

Seizing Opportunities for Cross-Curricular Instruction in Middle School Orchestra

Presented by Kathryn Woodard, July 25, 2015 at TODA, San Antonio, TX

The “Sling-Shot” Method – One class, one rehearsal, one reading

- Lesser known repertoire serves as a gateway into history, geography, cross-cultural influence and even politics
- Useful for sight-reading practice; and combined with online readings, audio files and visual aids, the works provide an opportunity for in-class discussion
- Featured scores are available as digital downloads from SheetMusicPlus.com. The articles and audio examples can be found at www.soniccrossroads.com/research

Francis Hopkinson – My Days Have Been So Wondrous Free (1759)

- America’s first art song, arranged for strings
- Article from 1919 by Oscar G. Sonneck, a prominent scholar of American music, discusses the role of music in Colonial-era Philadelphia and in the life of one of the “Signers.”
- See also, The Toast to General George Washington (1788)

Ulvi Cemal Erkin – Anatolian Sketches (1931)

- One of the “Turkish Five,” the first generation of composers active in Western classical music after the founding of the Turkish Republic (1923)
- His music explores elements of Turkish folk music with Western instruments: alternate modes, parallel fourths and fifths, ‘aksak’ (limping) rhythms
- See also: “Aegean Spring” for chamber orchestra, and “Sinfonietta” for strings
- Article by K. Woodard focuses on a different composer (Adnan Saygun) but provides some context for how influential these composers were and in what esteem they were held – even if now mostly unknown outside of Turkey. (Saygun’s Symphony No. 1 is for strings)

Leyla Saz – Victory March (1908)

- **Unique example from a transitional period in Turkish history**
- Article by K. Woodard describes the composer’s education in the Imperial Palace and how this particular work reflects both Turkish and Western influences, i.e. specific modes (makams) set to a 2/4 March rhythm. It also challenges readers (of all ages) to question what they think they know about women’s roles in the palace and in Turkish society and delves into the complexities of Ottoman history leading up to the Empire’s collapse and founding of the Republic.
- With audio examples including an archival recording from 1911.

One, two or all three examples can be combined for a module on “Music and Revolution,” drawing on the familiarity of the American Revolution as the means to introduce students to an important democratic ally in the Middle East, Turkey.