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GRADUATE COLLEGE

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CLARENCE A. BURG TO PIANO PEDAGOGY

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Music Education

By

LINDA JOYCE OWEN

Norman, Oklahoma

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THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CLARENCE A. BURG
TO PIANO PEDAGOGY

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
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I dedicate this work to the memory of my father, Ward Pratt (1909-1977), ever a champion of education and of his daughter. He would be so proud.

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ABSTRACT

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CLARENCE A. BURG

TO PIANO PEDAGOGY

By: Linda Joyce Owen

Major Professor: E. L. Lancaster, Ph.D.

This study documents the contributions of Clarence A. Burg (1893-1986) to the field of piano pedagogy by investigating his varied activities as a musician, teacher, professional leader in music, and music administrator. Burg's career as Dean and Professor of Piano in the School of Music at Oklahoma City University (OCU) from 1928 through 1982 was marked by tremendous growth in the School, largely through Burg's efforts. He influenced many generations of piano students by his own teaching and his piano teachers' workshops in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and elsewhere. His influence extended farther because of his leadership in numerous professional organizations. Chief among these are the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association, of which he was a founder and the first president, and

the National Guild of Piano Teachers, for whose annual auditions he served as an adjudicator for many years.

Interviews with Burg's relatives and archival materials provided biographical data. Information regarding Burg's piano teaching philosophy and approaches was gathered from questionnaires returned by sixty-seven of his former piano and piano pedagogy students. Based on the data, the overwhelming majority of Burg's students were positively influenced by him in their playing and teaching, as well as in their lives beyond their lessons or classes. It is clear that the School of Music at OCU and music education, particularly in piano, across the entire state of Oklahoma today have been shaped by Clarence Burg's influence.

This study contains six chapters and several appendices. Chapter 1 provides background on the subject and a survey of related studies. Chapter 2 is a biographical sketch of Burg. In chapters 3 and 4, Burg's techniques and methods of teaching piano performance and piano pedagogy, respectively, are discussed. In both chapters, the impact of his teaching is noted, based on questionnaire responses of former students. Burg's leadership role in music educators' professional organizations is explored in chapter 5. Chapter 6 contains a summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

The field of piano pedagogy includes both the teaching of performance at the piano and the instruction of piano teachers in the art of teaching. Clarence A. Burg (1893-1986) excelled in both of these areas, well before piano pedagogy had been defined as a field of study or a specialized discipline in college degree programs. His lengthy career included a number of unique contributions to this field, especially in the state of Oklahoma.

During his lifetime, Clarence Burg's influence extended into several different areas simultaneously. For most of his life, his base of operations was Oklahoma City University (OCU), where he served, in several capacities, from 1928 to 1982. During these fifty-four years as a university administrator and teacher, Burg affected many generations of music teachers and performers. He was first appointed Professor of Piano and Organ and Dean of the College of Fine Arts, which included the Departments of Art and Drama/Speech, as well as the School of Music. Under Burg's leadership, the growth and improvement of the School of Music

culminated in accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) in 1944, and in 1946, the establishment within the University of a separate School of Music. Burg became its Dean, a position he held until 1962. As Dean Emeritus, he continued teaching piano until his retirement in 1982.

Clarence Burg was already a piano teacher with several years of experience and a class of twenty pupils when he graduated from high school in Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1911. He became a charter member of the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association (ASMTA) at its formation in 1915, serving as secretary, then as vice-president of the organization from 1920-23. He was delegated to appear before the Education Committee of the State Senate of Arkansas and succeeded in convincing them to license private music teachers who were accredited by the ASMTA. He also performed at least once as piano soloist at one of the early ASMTA state conventions. Considering this background, it is not surprising that Burg became a leader in establishing the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association (OMTA), shortly after moving to Oklahoma in 1928. Indeed, he became the organization's first president, serving in that office from 1929 to 1934, and remained actively involved throughout his life. In 1986, the OMTA honored him by creating the Clarence Burg Achievement Award, given to every twelfth-grade student who has participated in the OMTA State Achievement Auditions for at least four years.

In 1927, shortly before he moved from Arkansas to Oklahoma, Clarence Burg met Irl Allison, Sr., founder of the National Guild of Piano Teachers (NGPT). A few years later, Allison conceived the idea of annual auditions in which piano students could play for a judge, receiving comments and suggestions for improving their playing. These auditions were intended to help teachers and students alike, and as such, were completely compatible with Burg's beliefs about assisting teachers in improving their teaching and motivating their students. Accordingly, he became the first Guild member in Oklahoma, initiating Guild auditions in the state in 1934. These auditions, held at OCU under Burg's chairmanship, were the first Guild auditions outside the state of Texas. After that time, Burg maintained a busy schedule each year as a Guild adjudicator, assisting and promoting the Guild in many other ways, as well. The impact of Burg's activity in the Guild was widespread among an enormous number of teachers and students.

Burg believed strongly that piano teacher education and training were sorely needed to raise the standards of the profession in the 1940s and early 1950s. Courses and degree programs in piano pedagogy were few or non-existent at that time, so in 1954 he began an annual series of week-long summer workshops for piano teachers in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Moving the popular workshops to Oklahoma City in 1966, he continued to offer them through summer 1978. In addition, he gave similar workshops

over a period of many years in a number of cities in Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Illinois, Missouri, Wyoming, Alabama, Tennessee, Virginia, Hawaii, Pennsylvania, and others. Thousands of piano students have been influenced by Burg's pedagogical principles through the teachers attending these workshops.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to document the contributions of Clarence A. Burg to the field of piano pedagogy by investigating his life and his varied activities as a musician, teacher, professional leader in music, and music administrator.

Answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What were the early experiences, musical training and education that prepared Burg for the numerous aspects of his career? (chapter 2)

2. What techniques and methods characterized Burg's teaching of piano performance, and what concepts did he emphasize? (chapter 3)

3. In his piano teacher workshops and classes, what teaching techniques and methods did Burg advocate and what other important ideas for piano teachers did he stress? (chapter 4)

4. What was the nature of Burg's work with the National Guild of Piano Teachers and its annual auditions? (chapter 5)

5. What was Burg's leadership role in music educators' professional organizations, such as the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association and the National Guild of Piano Teachers? (chapter 5)

Need for the Study

Leaders in the field of music education have long attested to the need for historical research in music education. As long ago as 1958, Allen Britton noted that "no general history of music education has yet been written" and that such a work would be very helpful in providing "the facts that might define the role which music has actually played in educational systems."[1] He further observed that, although few in number at that time, doctoral dissertations on historical subjects in music education represented "a satisfactory beginning to the important task of rescuing music education from the historical vacuum in which it presently gasps for intellectual breath."[2]

Doctoral candidates, over the years, continued to respond to the need expressed by Britton, so that, by 1992, George Heller was able to report that a total of 369 dissertations had been written from 1967 through 1991 on historical topics in music education.[3] However, while expressing "guarded optimism" regarding the present status and future prospects of historical

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[1]Allen P. Britton, "Music in Early American Public Education: A Historical Critique," in *Basic Concepts in Music Education: The 57th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, ed. Nelson B. Henry (Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education, 1958), 196.

[2]Ibid.

[3]George N. Heller, "Historical Research in Music Education and Music Therapy: A Quarter-Century of Research, Writing, and Publication," *The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1992): 59-60.

research in music education, Heller nonetheless states that "much more could and should be done on [the] history of music education . . . ."[4]

Stressing the value specifically of the biographical type of historical study in music education, George Heller and Bruce Wilson claim that "inspiration or motivation account for the importance of biography . . . . Honest and thorough biography serves not only to provide worthy models, but also to cast notables of the past in accurate, life-like (and therefore replicable) human models of behavior."[5] Of the 369 historical dissertations mentioned above, 114 were biographies. A mere twenty-three studies, written between 1962 and 1992, deal with individuals who made significant contributions to the field of piano pedagogy.[6]

Two recent dissertations also advocate additional biographical studies of piano pedagogues. Sarah Hatch's paper on Irl Allison, Sr., founder of the National Guild of Piano Teachers, states that "further study of the teachers [Allison] worked with would be important for a complete understanding of the Guild as a unique organization of American music educators."[7] In her

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[4]Ibid., 58.

[5]George N. Heller and Bruce D. Wilson, "Historical Research in Music Education: A Prolegomenon," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 69 (Winter 1982): 17.

[6]Richard Chronister and Patrick Meader, eds., *Proceedings and Reference, 1992-1993*, (Los Angeles: The National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, 1993), 262-64; Richard Chronister and Linda Timmons, eds., *Proceedings and Reference, 1990-1991* (Los Angeles: The National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, 1991), 226-40.

[7]Sarah J. Hatch, "The Governance Style of Irl Allison, Sr., As Evidenced in Documentation of the Development of the National Guild of Piano Teachers, 1929-1963" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Texas, 1991), 123.

dissertation describing piano pedagogy instructors at American colleges and universities, Gayle Kowalchyk recommends that future research include "a history of the development of American piano instruction, with a focus on individuals who made important contributions."[8]

That Clarence Burg made important contributions to the field of piano pedagogy is undeniable. His enormous influence on piano education can be measured in large part by the many successful pianists and piano teachers in Oklahoma, as well as in other states, who studied with him or with one of his students.

Enthusiasm for lessons learned and gratitude for help received from Clarence Burg are typical sentiments expressed by his former students and colleagues. One such student declared that Burg was "an expert teacher of teachers."[9] She added that his piano teacher workshops were "pioneering efforts," that he was a man ahead of his time. To support her claim, this student mentioned that, when she read James Bastien's well-known piano pedagogy text, *How To Teach Piano Successfully*, first published in 1973, she felt that she had long before learned from Dr. Burg most of the information and ideas contained in the book.

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[8]Gayle Kowalchyk, "A Descriptive Profile of Piano Pedagogy Instructors at American Colleges and Universities" (Ed.D. diss., Teachers College, Columbia University, 1988), 108.

[9]Marilyn Witcher, Oklahoma City, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 17 July 1992.

Burg's numerous accomplishments as a musician-educator have led another of his former students to term him "the father of piano teaching in Oklahoma."[10] Because of this widespread influence on piano music education, a thorough investigation of Clarence Burg's life and musical activities was needed. No such investigation has been made to date, however, despite the impact of his work. The present study meets that need.

Since many of Burg's former students are still alive and actively teaching and performing, documentation of his abundant contributions was both possible and timely. His achievements are worthy of study by other music educators who aim for similar excellence as piano pedagogues.

Procedures

Information for this study was obtained from a number of primary and secondary sources, as follows:

1. Clarence Burg's writings, including his master's thesis from Eastman School of Music and letters and articles in the official publication of the NGPT, *Piano Guild Notes*.

2. Records and memorabilia from the archives at the Dulaney-Browne Library at OCU and from Burg's personnel file in the President's office at OCU.

3. Personal interviews and correspondence with members of Burg's family, including his widow, Dorothy Burg, and his two daughters, Jean Burg McKean and Nan Burg Phillips.

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[10]Roger Price, Tulsa, OK, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 20 March 1993.

4. Records and memorabilia from family, friends, former students and colleagues of Clarence Burg.

5. Records and memorabilia from scrapbooks maintained by the historians of the OMTA.

6. Records and memorabilia in the offices of the NGPT, now called American College of Musicians, Austin, TX; personal interviews with NGPT President Emeritus Irl Allison, Jr., and President Richard A. Allison.

7. Personal interviews and correspondence with former students of Burg (preliminary research and biographical data only).

8. Responses to a questionnaire (Appendix A) mailed in November 1994 to former students of Burg, whose names and addresses were provided by the OCU Alumni Office and by other former students. Follow-up interviews were conducted to clarify responses, when necessary. The questionnaire was pilot-tested. The pilot-test cover letter appears in Appendix B.

Interviews were audiotaped, transcribed, and catalogued according to the guidelines given by oral historians Willa Baum[11] and William Moss[12] and by archivist-oral historian Edward Ives.[13]

The questionnaire to Burg's former students was modeled after those found in four similar biographical studies[14] for which questionnaires were

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[11]Willa K. Baum, *Transcribing and Editing Oral History* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1977), 22-65.

