

# Excellence

## Seize The Gift of Music

By: Carol Atacador

**A**n anonymous dreamer once wrote, "God gave us music that we may pray without words." Music writes the stories of humanity in a bombastic triumphal rhythm, sometimes in a serenely pastoral ensemble, but also in a lonely pensive concerto. The pace of life captured in the staccato of adventure takes us to periods of time when the world was vast, awaiting discovery. Similarly, the peace and quiet of moments when the beauty of nature and humanity intersected was captured in the compositions of Mozart and Beethoven when to hope was to see and hear and to see was to hear the music in their souls.

nationalism", and then all too often to a "triumphal nationalism."

Likewise, the Philippines wrote its history through music. The kundiman, which is the signature love song of the Philippines is not simply that...a love song. During the struggle years of colonialism, the kundiman was the outlet for a nationalism forbidden of the Filipinos. The lovely woman referred to in most kundiman songs from 1800-1930 is the Motherland. The folk songs spoke of our heritage, our traditions, and our culture.

Centuries underscore the role of music in civilization. The Middle Ages from 450 to 1450 saw the spread of Christianity, and the influence of the Islamic culture. Music was then under the patronage of the various religious sects and were written for worship and religious expressions. The Middle Ages also saw the development of the European culture.

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179) is the first woman composer whose biography is known. She wrote musical plays and is regarded until now as one who "was of irresistible spirit and vibrant intellect overcoming social, physical, cultural, gender barriers to achieve timeless transcendence." Her music spoke eloquently of her time.

1450-1600 known as the Renaissance is a rebirth of the classical learning, a transition from the feudal system to a modern state, a change in the views of the earth and the cosmos. Music during this period became a measure of learning and culture, of adventure, of discoveries by explorers like Ferdinand Magellan and scientists like Galileo Galilei. Music of this time spoke of territorial expansions and wealth.

1825-1900, the Romantic Era now sang of nature, not as a model of perfection but a source of mysterious powers. Music in this period gravitated toward the supernatural texts and stories. Patriotism was also a favorite musical theme causing compositions to have very strong national identity. Feelings and identity were harmonized in the compositions of Schubert, Felix Mendelssohn, Giuseppe Verdi, and Richard Strauss, to name a few. The Romantic Era composed from a "cultural nationalism" to a more overt political "liberal

I recently watched a daytime show wherein the host asked the contestant to continue the lyrics, "Leron leron Sinta..." of which the contestant quickly said, "bunga ng sampalok."

She said this with so much conviction that I was floored by the pride she had in her response. I remember what I was taught in the grade school. "Leron leron sinta, buko ng papaya..." I then felt the shame of not teaching our young ones the folk songs, which sing of our heritage and culture. This incident drove home the point that we are indeed cutting off our young from what is culturally so vital, the music of our country. We continue to look for ways to deepen our roots as a people. We go through lengthy debates and expensive researches. Some answers are staring at us in our faces, our music, and one that is fun but digs deeply into who we are as a people. The question upon us, how to balance today's music with our traditional folk songs and kundimans? The educator's challenge: Historical content through the music of our times, the past, and the present.

Why then should music not gain prominence in today's classrooms? Music is a cacophony of our civilizations; its violins cry out in anguish for the struggle for freedom, its trumpets blare the victories won, the trombones of the sadnesses, the cymbals of dissonance, the lyre of moments of peace. Philippine music is sad and clearly laments the bondage of a people waiting to be untied. Do we even know how passionately and deeply our composers fought our loss of freedom through their music? To

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Completes God's  
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paraphrase the anonymous quote, God gave us music to fight injustice and inequality with beautiful songs.

It is no wonder then that young children react to music the way they do. The young adults respond gracefully while adults are brought to laughter and tears from memories evoked by music.

Education with a strong music component is a holistic approach especially today when the world is drowned by the noise of a troubled world and visuals of horror are etched daily in our psyche. Let our customs and traditions and our stories as a people sing their way into our curriculum. Nationalism will then come as naturally as the race to which we were born.

## "Sound Advice"

By Stephen Acuña



In light of today's fast-paced and short attention spanned generation, it is an absolute imperative for educators to find methods of educating students that encompass most of their senses to enable them to balance critical information and healthy

emotions. CENTEX believes that Music is a key factor to this endeavor.

The use of music is a proven healthcare strategy that addresses physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals of all ages. Exposure to music improves the quality of life for persons who are already well, and meets the needs of children and adults with disabilities or illnesses. Musical interventions can be designed to promote wellness, manage stress, alleviate pain, express feelings, enhance memory, improve communication, and promote physical rehabilitation.

