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### Dates To Remember

- May 10.** DAMTA Business Meeting and Honoring Ceremony for Departing Board Members, 9:30-10:10 am., Classic Pianos and online (Zoom link will be sent out via Passalongs).
- May 10.** Teacher's Musicale, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Classic Pianos and online (Zoom link will be sent out via Passalongs).
- May 14.** Student Musicale and Honoring Ceremony for DAMTA Scholarship Recipients, 2:00 p.m., Classic Pianos and online (Zoom link sent to registrants).



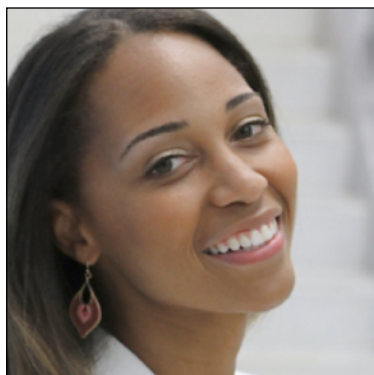
# LYRICS NEWSLETTER



## 2023 CSMTA CONFERENCE

Register Today for the Conference at CSU, Pueblo on June 2nd and 3rd.

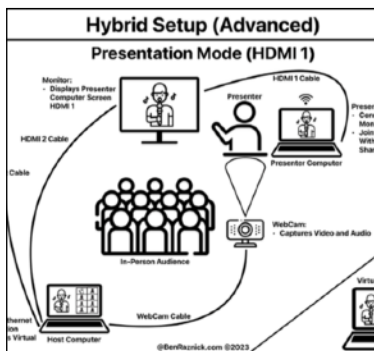
Page 2.



## BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2024 MUSICALE

Upcoming Opportunity for Students to Perform Music by Black Composers

Page 8.



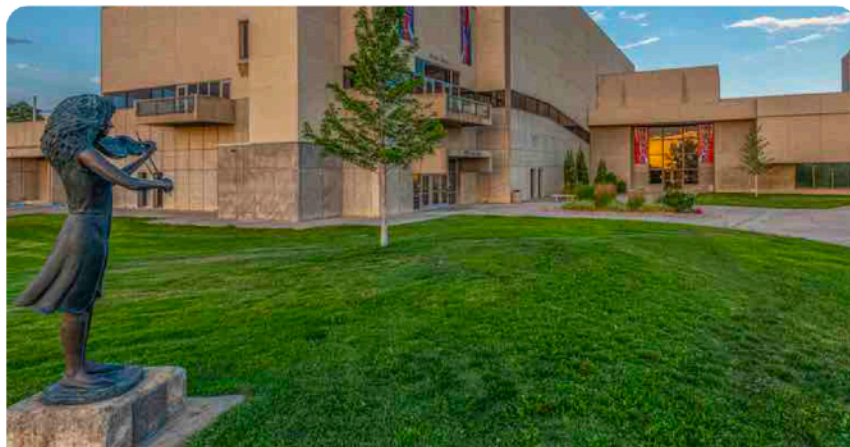
## ARE HYBRID ENVIRONMENTS THE NEW NORMAL?

Ben Raznick on DAMTA's Covid and Post-Covid Program Evolution.

Page 9.

As appears in CSMTA's newsletter, 'Notes and News', April, 2023,  
with permission of editor Dr. Janice Saffir:

## 2023 CSMTA CONFERENCE



Join us in the Music Building on the campus of Colorado State University Pueblo in June for a memorable conference! The entirety of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I, will be performed by the guest artist, and a presentation about Bach will be given in addition to a variety of other events. From presentations to masterclasses, exhibits and the awards ceremony, the 2023 Conference will showcase the best of music pedagogy in Colorado and celebrate those who are a part of it.

Hoag Recital Hall/Capps Capozzolo Center for the Arts  
Colorado State University Pueblo  
2200 Bonforte Boulevard, Pueblo, CO 81001  
Friday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>

*featuring*

### CONFERENCE GUEST ARTISTS

DR. DROR BIRAN

MARY BETH SHAFFER, NCTM

### WINNERS RECITAL

Featuring state winners in this year's MTNA Competitions and  
Rising Stars Festival

### ONLINE REGISTRATION IS OPEN

[www.comusicteachers.net/conference](http://www.comusicteachers.net/conference)