[12]William W. Moss, *Oral History Program Manual* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974), 46-60, 79-89.

[13]Edward D. Ives, *The Tape-Recorded Interview: A Manual for Field Workers in Folklore and Oral History* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1980), passim.

[14]Steven Henry Roberson, "Lili Kraus: The Person, the Performer, and the Teacher" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1985); Patricia Jean Trice, "Gray Thomas Perry, Piano Performer and Pedagogue" (Ph.D. diss., Florida State University, 1988); Carol Ann Baskins, "The Contributions of Celia Mae Bryant to Piano Pedagogy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1994); Laura Beauchamp, "Boris Berlin's Career and Contributions to Piano Pedagogy" (D.M.A. document, University of Oklahoma, 1994).

utilized to gather information. Of those investigators, all but Trice also performed pilot tests of their questionnaires. Books on questionnaire design and use provided additional guidelines for the development of the questionnaire for this study.[15] The questionnaire solicited recollections regarding specific areas of Burg's teaching and his methods, as well as opinions about his strengths and weaknesses as a teacher and his influence on the respondent. Since much of the information requested required reflection and interpretation, most questions are open-ended. One group of questions dealt with Burg's teaching of private piano lessons; another, with his piano pedagogy classes and workshops; three additional questions were for all respondents. Personal information about the respondent and his or her current involvement in music was also sought.

Questionnaires to Burg's former students included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research. Those who did not respond by the requested date received a follow-up questionnaire and, if necessary, a telephone call.

The pilot questionnaire was sent to three piano faculty members and ten graduate piano majors at the University of Oklahoma, with an

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[15]Douglas R. Berdie and John F. Anderson, *Questionnaires: Design and Use* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1974); Seymour Sudman and Norman M. Bradburn, *Asking Questions: A Practical Guide to Questionnaire Design* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1982); Raymond L. Gorden, *Interviewing: Strategy, Techniques, and Tactics*, 3rd ed. (Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1980); Norman K. Denzin, *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1989).

accompanying letter (Appendix B) explaining the nature of the research and requesting an evaluation of the questionnaire as to clarity, possible redundancy, and length. Suggestions were used to refine the questionnaire before mailing it to former Burg students.

Every effort was made to insure that all information presented in the report is correct and unbiased. As recommended by virtually all authorities on research techniques for historical studies, primary sources were used whenever possible, and corroboration of information among multiple data sources provided the highest degree of accuracy attainable.[16]

Limitations

A complete and detailed biography of Clarence Burg is beyond the scope of this study. Only the biographical information relevant to Burg's development as a musician, music educator, professional music leader, and music administrator is presented. Furthermore, only a brief outline of Burg's activity as a composer is given; his known piano compositions are listed in Appendix C.

Since the stated purpose of the study is to document Burg's contributions to music education, the author did not attempt to evaluate those contributions. Rather, evaluation of Burg's activities is limited to that

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[16]Edward C. Rainbow and Hildegard C. Froehlich, *Research in Music Education: An Introduction to Systematic Inquiry* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1987), 111-113.

given by former students in their responses to the mailed questionnaire and by former colleagues and associates in personal interviews.

Survey of Related Studies

Although a substantial amount of research has been done in the field of music education, especially in the second half of this century, a relatively small part of it is historical in nature. Within that category, Charles Wade Wright's thesis,[17] tracing the history of the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association, is particularly relevant to the present study. It contains several references to Clarence Burg, documenting his contributions to the establishment and early activities of the association. Burg served as secretary and, later, as vice-president of the fledgling organization. He participated in several of the group's ground-breaking achievements for music education in the state of Arkansas, such as the licensing of private music teachers and establishing standards and examinations for granting such licenses. These issues remained of great interest to Burg throughout his professional life.

Also of interest to the current research is Sandra Lee Camp's report on the status of the private piano teacher in music education in selected southern central states in 1975.[18] Camp includes an extensive review of

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[17]Charles Wade Wright, "A History of the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association" (M.Mus.Ed. thesis, Ouachita Baptist College, 1964).

[18]Sandra Lee Camp, "The Status of the Private Piano Teacher in Music Education in Selected Southern Central States" (D.Mus.Ed. diss., Indiana University, 1975).

Clarence Burg's survey, conducted by means of a questionnaire mailed to private piano teachers nationwide and presented in 1944 in his master's thesis, "Problems of the Private Piano Teacher." Citing it as "the first scholarly study conducted concerning the profession,"[19] Camp frequently quotes Burg's paper in support of the need for her study, noting that many of the same problems identified by Burg still persisted, over thirty years later. Her paper also provides her mailed questionnaires, along with their covering letters and a complete description of her pilot study and research procedures.

A concise, yet thorough history of piano pedagogy instruction in the United States can be found in Gayle Kowalchyk's dissertation.[20] She also details the development of the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy from its inception in 1979 and outlines the requirements for undergraduate and master's degree programs in music pedagogy, first published in 1985 by the National Association of Schools of Music. This information is provided as background to her descriptive profile of college and university piano pedagogy instructors.

Less than one-third of the historical studies in music education done in the last quarter-century are biographical. Only a small number of these

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[19]Ibid., 15.

[20]Kowalchyk, "A Descriptive Profile of Piano Pedagogy Instructors," 11-22.

document the lives and contributions of important music educators in the field of piano pedagogy.

Irl Allison, Sr., unquestionably influenced the course of piano music education in forming the National Guild of Piano Teachers and establishing its now-international annual piano-playing auditions. Sarah Hatch's dissertation[21] probes Allison's leadership style--how and to what extent he involved others and how issues were resolved--throughout the development of the Guild, of which she provides an extensive history. Hatch researched Guild publications and Allison's writings, conducting interviews of his relatives and associates. Also included is a chapter which discusses the literature on leaders and leadership style. Clarence Burg's enthusiasm and strong life-time support of the NGPT and its auditions has already been noted. Hatch's paper confirms this in several references to Burg's activities in the Guild and a number of citations from his writings in Guild publications.

The following master teachers of piano performance have been the subjects of doctoral research:[22] Joanne Baker,[23] Lili Kraus,[24] Gray Thomas

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[21]Sarah Hatch, "The Governance Style of Irl Allison, Sr.".

[22]Three additional studies of master teachers of piano performance--one on Cecile Staub Genhart by Stewart Gordon (1965) and two on Olga Samaroff Stokowski by Donna Pucciani (1979) and by Geoffrey McGillen (1988)--are known to exist, but none of these documents could be acquired for inclusion in the present study.

[23]David Glen Hatch, "An Examination of the Piano Teaching Skills of Master Teacher, Joanne Baker" (D.M.A. diss., University of Missouri-Kansas City, 1987).

[24]Roberson, "Lili Kraus".

Perry,[25] Ruth Slenczynska,[26] Gyorgy Sebok,[27] Abby Whiteside,[28] and Teresa Carreño.[29] Whiteside and Carreño taught piano privately; the others, in a university setting; and all taught advanced students. Except for Baker and Whiteside, these teachers had or still have extensive performing careers. The dissertation on Slenczynska is unusual in examining the transition of a concert pianist to an artist-in-residence and in using the case-study investigative method. The Whiteside document focuses on a particular aspect of the subject's pedagogy--namely, rhythm and form in piano playing. It contains five musical excerpts from the standard piano repertoire in which the use of her "tools" in analyzing and solving rhythmic and technical problems is demonstrated. The other five studies discuss the teaching and other career aspects of their subjects from a broader perspective.

The actual questionnaires mailed to former students and/or professional colleagues are contained in the papers on Kraus and Perry, while the Baker, Sebok, and Slenczynska studies provide the exact questions

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[25]Trice, "Gray Thomas Perry".

[26]Carol Shannon Hyde, "A Case Study of an Artist-in-Residence: Ruth Slenczynska, Concert Pianist" (Ed.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1988).

[27]Cynthia Cortright, "Gyorgy Sebok: A Profile as Revealed Through Interviews with the Artist, His Colleagues and His Students" (D.M.A. document, University of Oklahoma, 1993).

[28]Patricia Ann Wood, "The Teaching of Abby Whiteside: Rhythm and Form in Piano Playing" (D.M.A. document, The Ohio State University, 1987).

[29]Anne E. Albuquerque, "Teresa Carreño: Pianist, Teacher, and Composer" (D.M.A. thesis, University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, 1988).

asked. Roberson's study on Kraus is the only one of this group that mentions pilot-testing his questionnaires; he includes both his cover letters for the pilot-testing and a thorough description of his investigative methods.

Dissertations have been written on Thaddeus P. Giddings,[30] W. Otto Miessner,[31] Osbourne McConathy,[32] and Raymond Burrows,[33] who were all authors or co-authors of one or more textbooks and other teaching materials for public-school piano classes in the first half of this century. Because of his awareness that good materials alone do not ensure competent teaching, each of these educators, like Clarence Burg, became active in training teachers, often in summer workshops or courses. Additionally, Burrows started methods classes in piano teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University. These classes were among the first in the country and did much to create an interest in initiating such courses at other colleges and universities nationwide. A further similarity shared by these men is their leadership in national music organizations, which provided them an opportunity to promote their ideas widely. These topics are explored by the authors of all

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[30]Charles Maynard McDermid, "Thaddeus P. Giddings: A Biography" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1967).

[31]Samuel Dixon Miller, "W. Otto Miessner and His Contributions to Music in American Schools" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1962).

[32]Melvin Carlos Platt, "Osbourne McConathy, American Music Educator" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1971).

[33]Edyth Elizabeth Wagner, "Raymond Burrows and His Contributions to Music Education" (D.M.A. diss., University of Southern California, 1968.)

four of the dissertations, by examining the teaching materials and other publications created by each subject and by utilizing a variety of secondary sources of information. The Burrows study also includes an extensive survey of the class piano movement both before and during Burrows' association with it.

One study of William Mason[34] and two of W. S. B. Mathews[35] report the activities of these piano music educators of the 1800s and early 1900s. Mason developed and published a system of piano technique, which Mathews promoted, along with writing his own method books. As strong advocates of teacher training, both men were among the first to become involved in the nineteenth-century pedagogical phenomenon known as the "Normal Musical Institute," which represented one of the earliest efforts in this country to raise the standards of music teaching. Mason's participation in an 1870 institute at South Bend, Indiana, was the first instance of any significant piano instruction at one of these institutes, which had previously been oriented primarily toward vocal music. Thereafter, inclusion of piano pedagogy classes in the institutes became customary. The Mathews paper by

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[34]Kenneth Gene Graber, "The Life and Works of William Mason (1829-1908)" (Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa, 1976).

[35]Robert Westfall Groves, "The Life and Works of W.S.B. Mathews (1837-1912)" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Iowa, 1981); James Wesley Clarke, "Prof. W.S.B. Mathews (1837-1912): Self-Made Musician of the Gilded Age" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1983).

Robert Groves has a particularly thorough section on the development of normal institutes and the origins of piano pedagogy instruction.

Training competent piano teachers was also of great importance to the subject of R. Fred Kern's study, Frances Clark,[36] who founded a post-graduate school for this purpose. She also developed an extensive library of keyboard teaching materials, in part to support and promote her revolutionary method of teaching music reading. By way of background to his examination of Clark's teaching materials, Kern includes a comprehensive survey of piano methods and materials published before Clark's, prior to 1940.

Kathleen Schubert extends Kern's work by reviewing American beginning piano methods since 1950, in her dissertation on another prolific composer, editor, and author of teaching materials, Willard Palmer.[37] In both the Clark and Palmer studies, the subject's teaching publications are thoroughly analyzed; Kern also appraises Clark's journalistic writings. In addition, Kern includes surveys of the history of piano instruction and of a number of educational philosophers and psychologists on whom Frances Clark bases her own teaching philosophy.

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[36]Robert Fred Kern, "Frances Clark: The Teacher and Her Contributions to Piano Pedagogy" (D.A. diss., University of Northern Colorado, 1984).