Given that music is also educational, and at the same time therapeutic and healthy for an individual's wellbeing, it makes itself an optimal teaching technique for children who are in their critical stages of development. Scientists' studies of preschoolers and others led them to hypothesize that "the brain is `wired' to respond to music and that there is an overlap between brain areas specialized for music perception and those that carry out spatial tasks."

Many studies have also proven empirically, the positive effects of music on academic performance. Students of music and other arts continue to outperform their non-arts peers

on the SAT, according to reports by the College Entrance Examination Board. As a whole, in 1995, SAT-takers with experience in music scored 51 points higher on the verbal portion of the test, and 39 points higher on the math portion, as compared to students with no experience.



Rosalie Pratt says: "There appears to be an influence on learning because of music." There are definite physiological effects on the body such as heart beat, muscle tension, skin temperature and EMGs."

Mozart's music appears to have some of the greatest influence because of its structure. "Music lessons have been shown to improve children's performance in school. After eight months of keyboard lessons, preschoolers tested showed a 46% boost in their spatial IQ, which is crucial for higher brain functions such as complex mathematics." - Frances Rauscher, Ph.D., University of California, Irvine

However, it is also important to note that musical methods of education are not something familiar only to our contemporary culture. The positive effects of music in education, and on individuals was evident even centuries ago. Early Greeks thought there was a clear connection between music and Mathematics. Over the entrance to Plato's Academy at Athens there was an inscription that could be translated: "No one may enter who does not know earth's rhythm." in the belief that what held all things together was music.

*In all ages the thoughtful have called music "the celestial Art". Artists have pictured the angels playing on harps, and this teaches us that the soul comes on earth with the love of music. It is not after being born on earth that man learns to love music; the soul was already enthralled by music before it came to earth. . . . music is the first and the last thing to appeal to every soul.*

Music of Life by Hazrat Inayat Khan.

With all this in mind, CENTEX seeks to improve its own method of integrating music into the curriculum of the students and espouse musical forms of education to other schools. Since music learning is used to strengthen nonmusical areas such as communication skills and physical coordination skills, which are important for daily life, there are simple methods of music learning that may be employed for young children.

Teachers may use an extensive variety of musical activities. For example, the teacher and student might compose songs for the purpose of expression of feelings; one student might learn to play the keyboard for the purpose of improving fine motor skills, while another student might use instruments to express unspoken emotions. Teachers may also use music and movement activities, singing, lyric discussion or music and imagery to help the students reach their goals.

## A Musical Note Completes God's Symphony

Carol Atacador



I think. I feel. I respond. This tribute is a totality of my thoughts, my emotions of loss, and my response to what I cannot comprehend for now.

**JOHN CARMELO MANAOIS, October 22, 1999 – August 31, 2006, 5 A.M. CAUSE OF DEATH: DENGUE**

I would love to think that God's compassion and wisdom were the benchmarks of His decision to complete His symphony. He heard the cry of the poor and turned it into a note to soothe and comfort, some lullaby to swing the cradle of an innocent boy. Perhaps it is a note solely for the drums to wake us up to our grave responsibility to protect His little ones. In God's unconditional love for John Carmelo Manaois, God took him by the hand and said, "Come, my little one, my song. Where I am there are no infectious mosquitoes. We will sing together so other CENTEX children may hear us."

My final tribute to John is a challenge for all of us. What are we doing to ensure that each child, rich or poor, has the universal right to adequate nutrition and medical care?

For the likes of John Carmelo Manaois...let us be the song that will soothe and comfort the children in our care. Let not poverty rob us of our melody. Let our response to God's call be the concerto God has been aching to hear.

Goodbye, John Carmelo. Remember us when you play with your brother, Jesus.

### Because of Music

By: Ellaiza C. Montes  
Grade 4

The music of my life  
Leads me to be wise and bright.  
Makes me more artistic,  
I am what I am because of music.

The music of my life  
So colorful and wonderful  
Although the tone is sometimes sad,  
It brings me relief, and that's not bad.

The music of my life  
Helps and soothes me.  
Somber and gloomy mood,  
With music they disappear,  
That's sooo good!

### Of Melodies And Harmonies

By: Bianca Andrea M. Paredes  
Grade 4

I love pleasant music  
Hearing different kinds of melodies  
Creating pacifying harmonies.

I love pleasant music  
It makes me alive, gives zest to a dull life.  
While I wait for my bus to arrive,  
I listen to my recorder,  
My feelings, no longer dive.

I love pleasant music  
Various types and tunes it has.  
I like wiggling my bones  
Sounds of birds, such wonderful tones.

