paradigm?

Where have we been and…

- *Traditional vs jazz vs popular music education*
- *1950s - over 30 colleges added jazz to their curriculum, major publishers offer graded arrangements, instrument companies begin sponsoring musicians and school jazz festivals, and first summer camps are offered, recognition by MENC*
- *1960s - 450 college bands, 15,000+ high school bands, professional jazz musicians become involved via clinics, master classes, and method books, formation of NAJE in 1968, expanded coverage in DownBeat, Tanglewood Symposium*
- *1970s - more than 500,000 secondary and college students involved in jazz. Over 500 colleges offering credit for jazz courses, 70% of US JH schools had a jazz ensemble, 300 summer camps, 250 school jazz festivals. In 1972, only 15 US colleges offered a degree - by 1982 this increased to 72*

…who has the map?

- *MENC president Robert Choate said, "We cannot stay within the little tower of the classroom…any good schoolteacher must know something about jazz. It is the idiom of our youth."*
- *The NAJE constitution stated, among their aims and goals, "to foster and promote the understanding and appreciation of jazz and popular music and its artistic performance."*
- *NAJE "urged the consideration of the entire magnificent fiend of man's musical behavior for serious and systematic exploration; gospel, folk rock, art songs, Broadway, pop, soul music, traditional and modern jazz, blues, harmonica, the Nashville industry…and any and all music in Western culture."*
- *Where did it go sideways? Why can't we all just along?!*

Closing thoughts

- *The train is coming down the track…*
- *Simon Frith notes, "…the separation of jazz and popular music studies is an indisputable fact of academic life."*
- *Matt Brennan notes the same arguments used to dismiss jazz in the first part of the 20th century are being used by critics, musicians, and academics alike to dismiss rock and R&B*
- *Jazz education became acceptable after 1) jazz came to regarded as art music and not as mere entertainment and 2) extracurricular jazz activities on college campuses were highly successful (TMI)*