[37]Kathleen Louise Schubert, "Willard A. Palmer's Contributions to Piano Pedagogy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1992).

Both Kern and Schubert gathered information by interviewing their subjects. They also interviewed former students and/or colleagues of their subjects, as did Cameron Dibble in his profile of another famous author of piano teaching materials, John Thompson.[38] However, unlike Kern and Schubert, Dibble did not examine his subject's teaching materials in any depth; rather, his purpose was to discover whatever musical intentions and experience lay behind Thompson's great success with his teaching books, as well as to determine his influence on his students. Dibble's study is of particular interest to the present investigation because it includes a discussion of Thompson's association with the organization that later became the National Guild of Piano Teachers; its founder, Irl Allison, Sr.; and its earliest auditions.

Each of the three studies on Lynn Freeman Olson focuses on a different aspect of the multi-faceted career of the well-known composer and author of numerous teaching materials. A master's thesis by Leila Viss[39] sets forth Olson's beliefs about music/piano education, musical composition, and children's musical preferences, deriving these beliefs from Olson's published writings and interviews, other writers' articles about him, and interviews of some of his former colleagues. The author then assesses

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[38]Cameron Shawn Dibble, "John Sylvanus Thompson: Pianist, Pedagogue, Composer" (D.M.A. diss., University of Missouri-Kansas City, 1992).

[39]Leila J. Viss, "Lynn Freeman Olson: His Philosophy of Music/Piano Education and Composition as Reflected in His Literary Works and a Small Sample of His Piano Compositions" (M.A. thesis, University of Denver, 1990).

Olson's success at incorporating his beliefs into his own compositions by analyzing a small sample of those works. Similar sources provided information for Herbert's doctoral study,[40] which also discusses Olson's musical philosophy. In addition, she includes his system of grading piano compositions, his concept of piano technique, and his approach to teaching the instrument, as well as a complete catalog of his piano works. Steven Betts' dissertation[41] sought to bring together all the varied areas of Olson's career and provide a complete listing of all his compositions, as well as a review and analysis of his piano music and piano methods.

A number of parallels could be drawn between the careers of Olson and Canadian composer-educator Boris Berlin, whose contributions were documented by Laura Beauchamp.[42] Like Olson, Berlin has contributed greatly to the music/piano education field in his country through his numerous compositions and other publications. Considerable private teaching, pedagogy classes and workshops, and examination adjudication provide additional evidence of his importance as a leader in Canadian music teaching.

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[40]Constance Giesey Herbert, "Lynn Freeman Olson: Technical and Pedagogical Elements of His Music for Piano" (D.M.A. diss., University of Missouri-Kansas City, 1992).

[41]Steven Lee Betts, "Lynn Freeman Olson's Contributions to Music Education" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1995).

[42]Beauchamp, "Boris Berlin."

National leadership is also a significant contribution to music education of Celia Mae Bryant, the subject of Carol Baskins' dissertation.[43] Bryant's history-making election as the first female president of the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) was preceded by presidencies of other teachers' organizations. Among these was the OMTA, of which Clarence Burg was the first president, and in which Bryant and Burg worked closely together for many years. Like Burg, Bryant also had a long tenure as piano professor at an Oklahoma university and made a significant contribution to the education of piano teachers, much of it through her pedagogical writings in professional periodicals.

The dissertations of both Beauchamp and Baskins serve as exemplary guides for the present study in their inclusion of the concise, yet comprehensive questionnaires--all of them pilot-tested--that were mailed to former students and colleagues of their subjects. Future investigators are provided additional noteworthy models in the authors' cover letters and thorough descriptions of their planned investigative procedures.

Three other educators, who, like Clarence Burg, served at the college level as teacher-administrators in music, were chosen for study by researchers. One of these was Frederick Harwood,[44] whose career at Henderson State Teachers College in Arkansas almost exactly parallels

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[43]Baskins, "Celia Mae Bryant."

[44]Ann Barnwell Rye, "Frederick Harwood and Henderson State College: A History" (D.M.A. document, University of Oklahoma, 1987).

Burg's at OCU, although beginning about thirteen years earlier than Burg's. Harwood taught piano majors and a number of other music courses at Henderson and served as chair of its Music Department during many trying circumstances, including several changes in the school's administrative structure and the Great Depression. Both Harwood and Burg were involved in the early years of the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association, each holding office in the organization. In addition to their many teaching and administrative duties, both men continued to perform regularly, even appearing on the same recital program during an ASMTA convention around 1920.

Irving W. Wolfe had teaching experience at both high school and college levels, as well as a year with the Iowa State Department of Education, before becoming a music administrator. Donald Goss's dissertation[45] reports that Wolfe served as the Chairman of the Department of Music at Eastern Illinois State Teachers College in Charleston and later, as Head of the Division of Music at George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, Tennessee. During his lengthy career at the latter institution, he built a very weak music faculty and program into a strong, well-respected one, where the training of fine teachers was of primary importance. With his increasing involvement as chief author of a series of elementary song books,

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[45]Donald R. Goss, "Irving W. Wolfe: His Life and Contributions to Music Education" (Ph.D. diss, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1972).

Wolfe stepped aside from his administrative duties at George Peabody College, but continued a full load of teaching. As director of the college choral music program and of community choral activities in Nashville, and as a choral adjudicator, he greatly influenced choral music in his area of the country. Former colleagues and students attest to Wolfe's tireless dedication and success in the training of musicians and music teachers of the highest quality.

The accomplishments of music educator Charles Faulkner Bryan are chronicled in Carolyn Livingston's dissertation.[46] About the time Clarence Burg assumed his position as Dean at OCU, Bryan became head of Tennessee Polytechnic Institute's Division of Music and, at first, its only faculty member. He, too, shepherded his school through difficult times. Another administrative position Bryan held around 1940 was unusual: he was in charge of the Federal Music Project for the U.S. government's Works Progress Administration. In this capacity, he designed and supervised group piano classes for hobbyists of all ages. He wrote a short book, *Teaching Piano in Classes,* that contained a concise but complete outline for teachers to set up these classes, along with much practical and, for its day, innovative advice. Through this and other writings while in this position, Bryan influenced large numbers of piano teachers nationwide in their efforts to

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[46]Carolyn Harris Livingston, "Charles Faulkner Bryan: A Biography" (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1986).

develop musical taste, elementary skills, and an interest in musical activities among the American people. Bryan was also the composer of a substantial body of works; most of them, like his children's songs for school music texts, were for educational purposes. In addition, he wrote a number of articles on music education and folk music. As an ethnomusicologist, he edited several folk music collections and did unique research on the origins of the Appalachian Mountain dulcimer.

All of the biographical studies reviewed include information relevant to the musical training, professional activities, and special contributions of their subjects. This and other information was gathered from a variety of primary and secondary sources. The subjects themselves were interviewed, when possible, and their available writings and other publications were examined. Researchers also interviewed or sent questionnaires to former students and/or professional colleagues, when appropriate. All of these investigations used a similar framework, yet each presentation highlighted the experiences and contributions unique to its subject. These individuals, like Clarence Burg, have all left their mark on the field of music education.

Organization of the Study

This study is presented in six chapters. Following this introductory chapter, chapter 2 details those early life experiences, musical training, and

education that prepared Burg for the various aspects of his career. Also included are sketches of Burg's teaching, professional, and community activities in Arkansas; his career at OCU; his travel and other professional and community activities in Oklahoma; his final years; and honors he received. In chapter 3, Burg's techniques and methods of teaching piano performance are discussed, as well as the concepts he emphasized. The impact of his teaching is noted, based on questionnaire responses of former students. Chapter 4 outlines the teaching techniques, methods, and other important ideas for piano teachers that Burg stressed in his piano pedagogy classes and through his piano teacher workshops in several locations. Here, too, responses of former students to a questionnaire are utilized to document Burg's influence. Burg's leadership role in music educators' professional organizations, including the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association and the National Guild of Piano Teachers, is explored in chapter 5. Chapter 6 contains summaries of Burg's career and of responses to the questionnaire to his former students, as well as conclusions and recommendations for further study.

Five appendices provide additional information:

Appendix A--the questionnaire and accompanying cover letter to former Burg students

Appendix B--the cover letter for the pilot test of the questionnaire

Appendix C--a list of Burg's piano compositions

Appendix D--the plaque inscription for OMTA's Clarence Burg Achievement Award

Appendix E--photographs of Clarence Burg

CHAPTER 2

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Early Years

Clarence Albert Burg was born September 3, 1893, in Dallas City, Illinois, the first of three children of Albert Henry Burg and Omega Maude Pettit Burg. In 1896, the family moved to DeQueen, a tiny town in southwest Arkansas near the Arkansas-Oklahoma border, where Albert Burg was townsite agent for the newly built Kansas City Southern Railway. He built the first house in DeQueen. Clarence's brother Paul was born there in 1899, and their sister Christine, in 1905.[1] Apparently, neither Paul nor

[1]Paul Burg changed his last name during World War II to Pettit, his mother's maiden name, to avoid the anti-German sentiment sometimes encountered by the German-sounding name Burg. He was known as Paul Pettit for the rest of his life. He was married for a few years to Stella Smith and the couple had one son, Marlo Burg. After a divorce, he moved to Staten Island, NY, where he lived until his death in 1974. He was employed by the Horn & Hardart chain of automats in New York City.

Christine Burg's given name was actually Angeline or Angela, but she disliked that name and began calling herself Christine at an early age. Like her brother Paul, she too changed her last name; she chose Burton. She never married. She wrote articles for publication, although her family does not know of anything she actually published. At one time, she raised horses. She lived much of her life in Carmel, NY. At 91, she now resides in a nursing home in New England. (Dorothy Burg, Oklahoma City, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 20 July 1996; Jean Burg McKean, Port St. Lucie, FL, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 19 July 1996; Marlo Burg, Lincoln, NE, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 12 August 1996.)

Christine was involved in music. Mrs. Burg, a singer and church organist, was Clarence's first music teacher.

Clarence Burg discussed his earliest recollections about piano instruction in a 1978 interview with OCU President Dolphus Whitten:

> My cousin, Clyde Pettit, of Stuttgart, Arkansas, had just returned from receiving his law degree at Yale University. He was an excellent amateur pianist; in fact, he gave a whole recital in Stuttgart, including the Second Hungarian Rhapsody by Liszt. Mother came home and was so enthusiastic about the young man playing the piano that she said, "Clarence, you are going to have to take piano lessons." This was in the summer when I went barefooted and swam in the little creek near our home. We had horses, and I was not too interested in taking piano lessons. My first question was, "Mother, will I have to wear shoes and stockings?"[2]

Despite Burg's initial reluctance, his mother prevailed, and not long afterwards, young Clarence began taking piano lessons from a local teacher, Miss May Rice. Burg described Rice as an excellent pianist and fine teacher, saying, "I was very fortunate to have her."[3]

In 1907, when Clarence was ready to start high school, the Burgs moved again--this time to Fort Smith, Arkansas--so Clarence could have better musical opportunities. He went to the Bollinger Conservatory in Fort Smith, studying first with Miss Exene Nixon, then with Mrs. D. C. Smith.[4]

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[2]Clarence Burg, "Interview with Dean Clarence Burg," Interview by Dolphus Whitten, 28 February 1978, transcript, "Clarence Burg" file, Public Information Office, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Smith was also the teacher of Inez Silberg in Fort Smith. Many years later, Burg would hire Silberg as a member of the voice faculty at OCU.

After a year or two, Smith informed Burg that he was becoming too advanced for her and recommended Mrs. Elizabeth Price Coffey, a teacher newly arrived from Chicago. Because the new teacher's fee was higher than Smith's, Burg's parents could not afford it. So Burg made up the difference by going house to house in Fort Smith, teaching piano lessons. A practical businessman, even at age fifteen, Burg said of this first venture into piano teaching, "I found that I could make money faster and more easily giving piano lessons than anything else."[5]

At Fort Smith High School, Clarence composed a song for the Websterian Debating Society, of which he was a member, and also wrote music for school productions. He gave his first solo piano recital while in high school. Graduating in 1911, he was already well established in what would become his lifetime career, with a class of twenty piano students. However, his teacher, Mrs. Coffey, urged him to leave Fort Smith and go east to study, as she felt Burg had outgrown her ability to teach him.