## DAMTA Board Members 2022-23

Ben Raznick	President
Marilyn Madsen	Vice President (Programs)
David House	Vice President (Newsletter)
Sonya Clark	Vice President (Membership)
Joshua Zabatta	Vice President (Student Musicales)
(Vacant)	Vice President (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)
Nazila Nekooraad	Secretary
Carolyn Angelier	Treasurer
Kristin Jordheim	Parliamentarian
Vince Madison	Past President

## Submissions

- DAMTA issues the Lyrics Newsletter monthly from September through May, with a double edition in December/January.
- Submit all flyers, announcements, or news items as an email attachment to David House, at [davidhouse1@comcast.net](mailto:davidhouse1@comcast.net) no later than the 20th of each month. Please give emails the heading "Lyrics Submission".

## Passalongs

DAMTA's closed Google group for members:

- Notices in addition to official DAMTA business.
- Announcements and passalong emails that may be of interest to DAMTA members.
- News of workshops, competitions, special sales, instruments for sale privately, auditions, concerts, recitals, etc.

# Celebrating LGBTQ+ MUSICIANS

“So many people are willing to have teachable moments. That’s awesome because a lot of...hurt and anger in the past generations have been rooted in truly not understanding or not having access to educational moments.”

- Kehlani, Grammy-nominated, LGBTQ+ singer, songwriter and dancer



*Garrick Ohlssen*  
*American pianist*



*Wanda Landowska*  
*Polish harpsichordist*

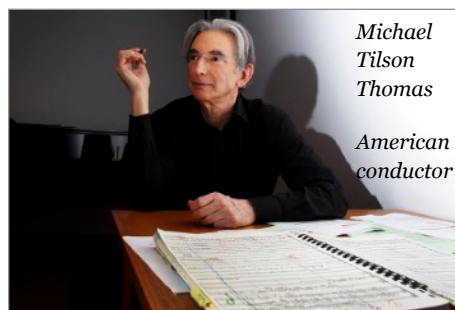


*Benjamin Britten*  
*English composer*

*Peter Pears*  
*English tenor*



*Deborah Cheetham*  
*Australian Aboriginal soprano and composer*



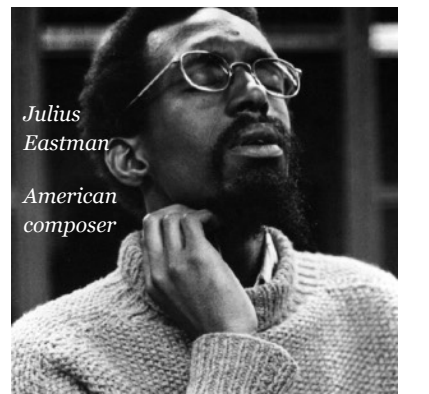
*Michael Tilson Thomas*  
*American conductor*



*Stephane Grapelli*  
*French jazz violinist*



*Sara Davis Buechner*  
*American pianist*



*Julius Eastman*  
*American composer*



*President's  
Message:*

## REFLECTIONS ON 2022-2023 and LOOKING AHEAD TO 2023-2024

Happy May, DAMTA!

Recently my student came to her lesson and told me exactly how many days were left in the school year. I asked if she had created a countdown and to my surprise her response was, "No, my teacher did!" It made me laugh and reminded me that we teachers might just look forward to summer more than our students!

It's been another fantastic year in our association. We officially transitioned our entire programming this year into a hybrid format, from our Business Meetings & Programs to our Student Musicales. Thanks to discussion among our Board of Directors and Technology Committee last summer, we invested in new livestream equipment and it

has paid off! We have found that in our past two years of offering a hybrid Fall Course experience, on average 60% of our viewers joined us online. Our presentation with the highest amount of online viewers reached 72% of our total audience. Conversely, our average in-person attendance dropped to 40% of our total audience, with our lowest in-person attendance reaching only 28% of our total audience. I was surprised to find that many people were showing up online instead of in-person. To learn more about DAMTA's journey towards a hybrid model, see my article "Are Hybrid Environments the New Normal?" included in this newsletter, originally published in CSMETA's April 2023 Notes & News.

One of the hardest parts of being your President is saying goodbye to wonderful Board members. I want to thank Deborah De La Torre, Marilyn Madsen, Nazila Nekoora and Sonya Clark for their incredible work serving our organization and music community. Please join us May 10th for our Annual Meeting. We will host an Honoring Ceremony to celebrate these individuals. We will also spend this meeting celebrating our incoming Board members. We are grateful for Annette Karges, Chandrika Prem and Dr. Thomas White for taking on new responsibilities to join our leadership team. Thank you Carolyn Angelier, David House, Joshua Zabatta, Kristin Jordheim and Vince Madison for your ongoing commitment.

