

# Performing Arts Medicine & the Web

Susan E. Harman, M.S.L.S.

As many of you know, the Health Promotions in Schools of Music Conference 2004 was held recently, with the Performing Arts Medicine Association (PAMA) as one of its organizers. MPPA will certainly keep readers abreast of activities as the performing arts medicine community responds to new National Association of Schools of Music accreditation guidelines that require the provision of health promotion and injury prevention materials to all students.

This column reviews the websites of several partners in this project. We look at the sites' credibility, accuracy, currency, and usability. (While reviewing these sites, please keep in mind that the information presented is from *non-medical* sources.) Each site was accessed during November 2004 using Internet Explorer 6.0.

## Andover Educators <http://www.bodymap.org>

Andover Educators' home page highlights their main offering, a book and course titled *What Every Musician Needs to Know About the Body*. Links down the left side of the page are The Course schedule, Teachers, Training, Andover Educators, Founder, Body Mapping, F. M. Alexander, Articles, Recommended Readings (labeled New), Andover Press, and Links. The same links are embedded in the text of relevant pages. The right side of the home page has a link to a new article, "Scientific Basis of Body Mapping" by T. Richard Nichols, Ph.D.,

---

*Ms. Harman is associate director for technical services at the Maryland Historical Society Library and a member of MedChi, the Maryland State Medical Society's Performing Arts Medicine Committee.*

*Discussion of a website in this column does not imply an endorsement by PAMA or MPPA.*

and a map marked Where we've taught recently . . . and where we're going soon. The bottom of each page is clearly labeled as copyright 1999–2004, with a link to e-mail comments and questions.

The links along the left side recur on each subpage, but the right side often contains testimonials from teachers, musicians, and course participants. The Course page says it is "designed to set each performer . . . on a path of self-evaluation and change" so he or she will "arrive at a sensory-motor integrity sufficient to becoming and remaining free of injury and pain." The six-hour course covers movement and the senses, the core of the body and balance, arm movement, breathing, the legs, and a how-to for individual instruments.

The Schedule area is an impressive ten pages long, listing courses, workshops, and private lessons divided by geography. Dates range from October 2004 to August 2006, with activities at the College Music Society Annual Conference, Pepperdine University, Ball State University, Wildacres Flute Retreat, and the Ohio Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, among others. There are links provided to each teacher and an e-mail address for further information.

The Teachers page has links to the founder, Barbara Conable, and each Certified Andover Educator listed on the Course page, again divided by geography. Each teacher page gives a biography, an e-mail address, and sometimes links to articles or books. The teachers range from singers and conductors to flutists and French horn players. Many of them have had training in Alexander technique, the Feldenkrais method, Taubman techniques, and yoga. All of the links work, though one is in Japanese. Barbara Conable's page provides further information about her Alexander training, the development of body

mapping, her courses, and books she has written. The Founder area links back to this page.

The Training section explains how to become a Certified Andover Educator. Their mission is "to put music training on a secure somatic foundation so that all musicians . . . may play free of pain and injury and with increasing enjoyment and skill." They want to pass on crucial information about the physiologic and neurophysiologic basis of music training. The page also says that many music schools are finding such courses a "recruiting asset and protection against lawsuits students are beginning to bring against teachers and schools of music for failing to give the information to prevent injury."

The Andover Educators area describes the founding of the organization in 1997 and its services. The page states that musicians taking the course should be examined or treated by a physician, and the course is not a substitute for medical care. The Body Mapping page defines the body map as a "self-representation in one's own brain." If it is accurate, there is efficient, pain-free movement. If it is inaccurate, movement is inefficient and can produce injuries. Body mapping is a slow correction and refinement of one's body map that produces coordinated, natural movements. Body mapping was discovered by William Conable, a professor of cello at Ohio State University and, according to this page, current neurophysiologic research is confirming the existence of such an internal map. It clearly uses the Alexander technique as a jumping-off point.

