Singing Gesualdo: Rules of Engagement in the Music History Classroom

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T he live performance of music in a music history classroom raises questions about its appropriateness in a non-performance course. In view of academic goals, how are such activities justifiable as pedagogically sound practices, and how can they be assessed in terms of the course objectives? To our accrediting organization, how can we argue that they aid learning? To my studio colleagues, how can I justify that performances that are less than professional in quality provide valuable learning? This paper explores the pedagogical validity of this type of learning activity by answering questions about its effectiveness as stated in the current scholarship of teaching and learning; as shown in the strength of its support in relationship to the stated course, department, and university objectives; and as evaluated by students in terms of their perceptions of their learning and retention of knowledge.

Teachers of music history survey courses are often faced with making compromises in content. For me, the sixteenth-century madrigal is one such area. Every year, come the mid-point of my Music History I course at Cedarville University, I struggle to impress students with the breadth of the madrigal's development. After talking about Arcadelt and Marenzio, wordpainting, and the English madrigal, I find that there is only enough time to mention Gesualdo and his extreme expressiveness, which seems as much tied to dramatic aspects of his biography as it does to the mannerist style of art in the late sixteenth century. In fall 2010, I took on the challenge of providing my students with more than just a passing mention of the madrigal composers listed in the textbook.[1]

I assigned specific Italian madrigals to student groups so that they could perform their way through the sixteenth century, ending with a performance

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1. J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 8th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010).

of Gesualdo. I chose three madrigals: an early example by Arcadelt, *Il bianco e dolce cigno*; a later example by Marenzio, *Solo e pensoso*; and a very late example by Gesualdo, *"Io parto" e non più dissi*.[2] I organized students into groups, assigned parts, and told them to perform their assigned madrigal in class on a given day. They could use either voices or instruments to perform their part, and they could opt for rehearsing together before class or putting their parts together on the spot. After each group's performance, the students in the group reflected on the challenges they faced in performing the music, especially those that they might not have realized by undertaking a mere score study.

All went well until we got to the Gesualdo example. It fell apart after two measures. Though it failed as a performance, the experience was a success as a history lesson in that it taught us what I had wanted to convey—that the Italian madrigal increased in difficulty as the century progressed. Although the studio and recital hall are not venues that welcome failure in performance, the music history classroom might be the place in which we can find "teachable moments" in less than perfect performances. This point is an important theme of this essay, because as teachers we are responsible for assuring a grasp of the course content while managing the "homework" load for students. In other words, we cannot expect students to put in an inordinate amount of practice at the expense of their other studies, so we need to find a balance, yet at the same time a justification for learning by preparing a piece of music for a live demonstration. We need to be convinced that live engagement with music provides valuable learning.

Although the activity was fairly easy to assign and carry out, the pedagogical issues related to learning objectives and assessment added layers of complexity. In this essay, for the sake of simplicity, I refer in general to classroom musical activities like the one described above as "Singing Gesualdo." Likewise, I refer to the justification for live performance in a non-performance course as "Rules of Engagement." These "Rules" include everything from the stated course, department, and university objectives to quantitative and qualitative assessment tools that investigate the effectiveness of this type of activity in increased student learning. An overview of several philosophical and pedagogical models will help us to determine whether this endeavor is worthwhile. In comparing music philosophies from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, live engagement and active learning models, dual coding theory, elaboration theory, and Universal Design for Learning, we will be able to establish a

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2. These are included in J. Peter Burkholder and Claude V. Palisca, eds., *Norton Anthology of Western Music,* 6th ed., vol. 1 (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010).

foundation for live musical performances in a traditionally non-performance course.

Philosophical and Pedagogical Models

Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Kivy

Many philosophers have written extensively on the nature and function of art which can inform our understanding of how experiencing music in learning environments can have both artistic and educational value. Friedrich Nietzsche's and Martin Heidegger's views share enough similarities that we are able to summarize them together. According to David Farrell Krell's introduction to his translation of *Nietzsche* by Heidegger, "none . . . can readily separate the name Nietzsche/Heidegger. None can pry apart this laminate."[3] Although Nietzsche examined music in particular much more extensively than Heidegger, commonalities in their writings about art inform, either directly or indirectly, a practical pedagogy of music education. Both philosophers recognize the intrinsic relationship existing among the artist, the art-making, and the art object. In his first volume of *Nietzsche*, entitled *The Will to Power as Art*, Heidegger states that "art must be grasped in terms of the artist."[4] The art experience must thus be understood in the mutual, or circular, existence of the artist and the act of art-making of his/her art, an experience that exists in the moment.