Believe or not, we are already planning for a great 2023-2024 school year! Please see information in this newsletter about our event scheduled in 2024, "DAMTA's 4th Annual February Student Musicale Celebrating Black History Month." We will be welcoming Dr. Leah Claiborne from Washington D.C. to join

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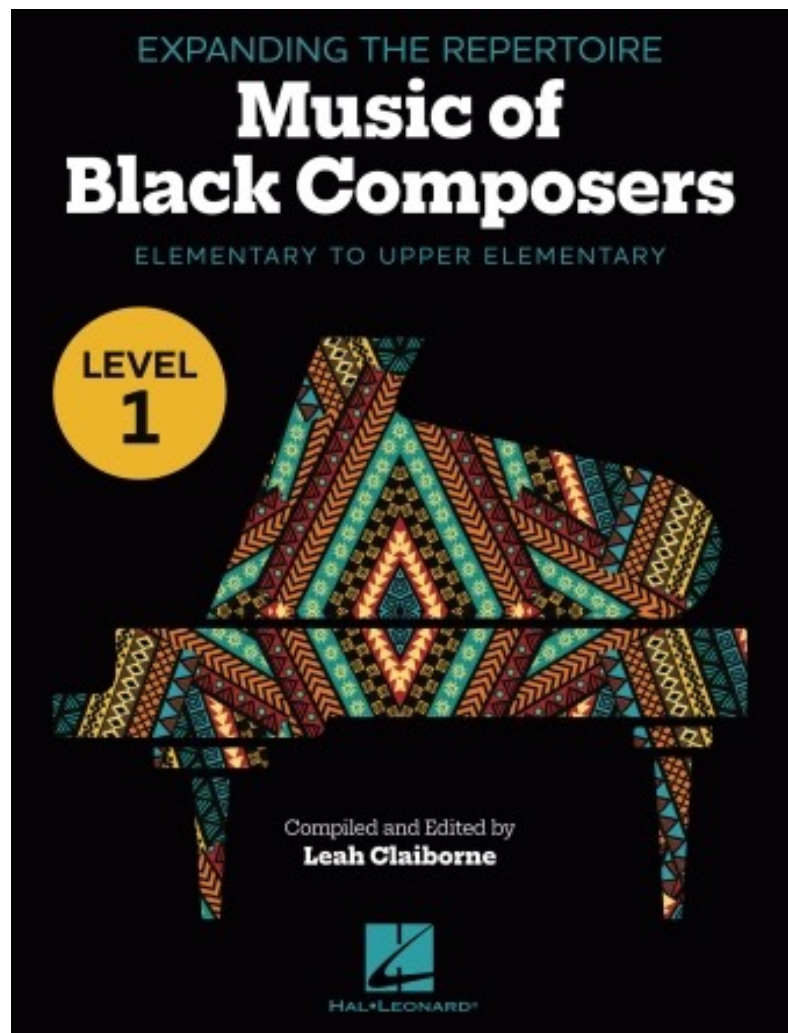
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us for our event that will take place in Hamilton Hall, DU. Students will perform works by Black Composers, including many from Dr. Claiborne's new publication "Music of Black Composers" (Now available to pre-order at [Hal Leonard!](#)). DAMTA will be partnering with Lamont Preparatory Program and DU's Collegiate Chapter of MTNA to create, what we hope to be, an incredibly meaningful and memorable event!

Thank you to all of you, our 80 members, who make our association strong and momentous. Serving as your President is an honor and I look forward to another fantastic year.

*Ben Raznick*

Ben Raznick  
DAMTA President



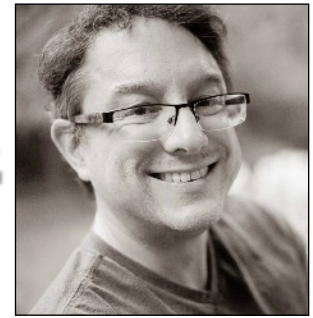
In a recent email to my friend, DAMTA president Ben Raznick, I mentioned I was working on the collage found on page 3 of this newsletter. I wrote, "I've discovered that there are some very famous musicians who I had no idea were gay!" I finished the email, hit send, and found myself left with a startling thought: there are no famous Black musicians who I didn't know were Black. "What? Jesse Norman was Black? Who knew?" Absurd, right? The difference is that the aspect of Ms. Norman's identity which set her perpendicular to the dominant culture was visible. Wanda Landowska's was not.