Post-High School Education

Coffey had recently heard and been strongly impressed with a New York recital by Ernest Hutcheson,[6] head of the piano faculty at Baltimore's

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[5]Burg, "Interview" by Whitten, 28 February 1978.

[6]Australian-born pianist Ernest Hutcheson (1871-1951) toured his native country as a child pianist and again at age 19. He studied in Germany at Leipzig and Weimar, lived in Berlin for two years, and came to the United States to the Peabody Conservatory in 1900. Naturalized as an American, he later headed the piano department of the Chautauqua

prestigious Peabody Conservatory, so she recommended Burg go there to study with him. Burg spent the school year 1911-12 working with Hutcheson. When Hutcheson resigned in 1912 to devote himself to his concert career, Burg, whose funds were running low, returned to Fort Smith and immediately resumed his piano teaching.

At that time, Burg also became a member of Rotary Club. The Fort Smith Rotary Club recruited the young man to be the pianist for group singing at their noon luncheons. In exchange, they offered to pay his membership fee and provide his lunch. The association with Rotary members proved beneficial in other ways, as well. A number of these men sent their children to Burg for piano lessons, and later, recommendations from some of these businessmen helped Burg to secure his appointment as Dean of Fine Arts at OCU.

As an established businessman himself, Burg was able to borrow money from a Fort Smith bank to finance a year of study (1915-16) with Polish-American pianist Sigismund Stojowski[7] at the Von Ende School of

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Institution and became president of Juilliard in 1937. He was also a composer of a number of major works and author of three textbooks.

[7]Stojowski (1869-1946) studied at the Paris Conservatoire under Delibes, Dubois, and Diémer. Later he was a student of Paderewski. After settling in America, he taught many well-known pianists. From 1905-1912, he was piano department head at New York's Institute of Musical Art, which later merged with Juilliard. He also composed works for orchestra, chorus, and piano.

Music[8] in New York City. Following this year, he again returned to his teaching in Fort Smith. On December 20, 1916, he took another important step when he married Hazel Douglas Prettyman of Fort Smith.[9] The couple's two daughters, Nan Elizabeth and Jean Clare,[10] were born in Fort Smith in 1922 and 1926, respectively.

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[8]Founded as a violin school in 1910 by American violinist and teacher Herwegh Von Ende (1877-1919), it was enlarged in 1911 to the Von Ende School of Music, a conservatory offering a full curriculum.

[9]The couple had met in Fort Smith at the Christian Science Church, following an evening service at which Burg had been the organist. Hazel, who called herself "Betty," had come to the service with her grandmother on the streetcar. Burg offered to drive them home in his car. He always had a fancy car, even when few people had cars at all, recalls his daughter, Jean McKean. Not long afterward, the pair decided to marry.

Betty had been attending the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, but discontinued her education when she married Clarence Burg. After the family moved to Oklahoma and while raising her two young children, she completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting at OCU, and later taught painting there. She also taught art one year in a private school in Oklahoma City in exchange for her daughter Jean's tuition at the school. Daughter Nan Phillips reported that her mother had a beautiful singing voice and had had musical training. However, her greatest talent was in art, and she produced many fine paintings. (Some of her early paintings were signed "Betsy Burg.") Years later, Phillips met a professor at the Art Students' League in New York City, who was familiar with her mother's work. He told Phillips that it was as fine as any he had ever seen. (Dorothy Burg and Jean Burg McKean, interview by author, Tape recording, Oklahoma City, 27 July 1992; Nan E. Burg Phillips, "Reminiscences of Clarence A. Burg," TMs and letter to author, Oklahoma City, from New Canaan, CT, 13 July 1993, 2.)

[10]Both Nan and Jean took piano lessons, but not from their father. Instead, they studied with Burg's advanced students at OCU or at his summer music camp. Jean reports that she hated to practice and her father grew impatient with her. However, Nan seemed to enjoy her lessons. She made better progress than Jean, because she practiced and also played by ear.

Nan graduated from OCU with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She married Dudley Phillips, a lawyer, and raised a son and two daughters. After her children were in school, she did a bit of substitute teaching, but for the most part, was not employed outside her home. She died in February 1996 at her home in New Canaan, CT.

Jean Burg received a Bachelor of Science degree in business from OCU. She and her husband Thomas McKean also had a son and two daughters. The couple later divorced. Jean taught business subjects in a private school in St. Louis. Now retired, she lives in Florida.

In 1920, Burg participated in a master class in Kansas City, Missouri, given by the famous concert pianist Rudolph Ganz.[11] Of the 125 students in the class, Burg was one of only fifteen who were selected to play for Ganz. He also won the Piano Interpretation Prize Ganz offered for the best performance of a new piece. The prize was $100, a princely sum in 1920.

Burg found another opportunity to work with Ganz when he attended the Chicago Musical College.[12] Studying in the summers of 1921, 1928, and 1929, Burg earned a Bachelor of Music degree in 1929. Other teachers in Chicago included Alexander Raab, piano; Clarence Eddy, organ; and Wesley LaViolette, composition. In 1931, Chicago Musical College awarded Burg an honorary Master of Music degree.

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[11]Rudolph Ganz (1877-1972) was a Swiss pianist, conductor, educator, and composer. He performed publicly as both cellist and pianist, studying both instruments at the Zurich Conservatory. Piano studies with Busoni preceded Ganz's debut with the Berlin Philharmonic, which soon after performed his Symphony in E. He became an American citizen and headed the piano department of the Chicago Musical College from 1901-1905, later serving as vice-president, then president of the school from 1927-54. From 1900 on, he established himself as a popular recitalist in Europe and North America. He gained fame for his wide concerto repertoire and numerous premieres of works by well-known composers of the early twentieth century. His activities as a conductor included stints as music director of the St. Louis Symphony and conductor of the young people's concerts of the New York Philharmonic.

[12]Now affiliated with Roosevelt University, Chicago.

A very influential teacher for Burg was Tobias Matthay,[13] whose School of Pianoforte in England Burg attended for four summers, 1934-37.[14] After his first summer of study, Burg was recommended by Matthay as a student member of the new American Matthay Association. At that time, only those who had studied with Matthay and received his personal recommendation for membership were eligible to join the group. The logic of Matthay's physiological approach to piano technique, as well as his ideas on musical interpretation, greatly appealed to Burg, and he frequently referred to them throughout the rest of his teaching career.

Burg's last formal education took place at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York, during the summers of 1941-44. From Eastman, Burg earned a Master of Music Education degree in 1944. His thesis reported the results of a questionnaire sent to independent piano

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[13]Tobias Matthay (1858-1945) was a British pianist, composer, author, and piano pedagogue. Successful as a concert pianist, he left that career to teach, first at the Royal Academy of Music, where he himself had studied, and from 1895, in his own piano school in London. He rapidly became one of the leading teachers of Europe, numbering Myra Hess, Clifford Curzon, and Moura Lympany among his students. Many fine pianists from the United States also went to England to study with him. Although he composed much music, he is better known for his books on piano technique and pedagogy, such as *The Act of Touch.*

[14]A tribute to Burg's skill as a businessman is the fact that he managed, in spite of limited income and family obligations, to finance travel to Europe to study during the depths of the Depression. He did so by arranging and conducting guided tours, with his wife's assistance, to a number of European destinations, often including "music shrines." The American Express Company made the tour arrangements. Burg sold the tours by traveling around the state of Oklahoma, showing movies he had made of the high points on his previous trips to potential customers. When in England, he practiced late at night and early in the morning in the basement of his hotel, sometimes on a dummy keyboard. He apparently squeezed in his lessons with Matthay while the tour members were having free time or visiting a museum or other attraction with Mrs. Burg.

teachers nation-wide. Before that time, no survey of national scope examining current practices in the private piano teaching field had been done, according to Burg.[15] Burg also wrote to state boards of education, asking a number of questions about high school credit for music study with private teachers, as well as about certifying private music teachers. Further, he contacted music publishers for information regarding their increase or decrease in sales of piano teaching materials and in numbers of active piano teachers. All this information was presented in Burg's thesis, along with his own ideas, based on his long experience as a piano teacher. The thesis, "Problems of the Private Piano Teacher," represents the first known attempt to present a thorough, comprehensive discussion of the various problems faced by private piano teachers in the United States.[16]

Teaching in Arkansas

Clarence Burg's career as a piano teacher began at the age of twelve in Fort Smith, Arkansas, where he gave lessons to his friends. When he changed piano teachers in high school, Burg helped to pay for his own lessons by taking more students. His class had increased to twenty pupils by the time he graduated from high school in 1911. Except for the years 1911-12 and 1915-16, when he was away at school, Burg built his piano studio in Fort

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[15]Burg, "Problems of the Private Piano Teacher," 4. Also reported in Camp, "The Status of the Private Piano Teacher," 5.

[16]Ibid.

Smith. By 1925, his business had grown so large that he founded the Clarence Burg School of Music, employing several other teachers besides himself. When he sold the School three years later to move to Oklahoma, it boasted 250 students, with six teachers, including Burg.

In addition to his teaching in the city of Fort Smith, Burg served as director of the John Brown University Summer Music School, Siloam Springs, Arkansas, in the summers of 1924 and 1925. He also organized the Clarence Burg Music Camp in the Ozark Mountains at Sulphur Springs, Arkansas--a pleasant location for summer study by young people, mostly of high school age. This successful six-week operation, beginning in 1924, continued even after Burg moved from Arkansas to Oklahoma. He served as its director each year through 1933. The camp was a family operation: Burg recruited students, taught, and hired several other teachers from among his numerous teaching friends; his wife was associate director and took care of many of the logistics, such as securing the services of a cook and arranging for laundry facilities and recreation activities; the Burgs' two young daughters came along for fun.

Camp students came from Burg's School of Music in Fort Smith or from studios of other teachers whom he knew. The fifteen to twenty campers, mostly girls, were housed in two of the several camp buildings, sleeping on cots, sharing shower facilities, and eating in a common dining room. At the camp they took theory and music history classes. They walked

down the hill each day to practice on pianos in the homes of Sulphur Springs residents. According to former campers, these were often not high quality instruments.[17] Some time each day was devoted to recreational activities, such as swimming. Trips to nearby points of interest took place on Saturdays. Weekly recitals provided opportunities for students to perform.

Following the summer of 1933, Burg discontinued his association with the Camp. By that time, the demands of his OCU position had become too great for him to continue them both.

Professional and Community Activities in Arkansas

Early in his career, Burg began what would become life-long, active support of professional music organizations. He was a charter member of the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association, a professional organization formed in 1915 "to elevate the status of music in Arkansas in every possible area."[18] In the 1920s, he served as ASMTA's secretary, then vice-president. He also played a significant role in the ASMTA's successful efforts to bring about licensing of private music teachers and granting high school credit for music study with private teachers.

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[17]Doris Rodolph, Perry, OK, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 17 June 1996; Emma Sue Sawallisch, Oklahoma City, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 24 June 1996.

[18]Wright, "A History of the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association," 8.

During his years in Fort Smith, Burg held organ positions at the First Presbyterian and First Methodist churches, as well as the First Church of Christ, Scientist. He gave piano and organ recitals in a number of communities throughout the state of Arkansas. Soon after his high school graduation, he was invited to become a member of the local Rotary Club. His membership fee was waived, along with the price of his lunches, because he could play the piano for group singing. He was also a founder and president of the Fort Smith Concert Club in 1927-28. This active involvement in all aspects of music in his community and state would continue when he moved from Arkansas to Oklahoma.

