

Centennial Honors College

Western Illinois University

Undergraduate Research Day 2014

Performance Presentation

The 21st Century "Renaissance" Musician A Presentation of the Value of a Well-Rounded and Versatile Musician
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Philosophy

Musicians are often taught that mastery of music comes first by technique and by developing fundamental skills, such as music theory. Then, these skills are applied to create a specific sound. Though these skills are essential in the initial development of a musician's sound, often over stressing on technical aspects can limit one's creativity. When creating music, it is often easy to go through the motions. In other words, instead of being conscious of what one is creating, it is easy to become complacent if the same method of creating music is repeated excessively.

To clarify, the intention of this presentation is not to devalue the power of creating music from a technical background. Rather, this method will aim to suggest different combinational approaches. There can be long term benefits to creating music in a multitude of different ways, instead of just learning one perspective. In essence, this presentation will pull on the experience of two 21st century collegiate musicians to prove the value of being a well-rounded musician . The first musician is a classically trained harpist and vocalist, and the other is a informally trained multi-instrumentalist. These musicians will explain the diversity of the situations that they have performed in, as well as show how they have learned for each other's perspectives.

Specifically, the following 4 topics will be discussed. The diversity of the harp, an instrument mainly associated with classical music, and its postmodern function in nontraditional musical situations (1). The ambiguity in the approaches and methods of songwriting (2). Music being used to learn ideas and concepts (3). Creating arrangements for unconventional duet instrumentation (4). Notice that these topics, though clearly falling under the category of creating music, are diverse. This is intentional to display that being a well-rounded musician can often boost creativity in musical approach and methods.