Ethnic differences are a bit more dodgy. Take one of my piano gods, Claudio Arrau. Most people who know this colossal artist know he was Chilean, but those who don't would be unlikely to arrive at this bit of info by looking at him, and certainly not by listening to him. Similarly, when I first heard Dame Kiri Te Kanawa sing, I was not aware that she was part Maori. My ignorance wouldn't have lasted long. Information like this is readily available and often rather enthusiastically shared. "Ethnic" is too often interchangeable with "exotic", and exoticism always scores points. "She's part Maori? Oh cool!" exclaim all the non-Maori opera aficionados. Conversely, I've admired the great American pianist Garrick Ohlssen for decades now, but until I googled "lgbtq+ classical musicians" I had no idea that he was gay.

Which begs the question: What difference does it make? Any of it. I remember sitting in the third row at a recital Mr. Ohlssen gave in February 2018. I listened, agog, as he unrolled the mammoth tapestry of Schubert's Sonata No. 21 in B-flat Major. Would I have listened differently if I'd known his sexual orientation? Could I have picked up on it in how he played? Given the storms we weather, year in, year out, over matters of sexual orientation, race, gender, and gender identity, it seems like

### *Editor's Note:*

## ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD



it should make some kind of difference. But it turns out that, try as one might to discern one, there is no quantifiably gay way of playing Schubert, any more than there is a straight way, a Black way, a Caucasian way, a Chinese way, a male or female way. In terms of actual musical execution, what style shoe one wears is a far greater factor.

And yet, here we are. The transgender American pianist, Sara Davis Buechner writes, "The classical music business likes to pretend that it is gender - and color - blind regarding the concert stage, and that the high-minded pursuit of Mozartian Truth is all that is professionally considered in the evaluation of performing musicians. My own experience tells me otherwise." In 1984, David Buechner won the Gold Medal at the Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition. In 1986, he was the top American prizewinner at the Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition. Then, after a "second debut" in 1998 as Sara Davis Buechner, she found that performance opportunities and teaching posts almost entirely dried up. In one instance she even received a check, weeks before a scheduled performance, from a presenter who had booked David Buechner, and was now paying her, Sara, not to show up.

Anti-transgender bias is a particularly virulent mutation of garden-variety sexism. My parents recount once attending a performance

(Continued from page 6)

of Rachmaninoff's *Third Piano Concerto* given by Rubinstein's formidable student, Ann Schein. They sat next to an earnest young man who, before the performance began, informed them that he was very interested to see how a woman would acquit herself of what was really a man's piece. These days, most people would be ashamed to voice such an absurdity. But not, alas, to think it.

Then there are the racial barriers. Take, for example, Nina Simone, or Don Shirley, brilliant artists who might have dedicated their lives to classical music if the ever vigilant white music industry sheep dogs hadn't assiduously nipped their heels in the direction of jazz, because, well, Black people, you know.

Which brings us to LGBTQ+ musicians. It's hardly news that queer folk are highly represented in the arts in general and music in particular. But the structure of authority in arts organizations has historically been deeply conservative. Perhaps this is in response to a culture that routinely undervalues the arts, treats them as commodities, expendable, defundable. In any case, it is telling that such pantheonic figures as Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland felt the need to carefully guard their professional standing by steering the public narratives of their private lives away from their sexual orientation. Astonishing, when you think about it, that it took until 2018 for an out gay man, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, to assume the helm of a major American orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera.

These are public hurdles. The psychological hurdles can be hard to root out. Remember Vladimir Horowitz's famous quip, "There are three kinds of pianists: Jewish pianists, homosexual pianists, and bad pianists"? It strikes a false note to the 21st century ear. It's a joke, of course, so in a way, it doesn't matter that it is untrue, only that it is funny. But it smacks of defense. One wonders

why, rather than simply resting secure in his pianistic sovereignty, Horowitz felt the need to tether the idea of superiority to the twin posts of oppression within his own identity? There was nothing he could do about being either, and he always denied being the latter. It's a funny joke, at first, until one realizes it might not be.