The Fort Smith Concert Club was organized to present professional musicians in an annual concert series in the community. Through a contact with a manager involved in this series, Burg was engaged for a recital tour as accompanist for Metropolitan Opera baritone Arthur Middleton, with some piano solo work. The pair toured the southwestern states in fall 1927, including a concert in Oklahoma City. This turned out to be an extremely fortunate event for Burg. Following the concert, George Frederickson, a trustee of Oklahoma City University, asked Burg to consider taking the position of Dean of the College of Fine Arts. In March 1928, Burg returned to Oklahoma City to play the MacDowell D Minor Concerto with the Oklahoma City Symphony Orchestra. The group was conducted by Fredrik Holmberg, Dean of the School of Music at the University of Oklahoma, who

had hired Burg to perform with the Orchestra. Holmberg also encouraged Burg to move to Oklahoma. In a later interview, Burg described what happened next:

> Many of the trustees were there [at the Symphony concert] and apparently, they were impressed with my playing. What they were looking for was a man who could be an artist/performer and travel over the Southwest, bringing students to OCU, and at the same time be an administrator. I'd had this school of music in Fort Smith for several years, and they felt that I would fill the bill.[19]

Because of his long connection with the Rotary Club in Fort Smith, Burg had no difficulty finding community leaders and businessmen to write letters of recommendation for him, supporting his election as OCU's Dean of Fine Arts. Soon afterward, Burg was offered and accepted the position. By the summer of 1928, he had sold the Clarence Burg School of Music in Fort Smith and moved his family from there to Oklahoma City.

Career at Oklahoma City University

As Teacher

In his first years at OCU, Burg was one of only five music faculty. As a result, he found it necessary to teach, at one time or another, "every subject in the School of Music, except voice and the band instruments."[20]

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[19]Burg, "Interview" by Whitten, 28 February 1978.

[20]Ibid.

According to a personal resume[21] compiled by Burg, he taught piano, organ, harmony, music history, music appreciation, forms and analysis, counterpoint, composition, and orchestration. He also founded and was the first conductor of the OCU Symphony Orchestra. His first love, however, was teaching piano, so one of the chief attractions of the OCU position was the new challenge of teaching advanced piano students in a university setting.

Burg apparently wanted to stay in touch with the problems and rewards of teaching less advanced and younger students, so he always took a few non-piano music majors, as well as some pre-college students in OCU's Preparatory Department. For many years, he also gave piano lessons in towns and cities throughout the state of Oklahoma, traveling virtually every weekend. Burg's weekends would begin around 5:00 P.M. on Fridays, when he would drive or take the train to Ada, Ardmore, Shawnee, or some other small town. If he rode the train, he would grade papers from his music appreciation or piano pedagogy classes. Upon arrival at his destination, he went to the home where he was to do his teaching. A typical arrangement was that Burg had with Mrs. Thurston of Wewoka. She was a

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[21]Clarence Burg, "Summary of Training and Experience," 1945(?), TD, Clarence Burg Collection, Archives, Dulaney-Browne Library, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City, 2.

widow and ran the hardware store in town. Her three sons--Tom, Dick,[22] and Harry Thurston--received free piano lessons from Burg, in exchange for his use of the Thurstons' living room and piano to give lessons to other local students. After teaching all day Saturday, Burg would return home to play the organ for Sunday morning church services. Sometimes he would be off again to teach on Sunday afternoon. During the Depression, these lessons often represented one of Burg's few chances to earn cash. The flourishing oil business in many small Oklahoma towns brought cash to the town's workers and other businesses, even in those hard times. Some parents could pay Burg with cash for their children's piano lessons. This money in turn fed and clothed the Burg family while necessitating a grueling weekend schedule for Burg.

College students from other institutions in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area sometimes sought Burg's well-reputed teaching, transferring the credits back to their schools. Other advanced non-college students, such as active piano teachers in the community, also came to Burg to improve their technique and their own performance literature, as well as to receive teaching ideas and inspiration from him for their teaching pieces.

Burg continued a full schedule of teaching OCU piano majors and other advanced pianists after becoming Dean Emeritus in 1962. When Dr.

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[22]Many years later, Dick Thurston followed in Burg's footsteps and became Dean of the OCU School of Music. Thurston held the position from 1982 to 1985.

Charles Watson, head of piano at Southwestern State College (now Southwestern Oklahoma State University) in Weatherford, unexpectedly died in a traffic accident in late summer 1962, Burg received permission to fill Watson's position temporarily, while Southwestern sought a permanent successor. As he did at OCU, Burg taught Southwestern's piano majors, as well as other advanced students in the area. Since he had just retired from the deanship at OCU, it was easy for him to fit the teaching at Southwestern into his schedule for a year.

Although he reduced his teaching load somewhat as he got older, Burg remained an active teacher at OCU until the age of eighty-nine. He had taught piano at OCU for fifty-four years, touching the lives of hundreds of piano majors and other advanced piano students. Even after that, a few long-time students came to his home for lessons. Virginia Campbell remembers playing over the telephone for Burg after he moved to the Four Seasons Nursing Center. Myra Schubert received his last lesson, given from his nursing home bed by tape recorder.

As Administrator

When Burg assumed his position as Dean in September 1928, he became the chief administrator of the three academic units that comprised the College of Fine Arts--the School of Music, the Department of Art, and the Department of Speech and Drama. The School of Music was located on

the ground floor of a two-story frame house on Northwest Twenty-Fourth Street, across Blackwelder Avenue from the campus, on the present site of the OCU President's home. There were three studios and the Dean's office, with four pianos, three of them grands. About one hundred students, both collegiate and preparatory, were served by five faculty members. The second floor of the building housed the smaller Art Department. The third unit of the College of Fine Arts--the Speech and Drama Department--was in the basement of the OCU Administration Building. It had only one faculty member.

In May 1929, the College of Fine Arts moved across the street into a new building at Northwest Twenty-fifth Street and Blackwelder. This Fine Arts Building contained four classrooms, thirteen studios, fourteen practice rooms, band and orchestra equipment room, a phonograph listening room, and an auditorium seating more than 1,300 people.

Burg's ingenuity and good business sense played a large part in the survival of the OCU School of Music through the difficult years of the Great Depression. The following anecdote is an example. OCU owed Burg $1,800 in back salary, so Burg was unable to pay the mortgage on his home. The mortgage holder was G. A. Nichols, an OCU trustee, businessman and founder of the upscale Nichols Hills section of Oklahoma City. Nichols had made a pledge to OCU of $2,500. He could not pay the pledge because so many people, like Burg, whose mortgages he held, were unable to pay them.

Burg devised a plan, which was approved by the OCU administration. OCU credited Nichols with $1,800 on his pledge, Burg received credit from Nichols for $1,800 on his mortgage, and OCU no longer owed Burg his back salary. No money changed hands; everyone benefitted.[23]

A high point of Burg's tenure as Dean came in 1944 when the School of Music was granted membership in the National Association of Schools of Music. This was unusual because NASM's policy was to approve membership only for schools of music whose parent institution was already accredited, and at that time, OCU had not yet received accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. However, Burg appeared before the NASM accreditation committee at their meeting in Cincinnati to plead his case. Initial refusal of the request turned to approval, through the intervention of committee member Howard Hanson, composer and Director of the Eastman School of Music. Hanson knew Burg, because he was completing his master's degree at Eastman that year. Hanson also had visited Oklahoma City and OCU. He was favorably impressed, he said, after talking with OCU students and hearing them perform, and he knew a number of OCU graduates who had gone on to Eastman for advanced degrees. Vouching for the quality work of Burg and

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[23]Burg and McKean, interview by author, 27 July 1992. Also in "Clarence Burg: Fifty Years of Dedication to OCU and Music," *Alumni Focus*, December 1977, 4-5; and in Paul A. Milhouse, *Oklahoma City University: A Miracle at 23rd and Blackwelder* (Oklahoma Heritage Association, published by Western Heritage Books, Inc., Muskogee, OK, 1984), 79.

the School of Music, Hanson convinced the committee to give OCU's School of Music associate membership, with full membership to follow the University's accreditation by North Central.[24] The School's Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts degree programs in applied music, music education, and church music received complete approval by NASM.

Another milestone occurred in September 1946 when the College of Fine Arts was disbanded and the School of Music became a separate academic unit. The smaller Departments of Art and Drama were incorporated into the College of Arts and Sciences and moved to other buildings, while the growing School of Music became the sole occupant of the former Fine Arts Building. It began offering the Bachelor of Music degree for the first time and discontinued the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.

During all of his long tenure at OCU, Burg was a tireless recruiter for the School of Music. He traveled all over Oklahoma and in other states, visiting prospective students, performing recitals and concertos, judging Piano Guild auditions and other contests, and giving piano teacher workshops and master classes. Former OCU President Dolphus Whitten noted that wherever he went in Oklahoma, he would meet people who had studied with Burg, and so had their children and grandchildren. Piano teachers who studied with Burg likewise sent their students to him, and

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[24]OCU was first accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in March 1951. (Milhouse, *Oklahoma City University*, 128.)

many of them in turn became teachers who recommended him to their students. Whitten called Burg "the best recruiter that OCU has ever had."[25]

Under Burg's guidance, the School of Music flourished and grew. In a personal resume about halfway through his deanship, Burg wrote:

> Since 1928 the enrollment has increased from approximately 100 students to the present enrollment of 437 students. The faculty has increased from eight teachers to thirty teachers. A substantial profit in the College of Fine Arts is turned to the University each year.[26]

At the conclusion of the 1961-62 school year, Burg's last year as Dean, he reported that thirty-eight teachers comprised the School of Music faculty. There were 161 music majors; 170 non-music majors and non-degree adult students enrolled in courses, private lessons, or in one of the instrumental or vocal ensembles; and 383 pre-college students in the Preparatory Department. He further reported the holdings of the School of Music library and equipment inventory as follows:

Phonograph listening room with over 2000 recordings

Library containing 3,288 books, including opera and chamber music scores; scores and parts for 700 orchestral works, 600 for band, 1,000 for choir; and 450 miniature scores

Concert grand and eleven other grand pianos

Two pipe organs and one electronic organ

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[25]Burg, "Interview" by Whitten, 28 February 1978.

[26]Burg, "Summary of Training and Experience," 1945(?), 2.

Thirty-seven upright pianos, in the Fine Arts Building and an annex at Florida Avenue and 26th Street[27]

Burg's successor as Dean, Dr. Fred C. Mayer, said that he knew Burg was available and willing to assist him at any time as he took over the Dean's position. But it was to Burg's credit, added Mayer, that Burg never tried to interfere or give him advice; their relationship was one of mutual respect.

Professional and Community Activities in Oklahoma

As he had been in Arkansas, Burg became actively involved in the formation of a professional organization for music teachers in Oklahoma. Soon after moving to the state, he was appointed by a group of music teachers to draft a constitution and by-laws for the new group. When these were approved in November 1929, the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association came into being. Burg was elected the first president, a position he held until 1934. Continuing throughout his lifetime to perform a variety of leadership roles in OMTA, Burg was honored by the organization in 1986 when it created the Clarence Burg Achievement Award, given annually to those twelfth-grade students who have participated in the OMTA State Achievement Auditions for at least four years. The text inscribed on the award plaque each student receives can be found in Appendix D.

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[27]Clarence Burg, "Clarence A. Burg," Typed resume and information sheet, 30 May 1962, "Clarence Burg" file, Public Information Office, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City, 2-3.

In 1927, while on a concert tour of the Southwest with baritone Arthur Middleton, Burg had met Irl Allison, Dean of the School of Music at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. There was an instant meeting of the minds regarding piano teaching. A few years later, when Allison formed the National Guild of Piano Teachers, Burg immediately became a member. An enthusiastic supporter of its goals, Burg arranged the first Guild auditions outside the state of Texas. They took place at OCU in 1934, with Burg as chairman of the audition center. Over the years, Burg founded a number of other audition centers around the state of Oklahoma. Serving as a Guild judge annually until just a few years before his death, Burg was always a staunch supporter and promoter of the Guild.