Several writers have commented on how Nietzche's and Heidegger's ideas are experienced in artistic engagement. In *The Nature of Art*, Thomas Wartenberg acknowledges another participant, the audience, of this circle in Heidegger's *The Origin of the Work of Art*: "Every aspect of the complex phenomenon known as art—the art object itself, the artist, the audience, and the work of art—is equally crucial to understanding what art is."[5] Christopher Naughton, in his study of Nietzsche, notes that the audience in ancient Greek drama became so engrossed in the play that they were essentially "at one with the spectacle."[6] David Lines, in his article addressing both philosophers' views on the work of music education, notes that if the circle is broken and parts of

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3. David Farrell Krell, "Introduction to the Paperback Edition: Heidegger, Nietzsche, Nazism," in *Nietzsche* V1/2, by Martin Heidegger, translated by David Farrell Krell (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1979), xxvii.

4. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche* V1, *The Will to Power as Art*, translated by David Farrell Krell (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1979), 71.

5. Thomas Wartenberg, *The Nature of Art: An Anthology,* 3rd ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2012), 145.

6. Christopher Naughton, "Nietzsche's Apollonian and Dionysian Consciousness in the Context of Community and Classroom Samba," *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 5, no. 2 (December 2006): 4; http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Naughton5_2.pdf.

this process are forgotten or ignored, there is a greater chance of misrepresenting the art.[7] Taking this in a very literal, linear, and direct way, it suggests that we need to experience music as the artists and composers themselves would have experienced it in the process or moment of creating it. This calls for a re-creation of the compositional setting in as holistic a manner as possible, to include performers and audience alike. While classrooms make awkward laboratories or theatrical stages, they are currently the format most universities provide; so, using our imaginations, we need to break out of time and space the best we can.

Nietzsche also recognizes the importance of the process, or work, of creating music. According to his concept of *Arbeit*, music is work brought forth. Lines notes that this process "opens intuitive spaces of insight and feeling."[8] For Nietzsche the process of becoming is most meaningful in music making because one can experience the dynamic and changing elements as they unfold in musical events. He believes that the "most potent force a music educator has . . . is music itself."[9] This process leads to critical questioning which becomes fertile ground for the music educator in shaping new directions in thinking about and experiencing music, and, perhaps even questioning the canon itself. As Lines concludes in his study of Nietzsche's and Heidegger's philosophy:

> Finally, what would such an active musical pedagogy, that is, the work of the cultural worker, consist of? An active pedagogy is implicit in the dynamic of the Nietzschean philosopher-artist, the thinker and musician, the designer of active curricula, the critique of cultural values, and the worker (*Arbeiter*) of new values in music. This pedagogue takes music to be the dynamic model of change and action, becoming an instinctive, interpretive, and artistic movement tempered by the space and place of the moment. He or she works to broaden our singular concepts of music by affirming the interconnected regions or spaces in the moment. This way of thinking becomes a guiding element in a music pedagogy.[10]

Another important idea in Nietzsche's philosophy that informs music pedagogy is the contrast between Dionysian and Apollonian perceptions. Nietzsche associates music with the Dionysian chorus of ancient Greek drama, whose music purportedly had the power to move the audience collectively into a shared emotional state that brought a sense of reality beyond the

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7. David Lines, "The Cultural Work of Music Education: Nietzsche and Heidegger," *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 2, no. 2 (September 2003): 4; http://act. maydaygroup.org/articles/Lines2_2.pdf.