The upshot is, these marks of identity, both the visible ones and, perhaps especially, the invisible ones, do make a difference, not empirically, but subjectively, that is in where we are coming from when we encounter them in others or in ourselves. In other words, one's identity may not determine how a thing is done, say, how one plays a Schubert sonata, but it will impact what reserves one brings to the task, how it is received, and all too often, whether it is done at all.

There is no gay way to play a piece of music. But there are true ways and false ways. One of my high school pieces was Isaac Albeniz's *Córdoba*. For those of you who don't know this piece, it is a jewel of Spanish romanticism. After a meditative chorale-like opening, it beaks into a serenade, replete with guitar strums and an ardent melody. Week after week I'd bring it to my lessons. At one particular lesson I gave my teacher what I thought was a decent approximation of what I could do with it. When I finished, he looked at me, then asked, "what is this piece about?" I had a ready answer. "It's about someone in love singing to the one he loves." (I would have choked on the word "lover"). He then told me, "You have to be the singer." I was immediately thrown into a crisis. I could not "be the singer" unless I owned up to who it was I'd be singing too. At the time, I didn't especially want to be gay, but I did want to be a musician. Today, I am happy to be both, and that has made all the difference in the world. ♦

- David House, Editor

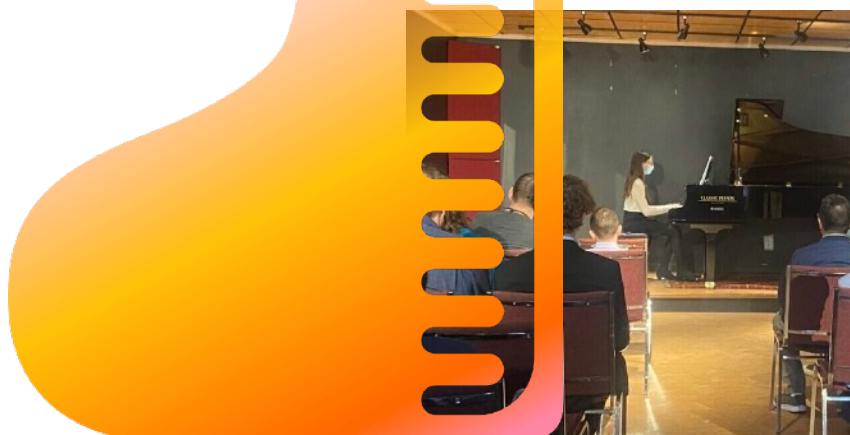
## Guidelines for Participants and Teachers:

1. **Sign up to participate:** Any Interested performers can sign up through their teacher and complete the form provided:
2. **Preparation:** The student should be prepared musically, but memorization is not required.
3. **Performance Etiquette:** Teachers should prepare their students with essentials for performance, including how to walk on stage, what to wear, how to introduce yourself and your piece, and how to bow.
4. **Musicale Fee:** We encourage a donation of at least \$10 per participant. Donations support DAMTA's scholarship fund as well as its ongoing operations. You can donate using the Donate Link on DAMTA's website, or pay in person before the performance.
5. **Access & Participation:** Each participating teacher should take up no more than 1/3 of the program length. Musicales typically last no longer than 60 minutes.
6. **All Students Are Welcome and Supported:** Students of all ages, skill levels, and instruments are welcome to perform in our musicales. Every student, teacher, and audience member should be supportive of the other participants.
7. **Copyright Policy:** Copyright laws must be observed; all music must be an original publication, licensed for reprint,

### Guidelines for Musicale Hosts:

See the Student Musicales page on DAMTA's website: <https://denvermusicteacher.com/students/>

# STUDENT MUSICALES



DAMTA presents a Musicale once a month during the school year. Musicales give students of DAMTA teachers the opportunity to perform in a welcoming and supportive environment. **Students of all instruments, ages, and levels are encouraged to perform.** Masks are encouraged but not required. We also offer a livestream over Zoom for anyone who can't attend in person. Contact musicale chair, Joshua Zabatta, at [JoshuaZabatta@gmail.com](mailto:JoshuaZabatta@gmail.com) with any questions.

### Get involved:

1. Sign students up to perform! (sign up form: [Musicales Sign-Up Form](#))
2. Host or co-host/assist with a musicale.
3. Donate to DAMTA.

