



**Title:** Training of Music Teachers in Russia

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*It is with pleasure that we inaugurate the reprint of the entire seven volumes of The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning. The journal began in 1990 as The Quarterly. In 1992, with volume 3, the name changed to The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning and continued until 1997. The journal contained articles on issues that were timely when they appeared and are now important for their historical relevance. For many authors, it was their first major publication. Visions of Research in Music Education will publish facsimiles of each issue as it originally appeared. Each article will be a separate pdf file. Jason D. Vodicka has accepted my invitation to serve as guest editor for the reprint project and will compose a new editorial to introduce each volume. Chad Keilman is the production manager. I express deepest thanks to Richard Colwell for granting VRME permission to re-publish The Quarterly in online format. He has graciously prepared an introduction to the reprint series.*

# Training of Music Teachers in Russia

By I. Pigareva

*Art at School, Moscow*

Prior to the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, in Russia music education's primary purpose was to support the religious and moral upbringing of children. Musical activity consisted mainly of church singing and the use of other choral literature.

After the revolution, as early as 1918, Soviet schools incorporated a class called "Singing Music" and the tasks of teaching were considerably broadened. In the 1920s, the foundation of modern music education in Soviet schools was formed by such outstanding figures in Russian culture as B. Asafiev, P. Blonsky, N. Bryusova, N. Krupskaya, A. Lunacharsky, S. and V. Shatskie, and B. Yavorsky. Nonetheless, Russian political life—the centralization of the country's government—also affected the system of education. Soon, dictatorial policies were enthroned, and the artistic undertakings of music education were rudely trampled.

Some rejuvenation of mass-scale music education began in the late 1940s, and in the 1960s new programs in singing were approved. Once again, choral singing was declared the basis of all school music lessons. By the end of the 1960s, however, the absolutely unsatisfactory condition of the arts in our schools became evident, as did the acute lack of qualified specialists in these areas.

It is important to mention that in Russia, the government's departments of education and culture exist independently, and each maintains its own educational institutions. Schools of the Ministry of Culture, for instance, accept musically talented young children at the musical elementary schools, and

the best pupils continue their studies in musical high schools. Finally, the most gifted pupils study in the conservatories, thus obtaining their higher education.

Unfortunately, tradition holds that a conservatory-trained person rarely works in music education, for that would mean "degradation" to a "lower caste." While those who graduate from the conductor-choral divisions of the secondary musical schools are officially qualified in a secondary specialty as "teachers of music," they typically do not long to work in our public schools. Further, these secondary music graduates' pedagogical and methodical training leaves much to be desired, and work in the general educational schools of the Ministry of Education is simply too difficult for most.

To remedy some of these problems, training for music teachers specifically for the general educational schools was established in the early 1960s, and on the whole continues to the present. As part of this process of improvement, pedagogical institutes were formed and soon developed into music education faculties. Now Russia has about 20 such faculties where students study for four to five years to obtain their higher education and qualify to become teachers of music in the general education schools and the musical high schools. Those who chose to become kindergarten music teachers, are trained in high schools or special pedagogical high schools.

Generally, the future teacher of music, prior to admittance to the musical-pedagogical school or institute, attends elementary musical school in either the performance or conductor-choral divisions or receives extensive musical training from a private tutor. Those entering a musical-pedagogical faculty

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or division must pass competitive exams requiring knowledge of an instrument and music theory. Education at these institutes is free of charge, and the students receive a stipend from the State during their study. All Russian music education institutions lack sufficient quality musical instruments, and equipment and music literature are sometimes located in old, dilapidated buildings. Despite these and other difficulties, many music education institutions continue to produce highly qualified teachers.

Recently, music teacher preparation has incorporated the new school music program developed by D. Kabalevsky. In general elementary and secondary schools, music is taught in grades 1 thru 8 for one to two hours per week. In addition, these schools encourage various specialized musical and artistic "circles." In grades 9 thru 11n, pupils study an instructional unit entitled "The World Artistic Culture." Often this subject is taught by teachers with specialties in music, fine arts, or literature, as well by other teachers actively involved in art. These schools also maintain special courses and groups for more intensive teaching in the arts.