8. Lines, "Cultural Work," 5.

9. Lines, "Cultural Work," 5.

10. Lines, "Cultural Work,"18.

surface of the text. As such, he views music as the art form with the unique ability to reveal essential, deeper, universal truths through its unspoken communication to our primal senses. Julian Young, in discussing Nietzsche's philosophy of art, notes that music "is the profoundest, the highest of all the arts. While the others speak always of the 'shadow,' it takes us directly to the 'essence' of things."[11] David Allison's research further reinforces the unique ability of music to move an audience. In *Reading the New Nietzsche*, he notes that "the entire argument for the privileged status of music stands or falls precisely on the listener's capacity to be effectively moved, transformed, by it."[12] This experience is requisite on the intensity of mood expressed in a live musical performance. Several other Nietzsche scholars, such as Kathleen Higgins, further discuss music's ability to produce states of ecstatic dispossession and a collective "sense of oneness with the rest of humanity."[13] While we might have second thoughts about students in our classrooms attaining a "state of ecstatic dispossession," we all should agree that the Dionysian power of music that can be experienced through live music performance can provide important opportunities for learning.

Dionysian perceptions involve feeling, subjectivity, uninhibited responses, and active communal participation. Apollonian perceptions involve logic, order, objectivity, passive responses, and an emphasis on the individual or separateness of man. This implies that for music to be effective in its Dionysian capacity, it must be experienced live. For Nietzsche, as noted above, the audience can be so moved as to become "one with the spectacle." Of course there are many factors of a live performance, which Nietzsche may have considered and which cannot be covered here, that contribute to an audience becoming "one with the spectacle" in states of "ecstatic dispossession." Granted, most "Singing Gesualdo" performances are not going to reach this level; however, even a poor performance will have at least the active communal aspect involving performers and audience and this is something a noninteractive, dry, professorial lecture can never achieve. The shared experience of giving and taking in a live-performance setting offers much in understanding the actual historical situation. Additionally, we should keep in mind that

11. Julian Young, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 21.

12. David B. Allison, *Reading the New Nietzsche: The Birth of Tragedy, The Gay Science, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, and On the Genealogy of Morals* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001): 48.

13. Kathleen Higgins, "Nietzsche on Music," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 47, no. 4 (October-December 1986): 666. For further reading see also Sarah Kofman, *Nietzsche and Metaphor*, translated by Duncan Large (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993) and Babette E. Babich, *Words in Blood, Like Flowers: Philosophy and Poetry, Music, and Eros in Hölderlin, Nietzsche, and Heidegger* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).

we are interested in music *in history*, and I think we can safely assume that many of the performances of the music in their original settings were less than perfect. That lack of perfection does not make its study any less worthy, and if it does, I think we need to rethink an overly idealized view of the historical performance of music in history. From this reading of Nietzche and Heidegger, I suggest that in performing music in class at less than "concert level," we do not entirely abandon our Apollonian way that embraces the objective, observed, vicarious, cognitive, studied, logical, ordered, and individual approach to learning music history, but rather couple it with the subjective, experiential, active, participatory, emotional, uninhibited (at least a little!), and communal aspects of Dionysian methodology.

More recently, philosopher Peter Kivy has written of the importance of studying music (including music in history) in its integrity; something that score analyses cannot address. In one of his many essays on the philosophy of music, he states, "To understand the philosophy of music one must not only understand the philosophy but the music—the sound of the music—as well."[14] This recalls Nietzsche's and Heidegger's prescription for active engagement in the music-making process.

The idea of students gaining an understanding of the history of a work of music, and attempting to recreate a performance of it based on that understanding, can be a valid technique, regardless of the level of achievement of that performance, and can be supported in the theories of the philosophers discussed above. I believe that these philosophers would all concur that in the music history classroom, the value of students participating in active music-making to recreate the historical moment is more important than the actual performance outcome.

Live Engagement and Active Learning

In addition to philosophical support, several pedagogical approaches confirm the importance of classroom musical performances as an effective teaching methodology. In a report on Alexander Astin's study, *What Matters in College: Four Critical Years Revisited*, which examined 20,000 students and over 190 environmental variables that affected student learning, James Cooper of California State University Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) noted that curriculum played little role in student success. Instead, the study found that "it was student involvement, fostered by student/student interaction and student/faculty interaction with course material that predicted student

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14. Peter Kivy, "Experiencing the Musical Emotions," in *New Essays on Musical Understanding* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 92.

success."[15] The National Study of Student Engagement (NSSE) findings over a five-year study of student engagement at CSUDH further suggest that, "when students are in class, that time must be spent wisely, since interaction with the content may be minimal outside of class."[16] This recommendation is based on survey results showing a discrepancy between reported student time spent in preparation versus faculty expectations for course success. In other words, students were not engaging in course material outside of class to the level of faculty expectation. Thus the use of class time must maximize the kinds of interaction that produce significant learning. "Singing Gesualdo" classroom activities are examples of the student/student interaction that maximize this level of learning.

