

**American String Teachers Association
of
New Jersey**

Virtual Fall Symposium

Saturday, October 2nd, 2021

Hosted by Dr. Brian Verdi, ASTA/NJ President

~ SCHEDULE OVERVIEW ~

- 1:00 - 1:50 **Reading Session: Presented by Joe Snyder from J.W. Pepper**
Grab your instrument and play along with new titles from grades 1 - 4
- 2:00 - 2:50 **Composition in the School and String Lesson: Creative Projects for All Levels and Ages.** *Presented by Dr. Matthew Rotijan, Scarsdale Middle School, Scarsdale, NY, and Dr. George Nicholson, assist. professor of music ed. at the University of New Mexico.*
- 3:00 - 3:50 **Tango: Bringing Drama and Authenticity to Your String Orchestra**
Presented by Jeffrey Cieriak, James Caldwell High School Orchestra Director, Caldwell, NJ
- 4:00 - 4:50 **Tools for Your Multi-Style Strings Teaching Toolbox**
Presented by Martha Mooke & Joe Deninzon, New Jersey City University
- 6:00 - 7:00 **New Jersey Intermediate and All-State and High School State Solo Clinics**
Violin - Dr. Timothy Schwarz, *Rowan University*
Viola - *Kathryn Lockwood, Montclair State University*
Cello - Dr. Tomoko Fujita, *Montclair State University*
Bass - Douglas Mapp, *Rowan University*
- 6:00 - 7:00 **Road Less Painful: New Approach to Teaching Strings, Where Everything Make Sense.** *Presented by Sergei Panov, Marshall Elementary School, Edison, NJ*

~ SESSION TITLES AND DESCRIPTIONS ~

1:00 - 1:50 **Reading Session: Presented by Joe Snyder from J.W. Pepper**
Play along with us with new selections of music from grades 1 - 4. Play along with us with a live string quintet.

2:00 - 2:50 **Composition in the School and String Lesson: Creative Projects for All Levels and Ages.** *Presented by Dr. Matthew Rotijan, Scarsdale Middle School, Scarsdale, NY and Dr. George Nicholson, assist. professor of music ed. at the University of New Mexico.*

Composing in orchestra class and lessons can be a rich and engaging experience for students in a comprehensive music curriculum. This session showcases various composition projects that have a particular design which allows teachers to adapt activities to their own curricular settings of instrumentation, levels, and age groups. Attendees will get hands-on experience creating their own compositions that can be adapted to several teaching/learning scenarios! No technology or composition experience required.

3:00 - 3:50 **Tango: Bringing Drama and Authenticity to Your String Orchestra**
Presented by Jeffrey Cieriak, James Caldwell High School Orchestra Director, Caldwell, NJ

Tango music is perfectly suited to string orchestras. Dynamic drama, special effects, minor keys, chromaticism and syncopated rhythms make this music exciting, challenging, and educationally relevant. However, many arrangements reduce this music to an inaccurate stereotype. In this workshop you will learn authentic tango rhythms, special techniques/effects, and styles under the tango umbrella. We will cover some strategies for teaching these unique aspects, some exemplary groups to use as models, and discuss a few arrangements that get it right.

4:00 - 4:50 **Tools for Your Multi-Style Strings Teaching Toolbox**
Presented by Martha Mooke & Joe Deninzon, New Jersey City University

This session will help teachers identify, and offer, tools needed to incorporate multi-style strings in a classroom or private studio. While you don't need to be an expert in all styles of music, improvisation or technology, you do need to know where to look for guidance and resources. Bring your questions, concerns and limitations (realistic or perceived.) This session will help you move forward toward enhancing the musical experience for you and your students.