From 1932-35, Burg was a member of the state Music Examining Committee, appointed by the Oklahoma State Board of Education to evaluate music teachers. He served as secretary of this Committee from 1943-47, and later, he was its chairman. The Oklahoma Board of Regents selected Burg as a member of the College Music Curriculum Committee. In the 1940s, he chaired the Education Committee of the Oklahoma Federation of Music Clubs (OFMC).

Burg's numerous professional involvements demonstrate his strong belief in the importance of music education in general and of piano teacher education and training in particular to raise the standards of the profession. Because there were few college courses and degree programs in piano

pedagogy anywhere in the country during the 1940s and early 1950s, many piano teachers had little or no formal training for their profession besides their own piano lessons. So, in 1954, Burg began what would become an annual series of week-long summer workshops for piano teachers. They were held at the Crescent Hotel in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Burg moved the workshops to OCU in 1966, continuing to offer them through summer 1978. Teachers came from all over the country to learn from Burg's lectures and teaching demonstrations and from panel discussions and other sessions that involved the input of workshop participants. Many were also pleased that they could earn college credit for attending. Burg gave similar workshops over a period of many years in a number of cities in Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Illinois, Missouri, Wyoming, Alabama, Tennessee, Virginia, Hawaii, and Pennsylvania. He estimated that the teachers who attended his workshops extended the influence of his pedagogical principles to at least ten thousand piano students.

Burg loved to perform and was active all his life in the Oklahoma City Pianists' Club. He took his turn to perform at least once a year at the group's monthly meeting-recitals. He also recommended other pianists, including a number of his students, for membership in the Club.

Rotary Club was one of Burg's long-time favorite activities. Through Rotary, he also became personally acquainted with many businessmen, who backed OCU with their financial support and sent their children there.

For many years, Burg was organist at First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Oklahoma City. During the Depression, when OCU had difficulty paying its employees, this job helped to support the Burg family. Burg also served as Dean of the Oklahoma City chapter of the American Guild of Organists from 1930 to 1936. He gave organ concert tours in the Southwest and performed organ dedication recitals in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Burg founded and conducted the Oklahoma City Piano Festival,[28] in which ninety teachers cooperated to train and present 1,200 student pianists, performing on thirty-five grand pianos in a large auditorium in downtown Oklahoma City. The first Festival was held in 1936; the final Festival in 1942 boasted a three-day series of concerts. About this same time, Burg also founded and conducted a professional multiple-piano performing group, the Piano Ensemble Club, made up of twenty-five pianists and teachers.

Established in 1954, with Burg's active support, including membership on the Board of Directors, the Civic Music Association of Oklahoma City (CMA) began and continues to hold its annual concert series at OCU's Kirkpatrick Auditorium in the Fine Arts Building. In 1957, Mae-Ruth Gilroy (now Swanson) became CMA's fourth president. An OCU graduate who had been recruited to the school by Burg, Gilroy approached him about the possibility of free admission to CMA concerts for OCU faculty and students, in exchange for CMA's free use of the auditorium for those

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[28]The equivalent of today's "monster concert."

concerts. Burg approved the plan, which is still in effect today. He worked out a similar arrangement with the Oklahoma City Symphony to use this auditorium for their regular recording sessions in the 1950s. OCU students were likewise encouraged to attend these sessions, for which they paid no admission fee.

In 1934, Burg became a member of the American Matthay Association, an alliance of American pianists who had been to England to study with the well-known British pedagogue, Tobias Matthay. The organization aimed to promote the teaching of piano using Matthay's philosophy and teaching ideas and to help the American students of Matthay to support and stay in contact with one another. To bridge the distances between the American Matthay students, there was a newsletter, as well as three regional Vice-Presidents. From 1937 to 1939, Burg was one of these three Vice-Presidents. He strongly believed in Matthay's ideas and methods and promoted them in his teaching and through his work in the Matthay organization.

Burg enjoyed composing and practiced this activity all his life. However, there was little time to compose, along with his many other responsibilities and interests. As far as can be determined, works Burg composed for vocal and instrumental ensembles were not published and the original manuscripts have been lost. Burg compositions were published by G. Schirmer, Inc., and Carl Fischer, Inc., both of New York, and by Art

Publication Society of St. Louis. Pieces known to have been published are all for piano solo; a list appears in Appendix C. There are three single pieces and two collections, one of which contains three arrangements of American country dance tunes, and the other, two original descriptive pieces. All the compositions are pleasant but unremarkable, fairly short and of moderate difficulty. Burg's arrangement of "The Arkansas Traveler" became something of a signature piece for him; he frequently played it alone upon request and as a recital encore.

However busy he was, Burg always managed to maintain some performance activities as a pianist. This fact was a source of inspiration to his students and to other teachers; in addition, it provided listening pleasure to numerous audiences. He gave many piano recitals throughout his life. More performances occurred when he was a student and a young man. Especially during his years as Dean of the School of Music at OCU, his busy schedule did not allow time to learn and keep up a large repertoire, so his programs contained a limited number of selections that were frequently performed, in different locations and at different times. In 1925, he made a series of piano roll recordings on the Ampico Reproducing Piano for the Ampico company of New York. Unfortunately, all have apparently been lost. On several occasions, he performed concertos with orchestras, including the Oklahoma City, Oklahoma State [University], Tulsa, Eastman School of Music, and Joplin Symphony Orchestras.

Honors and Awards

Burg's achievements were recognized during his lifetime on a number of occasions. He received two honorary degrees: a Master of Music from the Chicago Musical College in 1931 and a Doctor of Music from the College of the Ozarks, Clarksville, Arkansas, in 1949. He was listed in *Who's Who in America,* 1950-51 edition; *Who's Who in American Education; Who's Who in Central States; Leaders in Education;* and the *Directory of American Scholars.*

Burg's picture appears above a few biographical facts in the July 1940 issue of *The Etude Music Magazine* as part of "An Alphabetical Serial Collection of the World's Best Known Musicians."[29] This series appeared in the magazine over a period of nearly nine years. The same picture and information on Burg were again published when the series was later printed in book form, under the rather grand title, *Portraits of the World's Best-Known Musicians: An Alphabetical Collection of Notable Musical Personalities of the World Covering the Entire History of Music.*[30]

In 1964, shortly after Burg became Dean Emeritus, OCU's School of Music honored him by launching a campaign to raise $10,000 to endow a

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[29]"The Etude Historical Musical Portrait Series: An Alphabetical Serial Collection of the World's Best Known Musicians," *The Etude* (July 1940): 498.

[30]Guy McCoy, ed. and compiler, *Portraits of the World's Best-Known Musicians: An Alphabetical Collection of Notable Musical Personalities of the World Covering the Entire History of Music* (Philadelphia: Theodore Presser Co., 1946), 19.

music scholarship in his name.[31] The Small Auditorium in the Kirkpatrick Fine Arts Building was renamed the Burg Auditorium in 1982. A plaque mounted beside the door to the auditorium features Burg's picture and reads: "The Clarence Burg Auditorium, named for Dr. Clarence A. Burg, Dean, School of Music and Performing Arts, 1928-1962, Dean Emeritus, 1962-1986." (See Appendix E.)

Burg received several awards for service to the arts. In 1977, Oklahoma's then-governor David Boren presented Burg the "Arts Over the Years" Award for Outstanding Life Achievement. In 1978, Burg received the "Community Service to Music" Award from Sigma Alpha Iota (SAI) and was initiated into membership in SAI as a "Friend of the Arts" by OCU's Alpha Zeta chapter of SAI.

In 1986, the Clarence Burg Achievement Award was established by OMTA for high school seniors who had participated for four consecutive years in its State Achievement Auditions. The text inscribed on the plaque each award winner receives is shown in Appendix D.

Community organizations also recognized Burg's contributions. In 1977, the Salvation Army Senior Centers of greater Oklahoma City cited him as "Outstanding Senior Man." In 1985, he was named a Paul Harris Fellow for his seventy-four years of membership in Rotary Club International and

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[31] "OCU to Honor Veteran Dean," *Oklahoma City Times*, 3 August 1964, N3.

was honored as the second oldest member of Rotary Club No. 29 of Oklahoma City.

Travel

In 1934, Burg won a trip to Europe for himself and his wife from a music publisher for whom he had done some work, probably editing a piano collection. Burg felt that the trip was not well run and that he could do a better job. So the next year, even though the Depression was in full swing, Burg exhibited his skill as a salesman by selling a six-week summer tour of Europe, with himself as the tour guide. These tours continued from 1935 through 1938, with groups averaging twenty to twenty-five people.[32] Working with the American Express Company, Burg and his wife, sometimes with an assistant, escorted tour participants. The groups often visited "music shrines," such as the birthplace of a famous composer, and attended concerts, operas, and music festivals. Other attractions were also on their itineraries. Prices in 1938 for the Main Tour were $868 per person for tourist class and $773 for third class accommodations. An optional one-week extension tour of Scotland cost $128 extra.

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[32]A European tour advertised for summer 1939 did not take place, because of unsettling events occurring in Europe leading up to the start of World War II in September 1939. However, the Burgs did lead a 1939 tour. The plans were revised to include only destinations west of the Atlantic.

The ad for the 1939 European tour lists the prices for four tour packages from $660 (Main Tour) to $1,082 (Pre-Tour with Main Tour and Extension Tour). Prices include "all necessary expenses New York through Europe and back to New York" via the Queen Mary and the Mauretania.

It was during the first of these summer trips that Burg began his studies with the famous British piano teacher, Tobias Matthay, at his School of Pianoforte in the country outside of London. For three additional summers, Burg managed to find time for further coaching with Matthay during the time of his European guided tours.

Burg's life-long love of fishing provided the impetus for a different kind of tour--summer weekend trips which he organized and led for twelve years for OCU faculty men. The venue was the Illinois River, which flows through a scenic part of northeastern Oklahoma. The men floated down the river in canoes, fishing, relaxing, and enjoying the camaraderie. Burg felt this kind of activity was important in maintaining high morale and esprit de corps among the men who participated.

In 1970, Betty Burg died, after a lengthy period of ill health. Not long afterward, Burg took part in a tour to Honolulu, Hawaii, for OCU alumni and faculty to attend a basketball game between OCU's team and a Hawaiian team. Also on the tour was Dorothy Ann Downing Larkins, a former OCU student, who had also lost her spouse. She and Burg met, and in 1971, they were married. From then on, they did a great deal of traveling together. On their tours, Burg always sought out places of musical interest, including college and university departments of music. He was often asked to perform at the piano and never refused a request to play. Frequently, these performances took place in hotel lobbies or ballrooms. While on a trip to

Santiago, Chile, he gave a complete recital. He also played a special recital in Garden City, Kansas, in celebration of the wedding there of his grand-niece Marta Burg Morton.

Final Years

In 1982, the Small Auditorium in the Kirkpatrick Fine Arts Building was renamed the Burg Auditorium. At the official dedication ceremony in November of that year, OCU President Jerald Walker praised Burg's contributions to the University and termed the renaming "a much deserved honor."

By November 1984, although he was still alert and aware, Burg's physical condition had become increasingly frail. So he became a resident of the Four Seasons Nursing Center on North Brookline Avenue in Oklahoma City. Here he continued to enjoy visits from his family, friends and former students. In June 1985, in a ceremony at Four Seasons, Burg received an award for his seventy-four years of membership in Rotary Club International and was honored as the second oldest member of Rotary Club No. 29 of Oklahoma City. He had joined Club No. 29 in 1928, when he first moved to Oklahoma City, transferring his membership from the Rotary Club in Fort Smith, Arkansas, where he had been a member since graduating from high school.

Clarence Burg died at the age of ninety-three on November 6, 1986. A memorial service at Wesley United Methodist Church on November 10 provided ample evidence of Burg's lifetime commitment to OCU and to music. Many former students and colleagues were among the large crowd of mourners. The casket bearers had all been Burg's colleagues at OCU; the organist and vocal soloist were also from OCU. Long-time Burg student Myra Schubert played her piano arrangement of the hymn, "Abide With Me."