Derek Bok, former president of Harvard and author of *Our Underachieving Colleges: A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should Be Learning More,* advocates a pedagogy characterized as active learning. He notes that the passive style of lecturing and drill, still so prevalent in college classrooms accomplished very little in equipping undergraduates to apply their knowledge to new problems. Furthermore, merely inviting students to ask questions or allowing them to carry on a formless discussion among themselves is not much better. Instead, instructors need to create a process of active learning by posing problems, challenging student answers, and encouraging members of the class to apply the information and concepts to a variety of new situations.[17] He notes further that several studies

> have found that critical thinking and learning in general can be enhanced by giving students problems and having them teach each other by working together in groups. Simply assigning tasks to groups, however, is not sufficient. For optimum results, participating students need to recognize that each depends on the others for a favorable result.[18]

"Singing Gesualdo" provides an example of "giving students problems and having them teach each other by working together in groups" as Bok suggests. A comment from one of my students was particularly telling. He was singing his part with others who were performing with instruments. Even though he could easily follow the score and keep the beat, he had trouble entering at the

15. James L. Cooper, "A Baker's Dozen Strategies (Ideas) to Foster Engagement" (handout from keynote address, Ninth Annual California State University Symposium on University Teaching, California State University, Dominguez Hills, CA, April 1, 2006), 1. See also Alexander W. Astin, *What Matters in College: Four Critical Years Revisited* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993).

16. Cooper, "Baker's Dozen," 1.

17. Derek Bok, *Our Underachieving Colleges: A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should Be Learning More* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 116–17.

18. Bok, *Underachieving Colleges*, 118.

right time. He discovered that he was not just waiting for a beat, but rather listening for an articulated syllable sung by the voice entering immediately ahead of him. When he couldn't hear the other student, he missed his cue, and upon later reflection, realized that the actual sounds of the vocal syllables were very important for success. The replication of pitch and rhythm by instruments did not guarantee an equally successful performance in a group with mixed performance techniques.

In *Teaching Music in Higher Education*, Colleen Conway and Thomas Hodgman recommend a variety of strategies for implementing active learning in the music classroom. They emphasize a move away from a transmission-of-knowledge model to a problem-solving, learner-centered pedagogy.[19] By assigning problems to groups of students—as in the "Singing Gesualdo" assignment—the instructor creates an environment ripe for active learning.

Peer learning is another model that yields a high level of active learning. In his article, "Peer Learning in Music History Courses," J. Peter Burkholder recommends that students group together to actively engage in course material and course-related projects. He notes that data from student evaluations and comments "suggest that they learn more, remember more, and tend to enjoy class more" when they participate in peer learning.[20]

Dual Coding Theory

Dual coding theory suggests that at least two systems, such as verbal and non-verbal, are necessary factors in increased memory retention. When the systems work in parallel, such as in dealing with the same content, they can produce information processing that can be maximized by the learner. Modes of instruction that build on this theory are those that encourage a combination of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities. This idea is not new, for Cicero recommended mnemonic devices to aid the memory in *De Oratore*.[21] Guido of Arezzo developed solmization syllables and the interlocking hexachord system in his pioneering work in music pedagogy. Additionally, although it doesn't appear in his own writings, his name has been indelibly linked to the Guidonian Hand, one of the most famous mnemonic devices in music history. Recently, in her extensive research on the relationship of memory and notation in the medieval era, Anna Maria Busse Berger states that a striking feature of a new model for understanding how learning took

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19. Colleen M. Conway and Thomas M. Hodgman, *Teaching Music in Higher Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 123.

20. J. Peter Burkholder, "Peer Learning in Music History Courses," in *Teaching Music History,* ed. Mary Natvig (Aldershot, Hants and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2000), 206.

