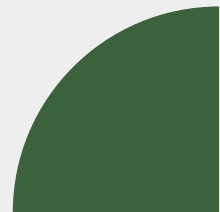
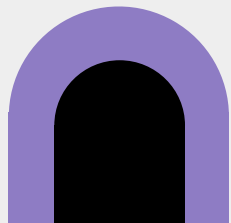
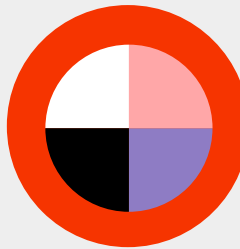
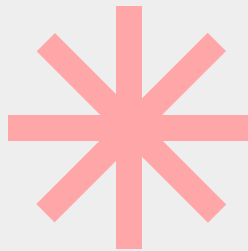
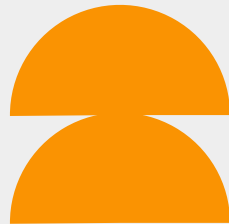
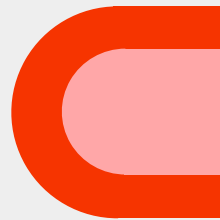
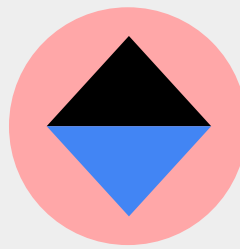


The Mother Tongue(s) Method

Creating a multi-lingual
musical year

Benjamin Van Vliet



A logo in the top left corner consisting of a semi-circle divided vertically, with the left half in light pink and the right half in orange.

Introductions

Road Map

- Video
- Story of a multi-lingual residency
- Framework for a residency







Story of a multi-lingual residency

Catalyst

- Vijay Gupta keynote at 2024 ASTA/SAA Conference
- Attended two Villalobos Brothers concerts
- Dr. Suzuki - "lessons with Kreisler" story
- Musical traditions continue to evolve
- Teachers learn too



Designing the concert

- Side by side: students and guest artists
- Musical crossroads: music our students regularly study, music by the guest artists, and a fusion of styles
- Level-appropriate engagement for ages 3 - 18 and levels beginning - concerto



Selecting the music

- Saying yes to singing
- Learn about son jarocho
- Intersection of musical styles
- Lyrics in two languages
- Expand rhythm vocabulary



Year-long arc

- November introduction
- January guest artist concert
- February - April learning music
- April rehearsal visit
- May concert



Teaching Strategies

- Complex to one person is normal to another
- 11/16 = pineapple pineapple pineapple ssippi
- Colors to internalize a complex form
- Rehearsal tracks
- Guest artist concert
- When the teacher is the student: learning alongside students (e.g. string teachers teaching singing, lyrics in multiple languages, different musical styles)

El Pijul Colors

(Timings for full speed recording, not for slow version)

Rojo (not in recording)

Azul (0:00)

Verde (0:32)

Naranja (1:02)

Amarillo (1:23)

Morado (1:53)

Rosado (2:08)

Turquesa (2:20)

Verde (2:49)