**Next Musicale: April 23, 2023, at 2:00 p.m., at Classic Pianos of Denver (1332 Broadway, Denver, CO. 80210) The host will be Nancy Harris: [nancy@thevoicebuilder.com](mailto:nancy@thevoicebuilder.com)**

### Upcoming Musicales:

- May 14, 2023, 2:00 p.m.



Submitted by Joshua Zabatta

# ANNOUNCEMENT: SPECIAL BLACK HISTORY MONTH MUSICALE

Hamilton Recital Hall | University of Denver | Sunday, February 25, 2024

## What DAMTA is doing right now.

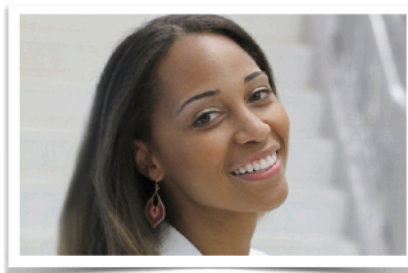
In preparation for this important event, DAMTA has submitted an application for an MTNA community engagement grant. If awarded, funds received from the grant would go to covering the purchase of this series for any teachers whose students present works in this musicale. Funds would also cover costs of putting on the event.

## What do we need from you, the DAMTA teachers?

Since this event will be a bigger undertaking than our usual monthly musicales, we wanted to announce this event early and gauge the interest and participation level from our teachers. If you want to have your students prepare works for this musicale, let us know so we can assist in the preparation. DAMTA will assist with helping teachers acquire the books. Let us know your level of interest using the sign up link to the right.

## 4th Annual Black History Month Musicale

On February 25, 2024, the Denver Area Music Teachers Association (DAMTA) will host a special Black History Month musicale. This free community event will give students the opportunity to perform works by Black Composers from Dr. Leah Claiborne’s 2-volume series “Music of Black Composers.”



By partnering with the Piano Preparatory Program at the University of Denver, DAMTA will be able to host this event at the beautiful Hamilton Recital Hall at the University of Denver Lamont Music School. Participating students will get the opportunity to perform these piano works on the gorgeous Steinway piano in the space.

Dr. Leah Claiborne who compiled and edited this series of works will also be in attendance at this community event. We are looking for DAMTA teachers to have their students participate in this historic event. Please complete the form (link below) to sign-up and be informed of our work for this event.

**Interested in being part of this Musicale? Sign-Up!**  
**Link:** <https://forms.gle/H7Co3meyhDk3fDc77>

**Deadline: July 1, 2023**

Submitted by Ben Raznick. As appears in CSMTA's newsletter, 'Notes and News', April, 2023.

## Are Hybrid Environments the New Normal?

by Ben Raznick

I had just been elected President of Denver Area Music Teachers Association (DAMTA) as the world began to reopen during the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2021. After a year of devastation and mourning loss, safety was an absolute priority when returning to in-person activities. It was also important to carry forward the tradition of DAMTA's programming and provide a space for hope and belonging for our colleagues during this difficult time. DAMTA had offered our Fall Course for over 40 years as a professional development series for our membership and music teaching community, and it was important to continue this meaningful work.

After plenty of research, myself and our board of directors at DAMTA were convinced that we should develop a hybrid setup to offer our programming in-person and online at the same time. Furthermore, we would record the sessions and archive their playback. This gave registrants three options to participate, and most importantly, we could all participate together.

I won't deny that we experienced headaches of tech glitches, but each obstacle we encountered created an opportunity for a learning curve that has led our organization to enormous success. Since our undertaking to develop a hybrid environment, we have strengthened our membership attendance and interaction, progressed towards a relevant culture of technology, and have become a resource for others who would like to do the same.

In our first year offering a hybrid model, our Fall Course income increased by 43% and our attendance data also demonstrated positive growth. We found that in our past two years of offering a hybrid Fall Course experience, on average 60% of our viewers joined us online. Our presentation with the highest amount of online viewers reached 72% of our total audience. Conversely, our average in-person attendance dropped to 40% of our total audience, with our lowest in-person attendance reaching only 28% of our total audience. I was surprised to find that many people were showing up online instead of in-person.

Because our hybrid atmosphere was rooted in the intentions to create a safe environment during the pandemic, we were happy to know that some viewers joined virtually due to precaution and health concerns. Others joined online due to accessibility or out of convenience as a way to accommodate their schedule and lifestyle. Some teachers popped-in between students, some stayed home to avoid traffic, and some joined us from out-of-state.