In September 1993, the Clarence Burg Centennial Celebration took place at OCU to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of Burg's birth. The two-day event, with the author as coordinator, began with a Saturday afternoon "Monster Concert," a multiple-piano concert of piano duets and duos in which approximately 40 piano teachers and 270 players, grade one through adults, participated. A multiple-piano program seemed a particularly fitting way to remember Burg, since he himself had presented a number of concerts that featured multiple pianos. Many of the participants and members of the audience were teachers who had studied with Burg and their students (referred to as "grand-students" and "great-grand-students" of Burg), and they were recognized during the concert. The Celebration concluded on Sunday with a solo piano recital by Dr. Roger Price, a 1978 OCU graduate and Burg student. Between pieces in his recital, Price offered recollections of Burg and outlined Burg's most important points of

emphasis as a teacher. Acknowledging Burg's strong and significant influence on his career, Price is just one example of the living legacy Burg left to piano music and piano pedagogy.

CHAPTER 3

TEACHER OF PIANISTS

Early Teaching Experiences

Clarence Burg began teaching piano lessons to his friends in Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1905, when he was twelve years old. By age seventeen, graduating from high school, he had built a class of twenty students. After spending a year away attending college, he returned to Fort Smith and resumed his teaching career, eventually expanding his business into the Clarence Burg School of Music, which included other teachers as well. In three years, the School grew to 250 students. In the summers, Burg also taught many young people at the Clarence Burg Music Camp he founded in the Arkansas Ozarks.

Only two of Burg's students from these first twenty-three years of his teaching were located. Therefore, his influence on that large group of early students and their future musical activities cannot be thoroughly documented. However, one thing is certain. Clarence Burg was an experienced teacher of piano by 1928, when he left Arkansas for Oklahoma.

Piano Teaching at Oklahoma City University

During a teaching career that spanned fifty-four years at OCU, Burg gave piano lessons to hundreds of piano majors and other advanced piano students at the University, as well as to many area piano teachers and some pre-college students. He carried out his teaching duties concurrently with his responsibilities as Dean of Fine Arts and later as Dean of the School of Music for his first thirty-four years at the school. In addition, he served as a temporary replacement for Dr. Charles Watson during the school year 1962-63 at Southwestern State College (now Southwestern Oklahoma State University) in Weatherford, Oklahoma, where he also taught piano majors and advanced students. The timing of this position was fortuitous for Burg. His retirement as Dean was effective with the fall semester 1962, so he had no trouble fulfilling his teaching obligations at OCU, while taking on those at Southwestern as well.

Master Classes

Burg extended his influence on the education of pianists by offering master classes to teachers throughout the state of Oklahoma, beginning around 1940, possibly earlier. For many teachers and students, these master classes became annual events, eagerly anticipated by everyone involved. They were held in the teacher's studio, usually on a Saturday, fairly early in the year, prior to contests. Burg would spend an entire day, listening to all

the teacher's students and helping them fine-tune the pieces they were preparing for contests. Sometimes he would begin on Friday afternoon or evening, if the class was large or if some students had conflicts on Saturday.

Thelma Stacy, a student of Dora Popejoy in Anadarko, Oklahoma, recalled that she played for Burg a number of years during junior and senior high school. She would play two or three memorized pieces for him alone, although her teacher sometimes was in the room. Burg talked with her and gave her pointers on improving the pieces, as well as providing a written critique. Stacy said that each student would pay a fee to play for Burg. She remembers being nervous when she first played for him, but feels that it was wonderful experience. After graduating from high school, Stacy spent one year at OCU studying piano with Burg.[1]

Ellen Govett completed an undergraduate degree at OCU. She studied piano with Clarence Burg, following in the footsteps of her high-school piano teacher, Lucille Hutchins. After building a thriving piano studio in the small town of Sulphur, Oklahoma, Govett began inviting Burg to come there each year to work with her students on their contest pieces. She described her experience:

> Some of the fondest memories I have of Dr. Burg today are the piano clinics he held in my home for a number of years. He loved to come to Sulphur, and my husband and I enjoyed having him in our home for the weekends. In those clinics, I learned more about the

[1]Thelma Stacy, Oklahoma City, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 22 February 1997.

> teaching of piano than I would have otherwise. He spent a lot of time with each student and me during each session.
>
> It was amazing the way he could approach and solve technical problems of each student. He corrected hand position and other problems by examination and following through with suggestions that even the youngest student could understand. He suggested strengthening double-jointed fingers by a certain exercise . . . As to interpretation he was always able to talk about the composer and what he, Dr. Burg, thought the composer was presenting in music. Students loved his way of doing this and enjoyed his keen sense of humor.
>
> He identified with piano students of all ages. After his clinics all my students were inspired and worked harder. His personal approach to the students and the music is something I will always remember and they do, too.[2]

Growing up in Sulphur, Jan Culver studied piano from second grade through high school with Ellen Govett and played for Burg every year when he came to town to give master classes, or "piano clinics," for Govett and her students. The students gathered in small groups to play individually for Burg. Sometimes their parents attended the sessions; Govett was always present. Culver, now a successful piano teacher herself, unhesitatingly claims Burg's annual visits were the highlight of her year, leading her as an adult to study piano privately with him and to attend a number of his workshops. Even though she did not attend OCU, Culver remembers with appreciation that Burg attended the recital she gave as a high-school senior and continued to show interest and support for her throughout her life.[3]

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[2]Ellen Govett, Sulphur, OK, to author, Oklahoma City, 12 January 1995, ALS.

[3]Jan Culver, Oklahoma City, telephone interview by author, Tape recording, Oklahoma City, 21 June 1995.

While promoting Burg's career and serving as a recruiting tool for OCU, these master classes also provided a valuable service to the piano teachers and students in Oklahoma and beyond. Ellen Govett summed it up: "To so many he will always be remembered as the great man of music in Oklahoma and in so many other parts of the country where he performed and held clinics."[4]

Questionnaire Responses on Burg's Piano Teaching

Eighty-one of Burg's former piano and piano pedagogy students were mailed a questionnaire (see Appendix A); of these students, sixty-seven (83 percent) responded.[5] The questionnaire contains two groups of questions about various aspects of Burg's teaching. Twelve questions (numbers 7-18) deal with his piano teaching, and the fifty-six responses to these questions are summarized in this chapter. Also in this chapter are applicable responses to questions numbered 33-35, regarding skills and traits that set Burg apart from other teachers with whom the respondent had studied, Burg's influence beyond the lesson, and his effect on the respondent's current involvement in music.

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[4]Govett, ALS to author, 12 January 1995.

[5]Only four of Burg's students from his year at Weatherford were located; all four responded to the questionnaire. The teaching situation and job description at Weatherford were essentially the same as those at OCU. Therefore, it has been assumed that Burg's teaching of these students would have been much the same as that of his OCU students, and accordingly, the questionnaire responses from these four students have been included with those from OCU students.

The fourteen questions relating to Burg's teaching of piano pedagogy (numbers 19-32), along with relevant responses to questions 33-35, provide the material for chapter 4. This material is taken from the responses of the forty-nine former students who reported taking either Burg's pedagogy class or his pedagogy workshop, or both. Thirty-nine of the sixty-seven respondents to the questionnaire said they had taken both piano lessons and one or more pedagogy classes or workshops from Burg.

Topics covered by the questions on Burg's piano teaching include his teaching style and personality, as well as his teaching of technique and tone production, practicing and memorizing, musical interpretation, and sightreading and ear training. Other questions asked how Burg motivated the student, what he taught in the piano lesson about piano pedagogy, and his influence on the respondent. Respondents were also requested to name Burg's strengths and weaknesses as a piano teacher.

Information gathered from the questionnaires is coupled with Burg's own beliefs and principles, as found in his 1944 master's thesis, "Problems of the Private Piano Teacher." Not all topics covered by the questionnaire are addressed in Burg's thesis. However, this format provides a comparison, in some areas, of his stated philosophy and teaching techniques with his practical application of them, as perceived by his students.

Burg's thesis appeared, by coincidence, at exactly the mid-point of his lengthy teaching career, following periods of study at several prestigious

institutions and with a number of notable artists and teachers. Thus, it represents the point of view of a mature, experienced, well-educated teacher. Although it is likely that Burg's ideas continued to evolve and change after 1944, it seems reasonable to assume that his paper presents his basic philosophy and approach, which were no doubt quite well established by then. In large part, respondents to the questionnaire confirmed that Burg practiced what he preached in his thesis.

Teaching Style and Personality

In describing Burg's teaching style in the piano lesson, former students again and again used the words "positive," "encouraging," and "supportive," and a number commented about Burg's friendliness and interest in their lives outside the lesson. Many said he had high expectations for them, yet was understanding when they fell short of those expectations. Several mentioned Burg's patience, though he seemed to know the right time to motivate a student by showing a rare bit of impatience. Criticism was given when necessary, but in an impersonal manner, and mingled with generous amounts of praise.

The following statements regarding the proper conduct and personality of the private piano teacher are taken from Burg's thesis:

> After the pupil has finished playing his composition, he usually turns toward the teacher, expecting praise, and the wise teacher will find something to commend. After a little praise, the pupil is receptive to suggestions for improvement. . . . Most students

will be quite happy with about 75 percent praise and 25 percent criticism.

Praise should be given in small doses to certain types of pupils. . . . [such as] the over-confident pupil [or] the conceited pupil. . . . The indolent pupil, on the other hand, is impervious to praise, and he can only be aroused to action by a show of impatience on the part of the teacher. . . .

. . . In giving praise, the teacher does not need to resort to meaningless flattery. He should give praise in a quiet, sincere, and impersonal manner. Words of praise, as well as sharp criticism, are often remembered years after the teacher has forgotten them.

In praising or criticizing a pupil, one should look at the music or at the keyboard, not at the pupil. The pupil should gain the sense of objectivity, the attitude that he and the teacher are working out a problem together, not that the teacher is praising or criticizing him. The teacher-pupil relationship should be one in which two people are working on a problem of mutual interest. . . .

One should avoid as much as possible the use of the word <u>don't</u>. The use of negative statements impresses upon the pupil what he should not do, and is a waste of time because the teacher must eventually give positive instructions. If for no other reason, the teacher should avoid the constant use of the word <u>don't</u> because it gives the pupil the impression that his teacher is a negative and irritable person.

. . . . . .

Before beginning the first lesson, the teacher must win the admiration and respect of the pupil. The new pupil comes to his first lesson filled with curiosity. He is probably wondering more than anything else what his new teacher will be like. His first impulse is to appraise the teacher's personality, and if the personality of the teacher appeals to him, he is ready to delve into the task at hand with an open mind. . . .

. . . The usual way to become acquainted with the new student and to put him at ease at his first lesson is to ask a few questions without appearing inquisitive. Get him to talk. Find where he is in school, what subjects he likes best, what his outside interests are, and why he is studying the piano. Is he studying because of parental persuasion, or does he genuinely want to learn to play the piano[?]

The teacher, as soon as feasible, should know everything possible about the student. Individual differences, even in a small class, are very great. The instructor who uses the same approach with all of his students will not keep them very long. The mental, emotional, and physical traits of each pupil should be studied. . . .

. . . The process of studying the pupil should be continuous; beginning with the first lesson, it should last throughout the teacher-pupil relationship.[6]

The comments that follow are representative of those made by Burg's former students on his style of conducting a lesson:

> I remember [my lessons] as. . . a very warm place to be. . . . a very pleasant experience. [Name withheld]
>
> Friendly, collegial, yet "to-the-point," Dr. Burg complimented often and was very encouraging. He was always interested in my family and activities. [Leon Whitesell]
>
> [Dr. Burg was] always positive in his critique, never disparaging. . . . Never dwelling on mistakes, his analysis was articulate and understandable. He went into detail and in depth in explaining technique. He would write on the page illustrations of what was needed. The pupil was required to demonstrate understanding. He was quick to praise, giving encouragement, but also very demanding of quality work. [Joye Hopkins McLain]
>
> Dr. Burg's teaching style was low-keyed. He was a patient man who recognized progress. He expected improvement but was never angry when I wasn't prepared. He encouraged me to <u>want</u> to practice--purely for the sake of loving to play the piano and making beautiful music. [Stephanie Winkler Bouc]
>
> He was very thorough, . . . very helpful and exacting about what he wanted you to do.
>
> He was always very enthused about music, about life, about travel, about books. He always had something new to tell you. It was exciting to take lessons from him. Sometimes I dreaded it, though, if I hadn't practiced enough, because he got on you and wouldn't let you get by. . . . Sometimes he was patient, sometimes he wasn't. If he wasn't, I probably needed it. But most of all, he was always encouraging, always suggesting something exciting to do. [Virginia Campbell]

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[6]Clarence Burg, "Problems of the Private Piano Teacher" (M.M. thesis, Eastman School of Music, 1944), 168-78 passim.