The Articles page is divided into four sections: Training, Teaching Tips for . . . , Performance Enhancement, and Science and Origins. The articles are by Andover teachers and other performers; sometimes biographical informa-

tion and further resources are given; other times they are not. Some articles are reprinted from journals or presentations, while others seem to be expressly written for the website. The authors' opinions on the place of health professionals in the body mapping mix vary. Titles include "How to Resolve Dystonias: a Movement Perspective," "The Alexander Technique and Percussion," "Choral Directors," and "Using Body Mapping Techniques in the Middle School Orchestra Class." The articles "Scientific Basis of Body Mapping" by T. Richard Nichols, Ph.D., and "Origins and Theory of Mapping" by William Conable may be of particular interest to health professionals.

The Recommended Readings section lists books in the following categories: Body Mapping, Anatomy, Alexander Technique, Performance Enhancement, and Somatics. The Body Mapping books are by Andover Educators, available through Andover Press. The others are available through Amazon.com, with a link to the specific page provided. The Andover Press section lists a handful of books that can be ordered directly using PayPal or through Amazon.com. The Links page lists 17 items, including Alexander sites, specific instrument organization sites, and books, magazines, and newsletters. Perhaps the most interesting is the link to Portland State's Coordinate Movement Program, a degree program developed for injured pianists.

The Andover Educators site is well organized, up to date, and easy to follow. There were only two dead links, and one of those sites could be successfully reached through another [bodymap.org](http://bodymap.org) page. Regardless of how one might feel about the usefulness of body mapping, information on the program, its teachers, and publications is clearly stated and easily accessed.

Among the partners in the Health Promotion in Schools of Music project are approximately a dozen instrument-specific organizations. The author wondered whether these groups had addressed health concerns before in their publications and, if so, whether this information could be freely accessed on the Internet.

### **National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS)**

<http://www.nats.org>

The major publication of NATS is the *Journal of Singing*, previously titled *The NATS Journal*, *The NATS Bulletin*, and *The Bulletin*. John Burgin, a past president, has created an online index of the journal, from the first issue in 1944 up to volume 60, number 2, 2003. New entries are added periodically.

The search engine is very simple, allowing searches by author key word, title key word, and general key word. The search can be limited by choosing from picklists of years, months, or subjects. There are also links to an Intro, Help, and Credits. Each citation includes title, author, volume, date, starting page, and a one- or two-sentence comment. Unfortunately, the articles themselves are not available online. The search page includes information on how to get back issues, as well as the suggestion to check local academic libraries.

Searching on the word "health" retrieved 32 articles, "medicine" eight, and "injuries" four. These included medical columns, first written by Van Lawrence and now by Robert Sataloff, M.D. The list is given in chronological order. Topics include medications and their effect on the voice, temporomandibular joint disease (TMJ) and singing, vocal aging, belting, and a NATS position paper on health and high school music theater productions.

### **American String Teachers Association (ASTA)**

<http://www.astaweb.com>

ASTA's website provides an *AST Journal* archives. Only issues from August and November 1994 and August 2004 are available. Each article listing includes title, author, and a short summary paragraph. One relevant article on body awareness in violists is listed. The articles themselves are available only in a members' online area. It is unclear whether more issues are covered in that area.

### **International Clarinet Association (ICA)**

<http://www.clarinet.org>

The ICA website also has a master index of articles from the ICA's journal, *The Clarinet*, going back to the first issue in 1973. One can download an ASCII text file of the whole index or use the volume, author, and title sort links. There is no search feature, and, full text is not available.

Choosing one of the sorts results in a long table with columns for title, volume and number, page, and author. Somewhat inexplicably, the date is not included. The list certainly is not very user-friendly, but scanning the three lists available, as well as the detailed back issue list linked to the index page, can lead to some health-related articles. These include a regular column by Heston L. Wilson, M.D., which apparently began running in 1990. Some of his topics are thumb problems, hearing loss, the tongue, and asthma.

### **International Double Reed Society (IRDS)**

<http://idrs.colorado.edu>

The IRDS website includes an archive for *The Double Reed*, formerly titled *Journal of the International Double Reed Society*. This is essentially a list of each issue published since volume 1 in 1973. Unfortunately, a search feature and access to the last year of issues are available only to members. However, anyone can check the table of contents for earlier issues and pull up full text of articles.

