

Confident Music Selection: A Focus on the Forgotten Layers

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April 9, 2022 ACDA Collegiate Day - Towson University

2-Part Description - Morning session and Afternoon session

- Part 1 - Review basic programming concerns and create a list of questions to help guide decision-making, introduce resources to help answer questions and suggest strategies for successful implementation. Handouts will be given of examples that will be further analyzed in Part 2.
- Part 2 - We will have a panel of composers, educators and conductors ready to discuss their approaches to responsible programming - concluding with a Q&A session.

How did we get here?

- Introductions
- Goals

What are the considerations that go into selecting repertoire?



Take a moment to write down three specific things that you consider when choosing repertoire.

The Process:

Part 1: Questions to fine tune the process

- Can you satisfactorily answer the questions - “Why this piece?” or What is/are the musical reasons we are programming this piece?
- Assets: What knowledge, perspective and skill sets do you have to teach this piece?
- Deficits: What is missing that you will need to research in order to do justice to the music?
- Context: How does this piece fit in to the concert program, season program or multi-year curriculum?

The Process - Part 2: Answers - Let's figure out answers together

1. Admitting that you don't know the answers is the first step!
2. Do your research respectfully and never assume! Reach out and contact sources.
 - When was the piece published? How does the publisher/composer site the original source or support performance practices that respect the cultures
 - What do reputable sources say about this style/genre of repertoire?
 - What is the vocal style generally associated with this piece?
 - What kind of accompaniment or performance practice is appropriate for this piece?
3. Educate your performers and your audience, notably your parents
4. Mitigate the Damage

The Unknown (more questions will arise)

- When does music become part of the general cultural fabric, not requiring acknowledgement?
- Is it racism to allow only POC ensembles/composers to sing/compose works with POC roots or to criticize white ensembles/composers to sing/compose music of the black diaspora.
- Can we embrace other cultures as a means of uplifting and adding to our canon?
- For songs with compromising lyrics, can you change lyrics?

What's next?

- Be aware of the layers that can be overlooked
- Look for opportunities to shift and shape the conversation
- Our goal is not acculturation or assimilation, but to teach with culturally responsive pedagogy that uplifts and validates all backgrounds and cultures equally.
- Give yourself grace. This is a lifelong journey!
 - “Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better”
Maya Angelou
- Reach out to the teachers around you to build a support network.
- Assignment; Has this session prompted more questions or thoughts? Bring them to Part 2 - this afternoon.