21. Cicero, *De Oratore I-III*, ed. Augustus S. Wilkins (1892; repr., Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 2002), II:87, 401–4.

place in the past allows us "to regard memory and writing not as mutually exclusive options, but rather as two sets of tools that can be employed simultaneously in a variety of ways and combinations."[22] Allan Paivio proposes in *Mental Representations: A Dual Coding Approach* "that performance in memory and other cognitive tasks is mediated not only by linguistic processes but also by a distinct nonverbal imagery model of thought as well."[23] These models challenge us to consider more seriously the effectiveness of multiple modes of learning. "Singing Gesualdo" reinforces the verbal (classroom lecture and discussion) and the auditory (listening) with visual (score-reading) and kinesthetic (live performance) modes of experience, thus reinforcing learning along multiple modes.

Elaboration Theory

Elaboration theory advocates a double-learning process whereby an initial presentation of knowledge is followed by application to either real-world scenarios or more difficult topical examples. In *Instructional Design Theories and Models*, author Charles Reigeluth explains this as a holistic approach to learning, one that organizes the content, or scope, of the information into a logical process, or sequence, that can maximize learning.

> The paradigm shift from teacher-centered and content-centered instruction to learner-centered instruction is creating new needs for ways to sequence instruction. In the industrial-age paradigm the need was to break the content down into little pieces, and teach those pieces one at a time. But most of the new approaches to instruction including simulations, apprenticeships, goal-based scenarios, problem-based learning, and other kinds of situated learning, require a more holistic approach to sequencing, one that can simplify the content or task, not by breaking it into pieces, but by identifying simpler real-world versions of the task or content domain. The elaboration theory was developed to provide such a holistic approach to sequencing that also makes the learning process more meaningful and motivational to learners.[24]

This method reinforces learning by connecting content immediately with practical applications. "Singing Gesualdo" takes the knowledge of the development of the sixteenth-century Italian madrigal and brings students

22. Anna Maria Busse Berger, "Mnemotechnics and Notre Dame Polyphony," *The Journal of Musicology* 14, no. 3 (Summer 1996): 263–4. See also her larger work on the subject, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

23. Allan Paivio, *Mental Representations: A Dual Coding Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), abstract. http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/oso/public/content/psychology/9780195066661/toc.html.

24. Charles M. Reigeluth, ed., *Instructional-Design Theories and Models, Volume II: A New Paradigm of Instructional Theory* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999), 427–28.

into the experience of its evolving complexities and increasing virtuosity. As students moved from Arcadelt to Gesualdo, they personally experienced the unfolding challenges to performance. Their reflections indicated that while Arcadelt and Marenzio were generally performable for college music majors with little or no prior rehearsal, Gesualdo was not. Gesualdo required a significantly longer practice time and directed effort to perform successfully. The experience of "Singing Gesualdo," though a failed performance, taught more in its failure than any amount of textbook discourse could do.

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is based on an architectural concept which makes provisions for alternative accessibility in buildings. When applied to teaching and learning it can be "a new approach to curriculum that is firmly grounded in the belief that every learner is unique and brings different strengths and weaknesses to the classroom."[25] The principle recommends multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement in order to reinforce learning and to appropriate the idea that successful learning for all should be the goal of education. David T. Gordon, in his article entitled "School Reform: Are We Just Getting Started?" notes that "while all students deserve the same opportunities to learn, they do not all learn in the same way, nor do they demonstrate their knowledge and mastery of skills uniformly . . . . Knowing what we now do about the great diversity of individual learners requires us to embrace a different strategy for pursuing a common endpoint: we need to remain open to multiple means of getting there."[26] As related in particular to "Singing Gesualdo," the principle calls for multiple modes of engagement with the madrigal. Students read material in the textbook, they analyzed the madrigal in score, they listened to a lecture in class, performed the music live before an audience of peers, and then reflected on the experience. The idea of reinforcing learning through a variety of means is a step toward total acquisition of material. According to the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) and Harvard University researchers, "There is no one means of engaging students that will be optimal across the diversity that exists."[27]

25. Nicole Strangman, et al., "Response to Intervention and Universal Design for Learning," in *A Policy Reader in Universal Design for Learning*, ed. David T. Gordon, Jenna W. Gravel, and Laura A. Schifter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2009), 158.