There are nearly 30 years of quarterly issues, which would require a lot of time if one were to check each one systematically. A spot check revealed an Ask the Doctor column by William Dawson, M.D., as well as articles on the pain of playing musical instruments, taming dystonia, overuse, and the virtues of exercise.

### **International Horn Society**

<http://hornsociety.org>

The IHS website includes several indexes and article lists. Under the head-

ing Resources there is a list of about 15 IHS Online Articles. These are mostly from *The Horn Call*, but include a few other publications. Under Clinics there are two relevant articles: "Embouchure Health and Maintenance" by Andrew J. Pelletier and "Medical Problems of Wind Players" by Philip Farkas.

*The Horn Call* itself has two separate indexes, one that covers 1971–1995 and one that covers 1995–present. The 1971–1995 index grew out of a doctoral dissertation and includes a three-page introduction describing how it is arranged and its limitations. The original publication had author and subject indexes, as well as category abbreviations. However, what is reproduced online is a chronological listing of the articles in each issue, including author, title, pages, a brief annotation, and appropriate category abbreviations. The current editor says clearly the list is not a database and suggests using text searching. Using the browser Find capability with individual words or the category abbreviations would lead the user to useful information, but the loss of the indexes is unfortunate.

The 1995–present index actually goes up to 2002 and is set up the same way. It does not include annotations or categories, and the user must rely on text searching. Topics addressed include left hand problems, back pain, embouchure dystonia, and audition stress.

**International Trombone Association (ITA)**  
<http://www.trombone.net>

The ITA has published the *ITA Journal* since 1971 and also published a newsletter from 1973 to 1980. The association is in the process of putting past

articles online. Currently there are separate lists for 2003, 2002, and 1988. Most of the articles are available full text only to members. Interestingly enough, Medical Corner columns by Edward A. Wolff III, M.D. are freely available to anyone. He has provided a medical column for each issue since Fall 1994, with topics ranging from asthma to posttraumatic stress disorder (written shortly after September 11, 2001).

There are also separate listings of each journal and newsletter, arranged by decade. Relevant articles address breath control, wind instruments in the dental literature, hearing loss, and stage fright.

**International Trumpet Guild (ITG)**  
<http://www.trumpetguild.org>

The editors of the *International Trumpet Guild Journal* are embracing technology by providing .pdf files of most articles within a year of their publication. There are indexes available for each issue from the first in February 1975 to January 2005, with hyperlinks to contents before January 2004. Separate lists for specific types of articles, such as columns, reviews, translations, and music, are given. The ITG also offers its journals on CD. The .pdfs are free to anyone and each article is prefaced with a copyright page. This appears to be unique to the ITG.

There is also a complete index of the journal from 1976 to 2004, which runs some 70 pages. While there are no hyperlinks, the author and subject sections turn up numerous articles related to performing arts medicine. Topics addressed in the Medical/Dental section include TMJ, rupture of the orbic-

ularis oris muscle, stage fright, and dystonia. Since October 2003, Kris Chesky has edited a Health and Awareness column. The focus of the January 2005 column will be the Health Promotion in Schools of Music project.

Reviewing the websites of several partners in the Health Promotion in Schools of Music project has shown the active interest of music organizations in health and injury prevention. Many of them provide some sort of access to their publications. While it often means skimming through long lists of tables of contents, a surprising number of relevant articles can be found.

This review also highlights the usefulness of "Occupational Diseases of Performing Artists: A Performing Arts Medicine Bibliography," a project of PAMA's Research and Education Committee for approximately the last ten years. While it would take a researcher many hours to research the topic through each relevant organization, the bibliography brings a great percentage of all the citations into one place. As many of you know, the bibliography has been unavailable on the Web for a number of months. A prototype of a searchable, more user friendly web page is now available at <http://artsmed.unt.edu>. Please direct comments and suggestions about the new web site to William Dawson, M.D., whose address appears on page 55 (Abstracts from the Literature column).

---

*If you have a website you would like us to consider for inclusion in a future column, please contact the author: Susan E. Harman, Maryland Historical Society Library, 201 W. Monument St., Baltimore, MD 21201, or [sharman@mdhs.org](mailto:sharman@mdhs.org).*