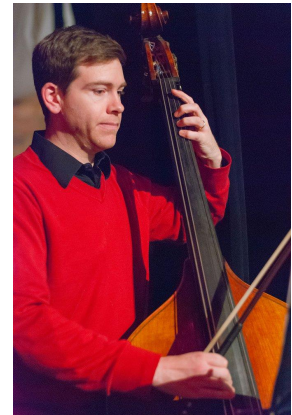
6:00 - 7:00 **Road Less Painful: New Approach to Teaching Strings, Where Everything Make Sense.** Presented by Sergei Panov, Marshall Elementary School, Edison, NJ

String pedagogy has been based on hundreds of years of practice that largely ignores human nature. As a result, music teachers are constantly fixing bad habits and wrong positions, that leaves most students frustrated, quitting after the first year. I would like to present a different approach, that starts with what is our human nature (most comfortable) and how we need to train our bodies to perform strange and

unnatural motions to play stringed instruments. Your students will learn body awareness, feel energized and excited to learn, understanding why learning strings is hard, in a properly structured environment. You will walk away with simple and easy to use strategies that will work in any classroom environment, and see immediate results with your students.

~ PRESENTERS' BIOS ~

Jeffrey Cierniak received his Bachelor of Arts in Jazz Studies from Indiana University in 2012. During his study, Jeffrey was part of the Latin American Popular Music Ensemble where he fostered a love for latin music. Under the tutelage of Daniel Stein he learned tango repertoire, style, and techniques in preparation for a concert led by tango artist Pablo Aslan. At Montclair State University, Jeffrey played in combos as well as the Balkan Music Ensemble while earning his Master of Arts in teaching. He has played various instruments with Samba New York! and performed in parades with them. Jeffrey taught in Newark Public Schools for three years and currently teaches orchestra, low strings, and music theory in Caldwell/West Caldwell.



Joe Deninzon has been hailed by critics as “The Jimi Hendrix of the Violin,” because of his innovative style on the “Viper” seven-string electric violin. Joe has worked with the Who, Bruce Springsteen, 50 Cent, Sheryl Crow, Smokey Robinson, Les Paul, Phoebe LeGere, Kurt Elling, and as a soloist with Jazz at Lincoln Center and the New York City Ballet.



Joe is the lead singer and violinist for the progressive rock band, Stratospherius, which has released 6 albums to critical acclaim. He is also a member of the Sweet Plantain String Quartet, which combines Latin Jazz with hip-hop and Classical music.

As an educator, Joe has taught at Mark O'Connor’s String Camp and Mark Wood’s Rock Orchestra Camp. Joe’s book on improv and extended techniques for strings, titled “Plugging In” is published by Mel Bay.

Sergei Panov is a Russian-born violinist who wishes to instill a love for music, self-expression, and self-realization in his students.

Teaching violin in a direct, simple, and goal-oriented way is his mission in life. At the age of 12, after growing up in St. Petersburg, he emigrated with his family to New Jersey in the United States.

With a mother who teaches piano, and a father who builds musical instruments, Sergei naturally gravitated toward music and education. He earned his Bachelor of Music degree in violin

performance at Temple University and served as the concertmaster of the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra. During his university studies, Sergei realized his true passion was in music education and he has presented on this topic at the New Jersey Music Educators Association Conferences and Rowan University. As orchestra teacher at John Marshall Elementary School in Edison, New Jersey, he now relishes cultivating a love of music with younger generations.



Visit www.sergeipanov.com for more resources and free downloads.

Martha Mooke, acclaimed for her electrifying performances and compositions, is a pioneering electric violist/composer, highly regarded for her artistry, music advocacy, and innovative educational programs. She transcends musical boundaries, enhancing classical training with extended techniques, technology and improvisation.



A Yamaha Artist and Eventide's first Artist in Residence, Mooke is a leading clinician on electric and multi-style string playing. She has performed with Barbra Streisand, David Bowie, Philip Glass, Elton John, Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, Laurie Anderson, Andrea Bocelli, Tony Bennett and ongoing collaboration with Beat Box legend Rahzel.

She is Founder and Artistic Director of the Scorchio Quartet (featured on David Bowie's Heathen CD) which performs as resident quartet in the Tibet House Benefit Concerts at Carnegie Hall produced by Philip Glass.

Her catalog of works include solo, chamber, orchestra, concert band, film and theater with genre-defying recordings Enharmonic Vision, Bowing's Cafe Mars, and No Ordinary Window, produced by Grammy winning Producer, Cynthia Daniels.