26. David T. Gordon, "School Reform: Are We Just Getting Started?" in *A Policy Reader in Universal Design for Learning,* ed. David T. Gordon, Jenna W. Gravel, and Laura A. Schifter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2009), 29.

27. David H. Rose, et. al., "Universal Design for Learning in Postsecondary Education: Reflections on Principles and Their Application," *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability* 19, no. 2 (2006): 137.

CAST supports projects that implement UDL, one of which is Engaging Access Through Collaboration and Technology (EnACT), an initiative led by Sonoma State University and embraced by a number of other California State Universities. EnACT recommends fourteen common elements for reaching all students. Among these, the following paraphrased items are applicable to "Singing Gesualdo:"

- *Multiple* methods of expressing general course content
- *Multiple* ways of identifying and explaining essential course concepts
- *Varied* examples and/or illustrations of course assignments or activities
- *Varied* instructional methods to involve students in the learning process (all emphasis mine)[28]

Note that in all but one of these the emphasis is on *multiple* and *varied*. While some students may be auditory learners, others may be visual, kinesthetic, or even social learners.

"Singing Gesualdo" is an attempt to maximize learning for the maximum number of students. The Ohio State University Partnership Grant entitled "Improving the Quality of Education for Students with Disabilities" acknowledges that "Universal Design is just good teaching."[29] While UDL does increase accessibility for students with disabilities, it benefits *all* students by recognizing the multiplicity of learning styles.

Course, Department, and University Objectives

Live performance in a music history course as outlined in "Singing Gesualdo" is not only justified by several philosophers and pedagogical theories, but also supports the goals of the course, the music department, and the university. Out of four objectives for my course, Music History I, the following was most applicable: "Analyze the building blocks of musical composition from Western classical traditions from the medieval through the Baroque era." Planning and carrying out a performance of the music affords a deeper analysis of the building blocks of composition that might be missed through a score or textual study. Nietzsche's prescription for a musical pedagogy that affords insight into culture through an exercise of the process of music-making invites another course objective for consideration: "Evaluate a body of repertoire for both vocal and instrumental music in terms of historical context and musical

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28. http://enact.sonoma.edu/udl. For more information about CAST, go to www.CAST.org.
29. The Ohio State University Partnership Grant: Improving the Quality of Education for Students with Disabilities. *Fast Facts for Faculty: Universal Design for Learning: Elements of Good Teaching*; http://ada.osu.edu/resources/fastfacts/.

tradition." "Singing Gesualdo" offers a comparative study of representative sixteenth-century madrigals. Both of these objectives, while rooted in historical understanding, encourage alternative means of engagement for gaining this knowledge.

Course objectives need to align with the overall department objectives. Because music history is required of all of our music programs, elements of the course objectives address elements in every one of our department's six music programs. This would be too many to cover in this paper, so I will mention only the most pertinent of the over-arching department objectives that would be met by "Singing Gesualdo," as shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Select Music Department objectives, Cedarville University.[30]

Music Department Objective	"Singing Gesualdo" Application
Identify and describe a broad range of music literature in terms of cultural sources, principle stylistic eras, and typical genres	Reinforces cultural practices, the styles of sixteenth-century vocal polyphony, and the development of the madrigal
Sight-read, with fluency, while demonstrating general musicianship and relevant, professional skills in performance area	Practice in sight-reading vocal polyphony
Develop and use appropriate conducting and rehearsal skills, as required	Practice in ensemble conducting and rehearsing
Visually and aurally identify the basic elements of music and use this knowledge in aural, verbal, and written analyses	Use of visual and aural skills to analyze madrigals and to realize them in performance
Formulate aesthetic judgments, orally and in writing, with regard to musical analysis, processes and structures, composition, performance, scholarship, and pedagogy	Require an understanding of the structure, composition, and performance of the madrigal as it is informed by historical scholarship
Recognize and identify, visually and aurally, representative compositions from each era of musical history, styles of particular composers within each era, and apply correct historical information to appropriate teaching situations	Distinguish among different madrigal composers and their styles by applying historical information about them and by comparing them by means of live performance
Develop creative approaches to musical problem-solving through multiple modalities of thinking	Apply given knowledge of the madrigal to create a plan for an appropriate performance

30. Cedarville University, *2011–2012 Academic Catalog*, 146; available at https://www.cedarville.edu/Admissions/Catalog.aspx.