Our online viewers were building a community unique to our in-person audience, and both environments became a microcosm of our hybrid experience. When viewing a presentation in-person, we are accustomed to maintaining silence until the Q&A segment. However, online texting chats were busy and exciting. Viewers shared their feelings, resources and questions throughout the experience. The merging of these worlds was fun and inspiring during an interactive Q&A by displaying the grid of our online viewers on the TV monitor and opening the floor for comments from the entire audience.

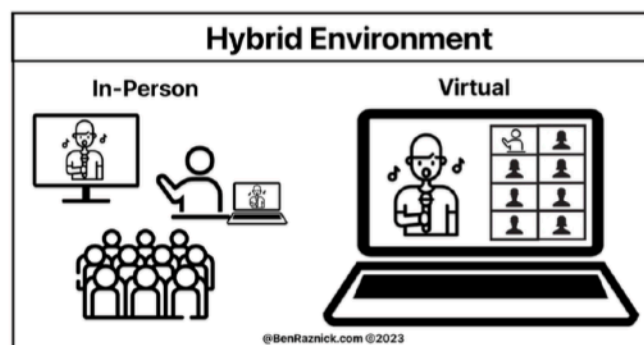
Since developing a hybrid model, DAMTA has only taken further steps to offer more of our programming in-person and online.

I hope that I have inspired you to develop your own hybrid environment, such as music studio hybrid master classes, group lessons, or student orientations and studio meetings. Similarly, I encourage local associations and music organizations to host hybrid meetings, programs and recitals to serve the community who may not have the opportunity to join in-person.

I have included 5 diagrams to help explain the hybrid setup that we have found most successful at DAMTA.

### Hybrid Environment:

The In-Person and Virtual experiences both have their benefits.



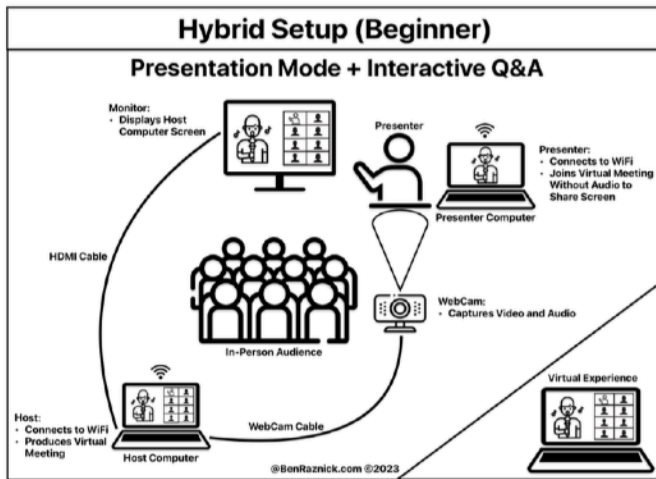
### Hybrid Setup (Beginner):

This is a more simple setup using WiFi and minimal cables. The Host Computer connects to WiFi to produce the virtual meeting, connects to a WebCam to present video and audio for online viewers, and displays the computer screen to a monitor with an HDMI cable.

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The Presenter Computer connects to WiFi, joins the virtual meeting and screen-shares the presentation for in-person and online viewers. External speakers for Presenter Computer are recommended.



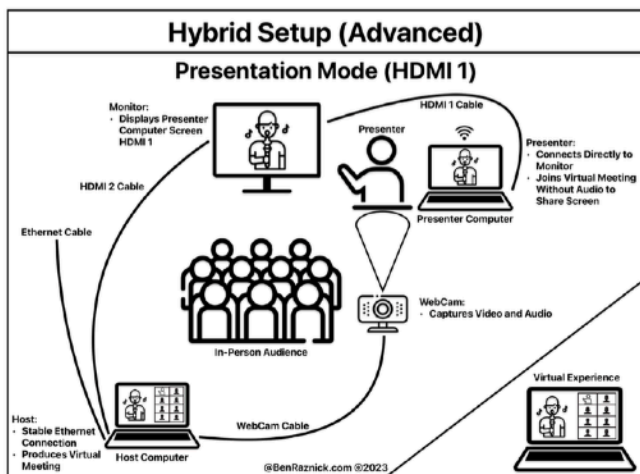
**Hybrid Setup (Advanced):**

This more advanced setup utilizes more cables and TV inputs. The main benefits are a stable hardwire connection for all devices and a clean presentation on the monitor.