Today, Russian schools demand much of the teacher of arts in general, and of music teachers in particular. A high level of professional training, the goal of our music teacher education institutions, was defined as early as 1926 by Russian music educator Asafiev in his article entitled "Music in the Present-Day School of General Education." He stated, "... the teacher of music ... must be both a theorist and a presenter, but at the same time a music historian, music ethnographer, and a performer who has mastered instruments so as to always be ready to direct attention either here or there. But the major thing is that he must know music literature, i. e., as many musical compositions as possible..."

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During this purely professional musical training of the future music teachers, which includes such obligatory subjects as special instrument, solo singing, conducting, and theory and history of music, every student learns to play an instrument, sings in the chorus, and masters the elements of conducting and methods of leading musical lessons. Great importance is attached to courses in educational psychology and music methods.

Students learn about the psychology of creative musical work, the actors' skills, the basics of oratory, the history and theory of music pedagogy, and musical performance. Students may choose courses such as "Children's musical theater" and "Instrumentation and children's orchestra." An important goal of the music teacher education program is to move prospective teachers from a "knowledge-mastery-skills" value system to a "think-to-, feel-to-, act-to-create" paradigm.

The music pedagogy faculties in Russia are also the centers of research activity in the field of music education. Leading this work is the music pedagogy faculty of Moscow State Pedagogical University, which con-

ducts postgraduate courses and graduates individuals with the highest qualifications. It is here, in a specialized council, that these researcher-musicians defend their theses.

The Russian music education system also seeks the improvement of the knowledge of teachers who have graduated and are working in the schools. In some Russian institutions of higher education, special correspondence courses allow music teachers to obtain higher education without leaving their employment.

In Russia, teachers are required to complete a short continuing education course of one to three weeks every five years. The Institutes for Advanced Training of Teachers (IATT), which coordinates such courses, only

## Music Teacher Preparation in Russia

A few years ago, future music teachers engaged in field experiences only after first completing three to five years of study. Now, however, practice teaching begins during the first year. Students, led either by their music education professors or by experienced music teachers, first attend lessons as observers and gradually become involved with school pupils. In the beginning, the practice teachers have short talks with children about music, perform brief musical programs, and learn with children some favorite songs. The practice teachers then may lead small portions of music lessons, and later they prepare and teach entire lessons under the guidance of a cooperating teacher who is usually among the best school music teachers in the city. Apart from lessons, practice teachers can work with school choirs and attend philharmonic concerts and theatrical musicals with pupils.

Music teacher education institutions also hold annual artistic/teaching competitions among students within the institution; students from different schools and institutes compete with each other as well. These contests carry great importance and prestige, for it is here that the students demonstrate the scope of their professional training. At the contests, they appear as music performers, demonstrate lessons designed for the general education schools, and display their skills in working with the children's chorus. Such contests last for two or three days and are conducted by the music pedagogy faculties of pedagogical institutes in various regions of Russia once a year.

recently began to include courses for music teachers. Now every regional center in the country offers IATT-sponsored courses taught by highly qualified music educators. IATT teachers form creative groups, evaluate each other's lessons, share opinions and impressions, exchange working materials, and even travel to visit colleagues. Teachers' expenses for IATT studies are paid by the Russian government. The IATT also organizes choruses in which teachers participate for the improvement of their personal performance and musical enlightenment. All this has considerably elevated the prestige of music teachers and their subject.

The combined efforts of all these Russian educational institutions cannot immediately

solve the problem of providing qualified music teachers for all the schools of Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Within our recent borders are over 60,000 schools. In cities and large townships, these schools can be quite large, but in rural areas and villages are many small schools and elementary schools. Unfortunately, one rarely finds teachers of music in these rural schools, and any music lessons that occur are taught by primary teachers who also have responsibility for teaching mathematics, Russian language, and other subjects. Many have very little skill in music. It remains to the future for all the children of our nation to have a highly qualified music teacher for their lessons in school. 