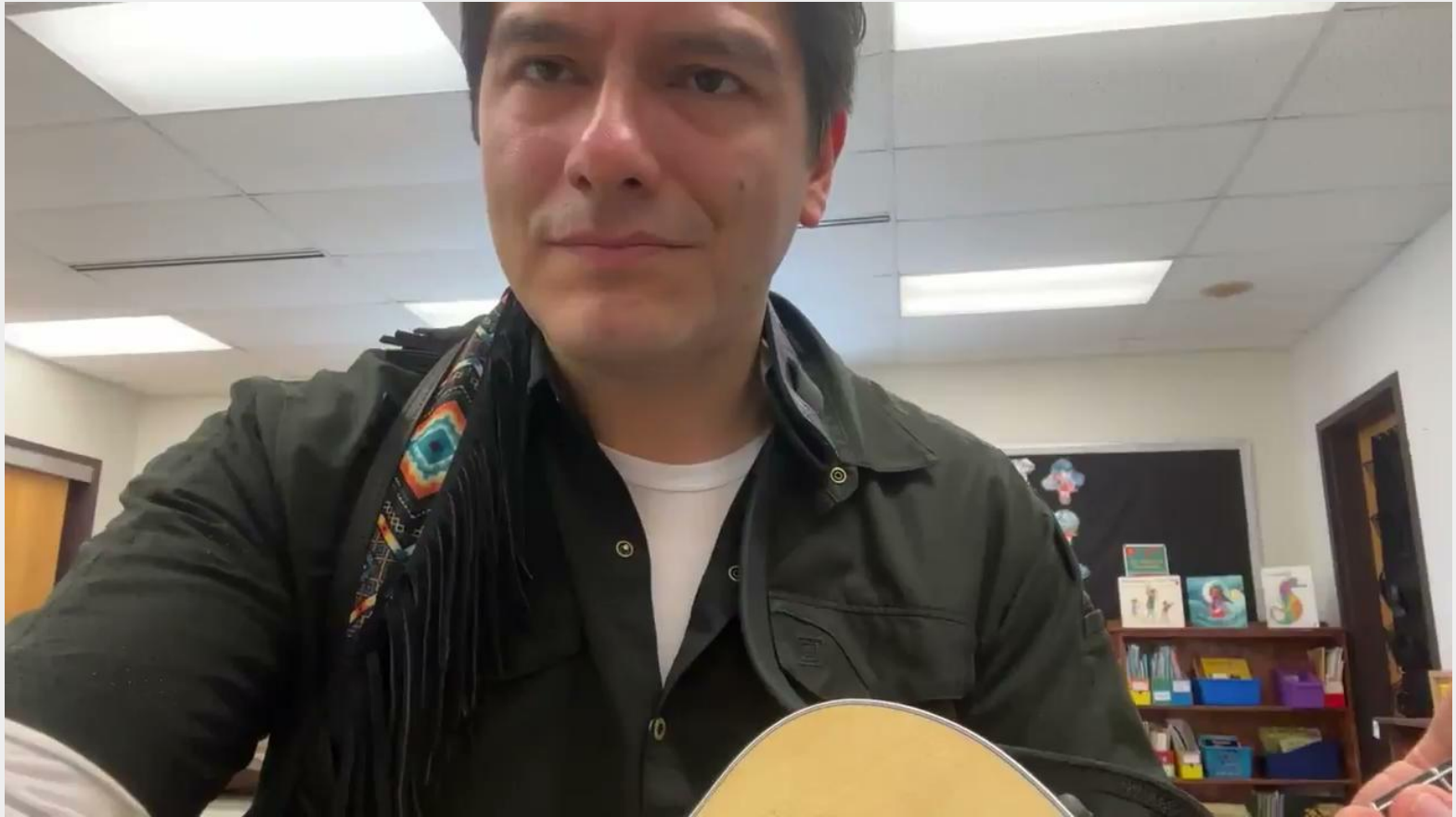
Turquesa (3:19)

Rosado (3:48)

Arcoiris Turquesa!!! (4:00)







The Concert

Program:

Boil 'em cabbage son jarocho medley

Cellos

Violas

Pre-Twinklers (beginners)

Advanced students: Colas

Violins

El Pijul









Impact & Worth It Moments

What do you remember most about the Villalobos residency?

Students/Families

"It was so moving to see the kids interacting with these famous, international musicians!"

"The high level of engagement of the Villalobos brothers with all of us musicians during the performance."

"Trying to encourage the older kids to sing. It was very funny!"

"The energy of the group through the concert, rehearsals and the showcase."

"Ai li li li li liiiiiiiiiiiiiii"

"Being grateful that a group like the Villalobos Bros took the time to meet with our students and work with them. **The joy and enthusiasm they brought, and the absolute fun all of the kids had working with them.**"

"We still remember the music! It stayed in our heads and our hearts. My child once in a while hums the rhythm "café con pan" tha he learned in order to play the piece for the concert."

"It felt like being a part of a warm, inviting community."

What do you remember most about the Villalobos residency?

Faculty

"The energy the Villalobos' brought to the stage was infectious, and the students positive response in their performance."

"The kids were really energized"

"Nathaniel dancing on stage."

"Colors!"