**Presentation Mode (HDMI 1):** TV input set to HDMI Port 1.

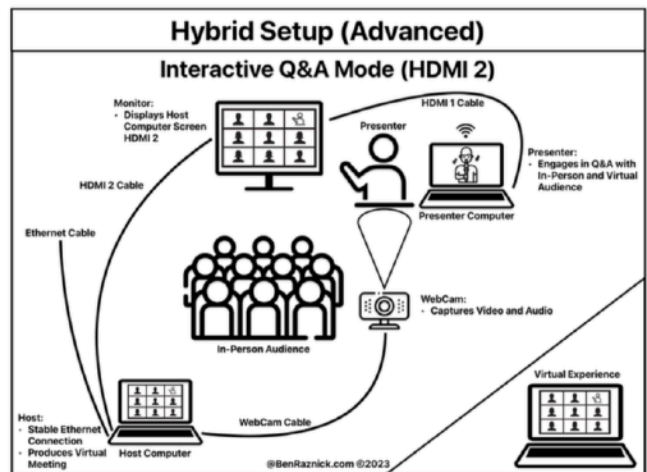
The Host Computer connects to an Ethernet cable to produce the virtual meeting and connects to a WebCam to present video and audio for online viewers.

The Presenter Computer connects to WiFi, joins the virtual meeting and screen-shares the presentation for online viewers. The Presenter Computer displays on the monitor with an HDMI cable into HDMI Port 1. Ensure Presenter Computer audio output is set to the TV monitor.



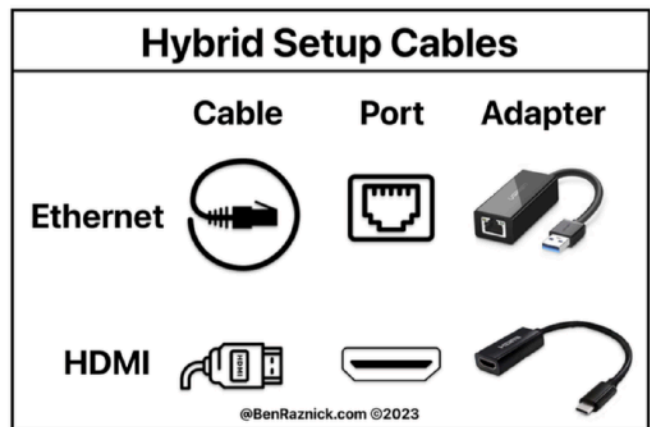
**Interactive Q&A Mode (HDMI 2):**

TV input is switched to HDMI Port 2. Host Computer ends screen-share of Presenter Computer. Host Computer displays the virtual audience on the monitor with an HDMI cable into HDMI Port 2. Ensure Host Computer audio output is set to the TV monitor.



**Hybrid Setup Cables:**

HDMI and Ethernet Cables fit into their appropriate ports. Adapters may be needed for the cable to fit into your device.



DAMTA’s success in developing a hybrid model is due to a team collaboration of the DAMTA Technology Committee: Kristin Jordheim, Shana Kirk, Vince Madison, Ben Raznick & Joshua Zabatta (names appear in alphabetical order).

*Ben Raznick is the President of Denver Area Music Teachers Association (DAMTA) and the newly elected Vice President for Teacher Enrichment of Colorado State Music Teachers Association (CSMTA). Raznick is a 4x recipient of Steinway & Sons Top Music Teacher Award, a Voting Member of the Recording Academy and his project, Birds of a Feather, was the winner of The American Prize.*

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**DAMTA'S  
SCHOLARSHIP  
FUND AT  
WORK**

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*Congratulations  
to the  
Recipients  
of the 2023-24  
DAMTA  
Scholarship!*

*Noyi Soto-Anglade, age 16*

*Student of Corinne Denny and  
Joshua Zabatta*

*Grace Fan, age 11*

*Student of June Haun*

*Iskandarkhon Vahobov, age 12*

*Student of Nazila Nekoorad*

*Anne-Marie Drabek, age 14*

*Student of Arylce Black*

*Henri Yoon, age 8*

*Student of Ben Raznick*

*Elias Yoon, age 8*

*Student of Ben Raznick*

*Ruby Garlow, age 10*

*Student of Ben Raznick*

*Cora Eliasson, age 15*

*Student of Arlene Black*

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