### The Flow of Music In My life

By: Jonan Buan  
Grade 6

In our music class, we talk about notes, beats, staff, G-clef, time signature, key signature, and many more. But music is much more than that. Music affects my life.

With music, I feel different emotions. When the sound flows from my outer ear to my cochlea, then to my jazzy brain, my senses react at once that sometimes I laugh out loud, dance, sing, write, or cry all day! My heart beats so fast, sometimes so slow. I particularly like rock and roll music because my brain never stops working with this beautiful noise.

Music gives me more energy, completing my day. During the times that I feel miserable, I simply turn on the radio and listen to my favorite station, or watch music videos of my most loved songs. But there have been times that I shut off the radio because of songs that sound so irresponsible and demeaning to us young kids. Those kinds of music make me angry; I end up playing with my younger siblings (which is one thing I like to do too!). But this is an isolated case only, because music affects me positively in general.

I may be too young to experience hardships, troubles, and misery, but I am positive that as long as I can feel these vibrations and wonderful melodies, there would be no problem too hard to handle. And so as my favorite song goes, "Sugod mga kapatid! Tayo ay magsama-sama, iwagayway na ang bandera, rock and roll hanggang umaga!"

## Goodbye and Hello

By Stephen Acuña

This year, unlike most CENTEX school years, begins bittersweet. Bitter because of the departure from CENTEX of its 4-year institution of a principal, Mrs. Antonia Dolor, and sweet because of the arrival of a brilliant, up and coming new principal, Mrs. Matdarenda Marasigan.

First, we say farewell to Mrs. Dolor who will definitely be more than missed by all CENTEX staff and faculty, and the students as well. To the CENTEX faculty, she was known as the advice-giver. Mrs. Nerissa Diño says, "She's a good adviser. She knows a lot about everything. She's the best person I've known. She is definitely one of the best principals." And these words seem to be the common consensus from the people that know her in



CENTEX. She has also garnered much respect from the CENTEX staff due to her proactive nature. She is never idle, always fixing things or looking for things that need to be fixed in the school, which is probably the cause of the many developments and positive changes that occurred in the CENTEX school in Batangas during her tenure as principal. Some of the structures that her facilitation brought into existence are the Math club hut, which is an outdoor area used by the students for math activities and the calamansi grove which is a small calamansi plantation within the school. And through her persistent appeals, she was also able to convince Mayor Herminihildo Dolor to build the kitchen in the principal's office, and the canal system of the school.

Apart from the structural changes, her dedication to her work and firmness as a principal, greatly improved the students' performance and the work operations in CENTEX. During her stay as principal, CENTEX topped the MTAP, which is a math test given to all public schools, in all grade levels. She also implemented The Speak English campaign in the CENTEX School for both the students and the teachers. Aside from her school work, Mrs. Dolor is a very committed family woman. As a grandmother, her grandchildren adore her.

Her family nature has also spilled over to her relationships with CENTEX and AFI staff. She is known to be very warm to teachers, and treats everyone like family. A true role model for future CENTEX employees, Mrs. Dolor will be greatly missed.

With that being said, there is no time for tears, because of the recent arrival of Mrs. Matdarenda Marasigan. Dang, as her friends call her, was formerly the principal of San Roque elementary school. Under her tutelage, San Roque, with a staff of 19 teachers and 700 hundred students, became one of the top schools in Batangas. Prior to her arrival in CENTEX as the new principal, she was also chairperson of 11 school activities in the whole of Batangas. This included being the chairperson in Science, English and girls scouts. However, even with everything she has left behind, she says "I am so happy in CENTEX because I feel alive again". She feels that CENTEX students perform better and absorb things more quickly compared to students from other schools she has handled.

Mrs. Marasigan was introduced by the district supervisor of Bauan as the person who "transformed San Roque into a performing school". The challenge to her is to do the same for CENTEX Batangas. Dang is also becoming instrumental in improving the relationship between CENTEX and Dep-Ed Batangas. She says she will "bridge the gap between CENTEX and Dep-Ed". This diplomatic character of Mrs. Marasigan makes her a valuable asset in strengthening CENTEX relations with other organizations. She intends to be not only a structural leader but also an instructional leader. She wants to personally improve the CENTEX curriculum and intends to maintain the English language program of Mrs. Dolor.

Just like Mrs. Dolor, Dang is also a dedicated family woman. She is an excellent wife to her husband who is a seaman. And she is also a great mother to her 4 children. We, at CENTEX look forward to all the great developments this truly charming and firm lady is certain to pursue.

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