Furthermore, if we think holistically about the education of our music majors, it makes sense to provide learning experiences from one area (aural skills, sight-reading, rehearsing) into another (music history). The idea of compartmentalizing students' learning experiences only perpetuates their view of seemingly disjointed and unrelated musical knowledge. "Singing Gesualdo" satisfies more than half of the department objectives and serves well to combine and reinforce multiple musical skill sets.

Department objectives also need to correspond to university goals. At our university these take the form of *Portrait Statements*, which are concise descriptions of the ideal graduate. Of our five Statements, three directly relate to "Singing Gesualdo."

- *Think broadly and deeply* calls for the working together of a breadth of knowledge (an overview of the sixteenth-century madrigal) and an in-depth understanding (prolonged and varied experiences with representative works).
- *Communicate effectively* describes the ability to listen well (each participant in the madrigal must listen keenly to the other performers, taking and giving cues) and to deliver compelling and truthful messages (singing expressively and accurately) in a relevant and respectful manner (honoring the ensemble).
- *Develop academically and professionally* demonstrates professional competence (intelligent and sensitive interpretation of the madrigal).[31]

As shown by the three tiered levels of objectives at this university, the "Rules of Engagement" of "Singing Gesualdo" clearly satisfy at least half of the objectives at every level. This is more than adequate encouragement to continue in this direction.

Student Outcomes

To test the long-term effectiveness of "Singing Gesualdo," I conducted a survey of students' recall of late madrigal composers in the spring of 2011, approximately one full semester after the students had "Sung Gesualdo." I asked them questions about some of the madrigal composers we covered. Three of them, Arcadelt, Marenzio, and Gesualdo were the ones in which we engaged in live music. As shown in **Table 2**, the questions ranged from "no recall" to remembering something more than the name. The results showed

31. Cedarville University, *Academic Catalog*, 6.

an increased recall in the composers whose music we sang. Ironically the seemingly failed experience with Gesualdo yielded the highest recall.

Table 2: Survey results—recall of madrigal composers.

Composer	A. No recall	B. Recalls the name only	C. Recalls more than the name
Jacob Arcadelt	1	11	5
John Farmer	11	3	3
Maddalena Cassulana	11	6	0
Luca Marenzio	4	10	2
Luis Milan	9	8	0
Carlo Gesualdo	0	3	14
Luzzasco Luzzaschi	15	1	1
Marchetto Cara	13	4	0

Results show that in "recalls more than the name" Gesualdo had the highest recall with Arcadelt coming in a distant second. Arcadelt and Marenzio were the two highest in name-only recall. This small anecdotal survey, while not a rigorous statistical analysis, seems to show, along with the data below that "Singing Gesualdo" did make a difference, at least in the short-term retention of knowledge. The comments in **Table 3** below are quoted from students who remembered Gesualdo and recalled something "more than the name." A number of the comments indicate that it was the live performance of the music that made the difference in the degree of recall, again reinforcing the effectiveness of this type of learning activity in the music history classroom.

These remarks reveal that students generally understand Gesualdo as a Renaissance composer of madrigals, characterized by complex chromatic harmonies. They further indicate that students understand the madrigal as a mostly Italian genre of Renaissance vocal polyphony. These are satisfactory results. Other comments recall experiences from the activity and facts related to his life. Only a few factual errors, such as identifying Gesualdo with *ars nova* or with opera indicate a possible need to re-teach.

Convinced that "Singing Gesualdo" is worthwhile and pedagogically promising, I repeated the activity in fall 2011. To my pleasant surprise I discovered that my new students had been anticipating it, having been "forewarned" by last year's class. I took another step and developed an assessment of the activity in light of one of my course objectives: "Analyze the building blocks of musical composition." In the assessment, I asked students to reflect on their experience by identifying named building blocks in at least two of the performed madrigals. **Table 4** shows the details and the points assigned to each part of the assessment.