Mooke received the prestigious ASCAP Concert Music Award for creating and producing ASCAP's new music showcase THRU THE WALLS featuring boundary defying composer/performers. She is a Governor of the New York Chapter of the

Recording Academy serving on the Grammy in the Schools and Advocacy Committees. She is on the Executive Committee of the Composer Diversity Project, and Advisory Board of Composers Now.

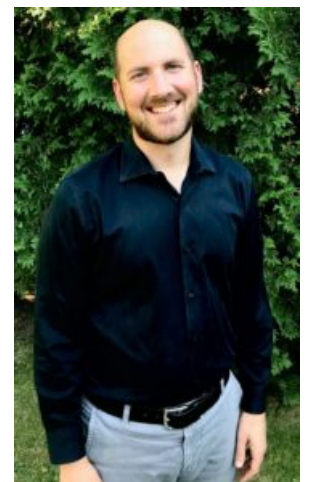
Mooke is Coordinator of Strings at NJCU and Founder/Director of the cutting edge, Multi-Style Strings program.

visit www.MarthaMooke.com

George Nicholson was born in Ridgewood, NJ, and grew up studying music in the Ridgewood public school system as well as at the Manhattan School of Music Preparatory program. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Miami, FL, and his master's degree from the University of Georgia. Mr. Nicholson had the privilege of teaching orchestra in Cobb County, GA at the middle school and high school level to wonderful, passionate, and thoughtful students. During his time there, the program produced award-winning performances, became actively involved in the local community, and engaged in creative musical experiences. In 2014, George moved to New York City to pursue his doctoral degree in music education at Teachers College at Columbia University where he was a Florence K. Geffen fellow under Dr. Randall E. Allsup. In addition to his studies, he mentored practicing music teachers, conducted the InterSchool Orchestras of New York, and was principal bass with the Queer Urban Orchestra. His research interests focus on the connection of theory to the practice of teaching, in domains of social justice, creativity, and multidimensional forms of music making. Past positions include posts at Ithaca College, CUNY Queens College, and The College of New Jersey. George currently serves as Assistant Professor of Instrumental Music Education at the University of New Mexico.



Matthew Rotjan is an active music educator committed to fostering diverse and creative learning experiences in music education. As a public school music educator, he is on the faculty of the Scarsdale Public Schools (NY), teaching orchestra at Scarsdale Middle School. Matthew has also been Adjunct Assistant Professor of Music Education at Westminster Choir College of Rider University and taught in the South Orangetown Central School District (NY), where he taught grades 3-8 string lessons, orchestra classes, and general music for 11 years.



Outside of his activities in the public school, Matthew is the co-founder and co-conductor of the Rockland Youth Orchestra (NY). He has been honored as guest conductor throughout New York State, invited to conduct honor festivals in Broome, Monroe, Nassau, Orange, Onondaga, and Rockland counties. Matthew also served on the artistic staff of New York City's InterSchool Orchestras of New York for 8 years as conductor of the Morningside Orchestra.

As a frequent speaker at state, national and international conferences, Matthew presents unique sessions on research and connections between educational theory and practice. He has been invited as keynote speaker and to present his research, pedagogical practice, and philosophy at colleges and universities throughout the east coast. His work is published in *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, *American String Teacher Journal*, *Music Educators Journal*, *Teaching Music*, *Tempo*, and *Visions of Research in Music Education*. Matthew has twice been named a Quarterfinalist for the Grammy Music Educator Award and is regularly sought out for professional development leading sessions with educators, administrators, and writing curriculum.

Matthew earned his doctorate from Teachers College, Columbia University, where he served as a music teacher supervisor, applied music instructor, research assistant, and cooperating teacher. His dissertation (available online), "In-between and together with: Exploring the complexity of repertoire selection with orchestra teachers and their students," examined the complex relationships between student interests and identities, teacher training and philosophy, and repertoire selection practices in public school orchestras. He is actively immersed in connecting theory to practice in music education, string pedagogy, and teacher preparation. Degrees are from Ithaca College (B.M.) in Music Education and Performance (cello) and Teachers College, Columbia University (M.A., Ed.M., Ed.D.) in Music and Music Education.