"Lots of energy, lots of excitement; lots of parents saying "This is the coolest thing we've ever done!"

What changed as a result of your/your child's participation in the residency? Students/Families

"More excitement for the end of year showcase, as the experience was much more meaningful than the typical group play down. This is especially true for my student who is in high school."

"I was exposed to a very different way of playing the violin."

"She has a deeper appreciation for world music and understands how sound is translated and shaped by culture, local tradition, voices, and instruments outside of Europe."

"Extra joy!"

"A sense of the canon being more open than she thought it was!"

Kids got more of the idea that they could connect / relate to non-classical performance musicians.

We were all more motivated to practice at home so that we can participate fully and work together with the group.

What changed as a result of your students' participation in the residency?

Faculty

They were especially motivated by seeing the Villalobos brothers perform by themselves.

The students were exposed to a very different kind of music (from core Suzuki rep) and learned that they can perform complex rhythms.

The more advanced kids understood the gravity of their role in the performance. Having the solo parts helped them understand the performance wouldn't work without them and they felt important.

There was an energy at the performance that we hadn't had in past years.

We pushed a lot of people out of their comfort zone (e.g style, singing, language), including parents, kids, and teachers, but there was enough support that ultimately everyone felt really good.

I think it built a sense of community among parents and students in that everyone had a common language of this piece - everyone had a part in this one piece.

What advice would you have for students who are about to begin a similar residency?

Students/Families

Engage as much as possible! Try to learn as much as you can. This is a unique experience that not every student will be lucky enough to have.

Learn your material beforehand so you can really enjoy the performance and master classes.

Have an open mind and try to challenge your preconceptions about music making. Notice embodiment, community engagement, and other performance styles as well as the richness of sounds with transcultural and transnational influences.

For older students: it might feel a little silly doing things like singing, but know that all the littler kids are looking up to you to see what you do and how you act because they aspire to be you; for little kids: have fun without tormenting your teachers.

Take advantage of this really special opportunity. It's such a gift to be able to make music with such talented, passionate artists.

What advice would you have for students who are about to begin a similar residency?

Students/Families

Be prepared - when it gets hard don't give up. You'll eventually get it!

Be open and receptive to the challenges, fun, and growth that can come from a residency like this!

Keep an open mind about what violin performance should or shouldn't be.

Go to all of the classes/lessons with and without the artists in residency. This is a long process, and it takes several days/weeks/months so that the concert with the artists is really meaningful. Also, be ready to be surprised, amused and amazed!

"Get to know them. Pay attention. Give it your all."

Be open to experiment! You never know until you try it out.

Enjoy the ride and get involved as much as possible.

Be open to learning about new ideas.

What advice would you have for students who are about to begin a similar residency?

Students/Families

Keep your ears, mind, and heart open! Being in a new community will mean challenges, but it will also mean new and exciting ways of seeing, understanding, and hearing things. **Music is a great way to bring everything and everyone together and you should remember that. :-)**

What advice would you have for teachers who are about to begin a similar residency?

Faculty

Be ready to be flexible in the collaboration. Prepare your students to have some flexibility as well, perhaps teach about the concept of collaborations and residencies in detail.

Incorporate as many students, parents and teachers as possible.

It's a wild ride! It's much easier and safer to play familiar repertoire. A residency like this forces you to work in a different way, but ultimately felt very rewarding.

Working with guest artists can be very unpredictable. If your program is used to a lot of structure, you'll have to practice being flexible, so that everyone is able to make changes when they need to.

It's a lot of work, and worth every minute!

Any other thoughts?

Students/Families

A residency like the Villalobos Bros. can be stressful and feel crazy and hard, but the fact that our kids got to experience music from another part of the world, and were able to make connections with their week in and week in practice and lessons and the fact that they could play something at that level was priceless. Also, the brothers themselves were lovely and joyful and it was just generally such a lovely and wonderful experience.

The residencies and the concerts with invited artists are one of the most delightful and enriching parts of UVMC. I wish I had something like that when I was a child studying piano.

No matter what style and language it is- good music is good music! It always touches your heart!