Table 3: Selected survey results—recall of Gesualdo.

I vaguely remember him being in competition with someone and being something of a jerk.
I feel like he has something to do with madrigals.
We performed his music.
He wrote madrigals during the Renaissance. I think he was mentally disturbed, and his music and lifestyle reflected that he was a bad man.
I remember trying to sing a madrigal of his that was very difficult.
He wrote a lot of hard music. He wrote a lot of madrigals. He was a composer in the Renaissance era.
He murdered someone; he was a composer in the Renaissance/Baroque era; opera.
He wrote really complex music; difficult to sight-read.
We talked about one of his pieces and played it in class. I think we analyzed one, too. It was ars nova or something.
He has something to do with vocal music. I believe it has to do with polyphony in vocal.
The one a group in class tried to perform was really hard, so they didn't finish their performance; instead, the whole class sang another one of his easier works later.
Wrote Italian madrigals; I remember the madrigal we listened to being very interesting harmonically.
Composed madrigals; used chromatic harmonies; difficult to sing!

Table 4: Sample assessment of "Singing Gesualdo."
Instructions: Write a reflection of your experience in both performing and listening to the madrigals we performed in class. Identify the following musical elements in two different madrigals for each item, by mm. # and voice, and by providing a detailed description of their effect in the music.

Element	Your answer	Points
Increased chromaticism	1a. Title, mm. #, voice:	5
	1b. Effect:	5
	2a. Title, mm. #, voice:	5
	2b. Effect:	5
Increased variety of harmony	(same as above)	20
Wordpainting	(same as above)	20
Increased virtuosic writing	(same as above)	20
Relationship of musical rhythm, meter, and phrasing to poetic accent and line	(same as above)	20

I showed the students the reflection-assessment before "Singing Gesualdo," and an on-the-spot check of student responses revealed that they could not yet respond well to the elements itemized above. After the activity, however, they were able to identify such elements as the chromaticism in Marenzio and the wild harmonic excursions in Gesualdo.

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After completing this assignment and in an effort to strengthen its effectiveness, I expanded live performance in the classroom to my Music History II and Introduction to Music Literature courses in 2011–12. Spurred by a department-wide and National Association of Schools of Music directive to increase the number of small ensemble experiences for our students, I required students to prepare and present live music of their choice within a current unit of study, such as the Classical or Romantic period. Students had to group themselves, prepare a required oral presentation of the history, and musical analysis, along with the live performance. From the present study I applied the idea of combining both Dionysian and Apollonian aspects of learning and strengthened the *varied* and *multiple* means of engagement with the material, considering aspects from a number of pedagogical models, such as live engagement, dual coding theory, and Universal Design for Learning.

I called this assignment "Beyond Gesualdo" because it required more work from the students to find their own repertoire and prepare their own histories and analyses. These pieces were not from the textbook anthology, so students also had to apply research skills. I was pleased with the outcomes— students were engaged with both the sound and history of the music as a community of performers and audience, and the class gained a broader experience of music from a particular period. The "Beyond Gesualdo" activity had one distinct difference from the original. All of the pieces were successfully performable, most likely because the students themselves chose the repertoire according to their own abilities. My only requirement for performance had been that the ensemble could play through the piece without stopping and that it would be with correct notes and in correct time.

Even though I have argued the case for less-than-perfect performances in the music history classroom as long as they provide significant learning, I must admit that I was concerned about an entire class period potentially filled with poor performances. Fortunately that did not happen in the "Beyond Gesualdo" assignment. Upon further consideration I plan to add a minimum one-hour rehearsal time to the assignment. Whereas the original "Singing Gesualdo" allowed for performing without prior rehearsal, I do understand the students' sensitivities to performing well in front of others. The threshold

of competence in live performance may be something that needs to be dictated by the comfort levels of individual instructors and by the nature of individual assignments.

This investigation into the scholarship of teaching and learning, coupled with an examination of the governing objectives at multiple levels and direct assessments of student learning, has strengthened the case for live engagement activities within the music history classroom. While there is need for more data gathered over a longer period of time in order to assess this type of learning, "Singing Gesualdo" and "Beyond Gesualdo" provide pedagogically-supported models for performance in the music history classroom.