Framework for a Residency

Approach

- Side by side with a great artist
- Learn a musical language
- Deepen personal and musical connection over time
- Multi-layered teaching techniques
- Everyone plays & sings together (levels & ages)
- Get out of our comfort zone



Framework

- Goals & Opportunities
- Finding & Working with a Guest Artist
- Designing a Residency
- Teaching Strategies
- Impacts & Worth It Moments



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Goals & Opportunities



Assess your program and community

- Who are your students and families?
- Ages, skill levels, experiences, interests, languages, family heritages
- Who lives in your community (broadly speaking)?
- What do you regularly teach?
- What languages (spoken and musical) are familiar or unfamiliar to our students?
- What are your (your faculty's) expertise?



What inspires you?

- Students have a 6th sense for what excites their teachers
- Personal experience as a student
- Teaching philosophies
- Concerts, conferences, presentations



The power of three or more goals

- Keep an unlimited list
- Magic happens when three or more goals converge
- Flexibility - it's hard to predict which goals will align with opportunity



The power of three or more goals

Examples

- Create community connection
- Develop a relationship over time
- Continue learning as teachers
- Validate members of our community
- Expand knowledge and experience of students
- Generate energy and enthusiasm in students and families
- Multiple languages - musical and spoken



The Mother Tongue(s) Method

- Immersion
- Learning from a 'native speaker'
- No one universal language - spoken or musical - so the more we work to learn each other's languages, the better we can communicate and share experiences



Finding & Working with a Guest Artist

Create opportunities

- Who are the great artists connected to our community?
- Get to know artists based in community
- Look out for artists who visit frequently
- Consider the interests and heritages of students and families



Just the right amount of vision to start a conversation

- What are the most basic key building blocks?
- An opening vision with a lot of room to co-evolve



Translation

- Different ways of thinking
- Different ways of speaking
- Different ways of working





Designing a Residency



Beginning, middle, and end

- Having a beginning, middle, and end feels complete
- Can be a day, a week, a month or a year
- Spreading the story out over more time can deepen the relationship with the artists and the music



Multiple levels

- Energy of interacting across levels
- Important that each level feels engaged
- How can multiple ages and levels of students be included and feel belonging?



Multiple types of learning

- Demo/lecture
- Attending a concert
- Rehearsing artist's music
- Performing with artists



Choosing and arranging music

- Translating from performing artist arrangements to student accessible while maintaining the spirit and integrity of the music
- Side by side - artists performing with students, not as soloists
- Multi-level arrangement to increase community, provide vision for younger students
- Musically meaningful parts at each level



Where to find sponsors and funding?

- Have a clear vision to present to funders
- Consider individuals, grants, businesses, administrations, crowd source
- Allow as much time as possible
- Set the table for the future by talking about vision in general terms as much as possible
"Someday we'd love to...."



Teaching Strategies

Different kinds of teaching

- What are the experiences and strengths of everyone involved?
- Long-term teaching vs. short-term teaching
- Explanation vs. demonstration
- Breaking it down into smaller steps
- When the teacher is also the student





Impact & Worth It Moments

Document it!

- Re-live the magic
- Recruit future students
- Build future support and funding
- Methods
 - Document as you go and after you finish
 - Multiple methods (e.g. photos, videos, surveys)





What do you remember most about the Villalobos residency?

Students & Families:

"We still remember the music! It stayed in our heads and our hearts."

"Ai li li li li liiiiiiiiiiiiiii"

"It felt like being a part of a warm, inviting community."



What do you remember most about the Villalobos residency?

Faculty:

"The energy the Villalobos' brought to the stage was infectious, and the students positive response in their performance."

"The kids were really energized; Nathaniel dancing on stage. Colors! Lots of energy, lots of excitement; lots of parents saying "This is the coolest thing we've ever done!"

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Conclusion

Conclusion

- Story of a multi-lingual guest artist residency
- Framework for a residency
 - Approach
 - Goals & Opportunities
 - Finding & Working with a Guest Artist
 - Designing a Residency
 - Teaching Strategies
 - Impact & Worth It Moments



Conclusion

- Get out of the comfort zone
- Planning and flexibility make it work
- Lots of work, lots of reward



Let's continue the conversation!

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