> I was an adult when I studied with Dr. Burg. I was married, the mother of two young children, and taught at least 40 piano students each week. A typical lesson began with my "excuses" for not practicing as much as I should have. Dr. Burg, good psychologist as well as piano teacher, listened, then offered his words of wisdom and worked with me to improve my playing, starting at whatever level I had achieved that week. [Marilyn Witcher]

> I would always feel a warm and friendly welcome upon entering his studio. He would be always in a cheerful, supportive frame of mind, and would put me at ease immediately with his affirmation. . . . I always felt like a million dollars when I left his studio. He made me feel very special. [Myra Schubert]

Schubert further stated that Burg's optimism and friendliness were qualities that distinguished him from her other teachers. Leon Whitesell concurred that "warmth and optimism" made Burg stand out as a teacher, in his experience. Schubert also named Burg's "down-to-earthness" as a distinguishing feature. This last characteristic was also unique to Burg among William Godley's teachers. Godley pointed out, "Not a single one [of my other teachers] was folksy in any way." Burg, on the other hand, had "that kind of open, expansive personality that most concert pianists who teach piano to advanced students don't have," Godley asserted.

Roger Price made the following comments regarding Burg's behavior and demeanor in the piano lesson:

> I think his interpersonal relationships with his students were very important, so he spent some time talking; would ask what was going on, what was happening with you that week, [and] was always interested in all of your activities, whether it was piano, or sports, or whatever. He was interested in the whole person. . . .
>
> . . . The style of working with us was always kind, characterized by his statement, "75 percent praise, 25 percent criticism." He was

> always encouraging--that doesn't mean that he never criticized, but he did it in an encouraging manner. . . .
>
> . . . At crucial points, he could be challenging. . . . There were times when he would say, "Now, son, it's time to get down to work on this." He could show a little chagrin--not very often--but when he did, it was effective. He . . . could make it something that would challenge you, [not something that would] really make you feel bad. So his purpose was always to motivate.

Price added that one of Burg's special gifts was "the ability of . . . pointing out specific goals or problems and giving you a specific solution, whereas some teachers simply say, 'You need to fix this,' or 'Something needs to happen here.'" Although not unique, Price said this was certainly a feature that was "very helpful" and distinguished Burg from other teachers Price has had.

One respondent, who studied with Burg only as a child, had mixed feelings in recalling the experience:

> Lessons were casual and relaxed. Dr. Burg was jovial and very kind to me. I felt toward him much as I would toward a grandfather. I remember little of the content of lessons. Dr. Burg would at times sit back at his desk (behind the piano) instead of beside the piano. I was later told that he would sometimes nod off at his desk. [Name withheld]

Although Burg was seen by most students as warm, friendly, and cheerful, two students had somewhat different recollections. One of these, citing his own very young age and serious nature, says he was "pretty intimidated" by Burg; yet this student felt that Burg "was interested in the piano, the music, and in helping young people. That is what made him what he was." The other student remembers Burg as very academic and precise, almost like a drill sergeant in his rigorous requirements and

discipline: ". . . Very strict, . . . very Germanic . . . strict schedule, strict timing at the piano, know your material, count--these are the things that come to mind." However, this student added that Burg's requirements of discipline, precision, and no sloppiness were traits that "taught me a lot" and proved beneficial when applied to all of the student's music study and activity.

Nearly 20 percent of the respondents specifically mentioned that it was Burg's habit to allow them to play without interruption through an entire piece or section being worked on, before making comments or corrections. Several expressed appreciation at this and said it was unusual, compared to their experience with other teachers.

On this matter, Burg's thesis states:

> The teacher should listen attentively while the pupil is playing. . . .
> . . . When the pupil has prepared a whole composition, he should be permitted to play it through the first time without interruption. This will encourage him to prepare his lesson so that he can present an interesting and complete performance. The conscientious teacher finds it difficult not to stop the pupil at the first mistake. He should remember, however, that an interrupted performance lacks continuity of thought, and that pupils who are constantly interrupted at their lessons lack assurance in public performances.[7]

Auda Marie Thomas found Burg's attitude refreshing, as well as rather surprising, in view of his advanced age:

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[7]Ibid., 175-76.

> I asked him one time, "Why do you let me play all of that . . . when I know I'm probably making lots of mistakes?" His comment was, "You might do something that I haven't thought of. If I listen to you, I might learn, too." That really stuck with me.

Thomas said she tries to use this approach with her own students, considering this to be one of Burg's strongest influences on her teaching.

According to many respondents, Burg was business-like and energetic, working hard with the student to tackle musical problems in great detail, and offering solutions that were highly practical. His fine sense of humor was often cited, as were his frequent anecdotes--often amusing, but never idle time-fillers, always to the purpose of highlighting a point.

> Dr. Burg as a teacher was very energetic. There was never a dull moment. He talked a lot about the past and his past experiences but was always aware and alert in his later years.[8] He always made good suggestions when it came to working difficult passages and was always helpful in the areas of style and interpretation. [William E. Brackeen]

> I received training under Dr. Burg rather late in his life--however, he was full of energy during my lessons. He always would let me play a piece all the way through before he would start any criticism. . . . Dr. Burg liked to remember the <u>past</u> and would quote past experiences readily. [Name withheld]

> He always had a story or an anecdote to illustrate his point. That was very important for him, to describe it in story fashion. You remember those stories; they stick with you. [Roger Price]

> He was full of (many times humorous) pertinent anecdotes regarding famous pianists, composers, or former students. One's playing was accompanied by frequent "Good!" interjections, occasional "play alongs" an octave higher or at the other piano,

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[8]Burg was almost 90 years old when he was William E. Brackeen's teacher. Brackeen was one of the very last to study with Burg before he finally left OCU in 1982.

humming or singing the phrase, "grunting," pencil scribbles on the score--always active listening. [Gari Kyle]

Regarding problem-solving, Burg writes:

> If the pupil is to receive any lasting benefit from the lesson, he must receive definite instructions. Such phrases as "Don't play so choppy." "Don't bang." "You play mechanically." "Why are you rattling through that piece?" do not give the pupil the slightest inkling of what he needs to do to improve his playing. Very likely teachers use these expressions because they do not know exactly what is wrong, or what needs to be done, or perhaps they do not feel like making the effort to explain the procedures used in playing well.[9]

Burg also believed, as quoted above, that the teacher must remain objective when criticizing the student's playing and promote the feeling that they are working together to solve a problem, that "the objective should be: Let's do this as the composer would have us do it."[10] In this connection, Burg was unable to resist making his point, even in this scholarly paper, by relating an amusing incident:

> The first goal of the pupil should be to play the composition exactly as the composer has indicated. . . . The writer is reminded of the story in which a young man played a Beethoven sonata for Josef Hoffman. After finishing the sonata, the young man turned to Mr. Hoffman and said, "How do you like my interpretation?" Mr. Hoffman replied, "Has it ever occurred to you to try Beethoven's interpretation?"[11]

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[9]Burg, 178.

[10]Ibid., 177.

[11]Ibid., 180.

On the subject of time, Burg offered the following thoughts:

> The private lesson should begin and end on time. . . .
> . . . The teacher should not give overtime. . . . overtime to one pupil will delay the succeeding lessons. Furthermore, overtime is rarely appreciated; it lowers the pupil's estimate of the value of the teacher's time, and once it has become a habit, the grasping student will expect it henceforth. . . .
> . . . [However,] the teacher should avoid the appearance of being in a hurry. The teacher who frequently looks at his watch during the lesson creates an atmosphere of restlessness which is not conducive to good teaching. . . .
> . . . The teacher should not assign more than can be conveniently heard at the next lesson. . . .
> . . . Usually, the teacher should hear everything assigned and focus his attention on one or two things needing special attention. . . . An exception to the rule that the entire assignment should be heard may be made if the pupil has not practiced or has not put forth his best effort. . . . Another exception may be made in teaching advanced students, when it is often best to spend the entire lesson on technic or on a long composition.[12]

Former Burg student Gari Kyle reports:

> Time was seemingly unstructured, and a problem might lead to similar places in other works, to detailed practice suggestions (various rhythmic groupings, all staccato, repetitions with metronome, etc.), advice to listen to a particular recording, or to a technical demonstration. He was very generous with his time.

Further ideas relating to time were offered by other students. One remembered that "lesson times were prompt," while another said there was "no overtime ever." Even though a number of pieces would be assigned and in progress, several respondents reported experiences similar to the following:

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[12]Ibid., 173-85 passim.

> Often we would work on only one or two things (usually), and then he'd look at his watch and say, "Well, my dear, that's all!" or if we were pretty involved and didn't notice the time, the next student would knock on the door and we would bring the lesson to a close. Sometimes he would ask the next student to sit in the studio on the couch to hear the end of the lesson or to have me practice performing for them. [Kaye Wilson]

> We began with warmup on scales, technic books and then moved on to the pieces assigned. Often, we did not begin to cover what I had practiced because we would spend a lot of the lesson time on particular passages, rhythm problems or counting. [Dorothy Lee Carter Howard]

Myra Schubert recalled that Burg

> would hear [the assigned work] from beginning to end without interruption, give praise, then the second time through, we would dwell on only one section, one phrase, or one measure until it was to the perfection of his liking. I remember one lesson spending a whole hour on one note!

Stephanie Winkler Bouc likewise reported that Burg was always "striving for perfection," and she too remembers one lesson spent on a single thing: "'breaking in' a book correctly by folding down each page, pressing [it] open to the spine/binding."

Auda Marie Thomas felt that one of Burg's strengths was his practical use of lesson time:

> In the lessons, I don't remember anything that seemed to be a waste of time. . . . [He] could get it done without a great deal of verbiage. You didn't have to . . . sit and listen forever and ever [for him] to get something across.

Burg wrote that "the instructor who uses the same approach with all of his students will not keep them very long."[13] It seems he followed his own advice--questionnaire responses gave numerous indications that there may have been no such thing as a "typical" lesson for all Burg students. LaDonna Reynolds has no doubt that her lessons as a graduate student were tailored to her own personal needs:

> My first lesson, he gave me a sheet of paper which had three columns of topics. He asked me what I wanted to study with him. . . . I said, "All of it." He said to pinpoint one or two things. . . . I told him I had heard so many wretched pedals, that I really wanted to study pedaling. Also, phrasing and how to prepare students for contests. I believe that's what we studied most. . . . really basic, basic things.

Apparently, lessons were personalized according to such factors as the student's abilities, needs, and preparedness for the lesson. For example, a number of students said their lessons began with technique, such as scales, arpeggios, octaves, Hanon or Czerny. But many others said that, although Burg advocated technique practice for all students, "pure" technique was usually not done in lessons. Rather, particular technical exercises would be recommended, or even created, from the technical demands of the pieces being studied. The questionnaire data suggested that Burg used the latter approach chiefly with his older or more advanced students, perhaps believing that the younger, less experienced players needed a more basic, standardized routine while their technique was still developing.

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[13]Ibid., 169.

Burg's use of demonstration in the lesson is another example of variability in the lesson format. Some respondents said Burg would frequently play passages for them; others said this was only occasionally done. Again, the difference seemed to relate to how advanced the student was when studying with Burg. Following are some of Burg's ideas on the subject:

> Demonstration by the teacher can be very valuable if timed properly, or it can be harmful to some pupils. . . . One should demonstrate only when the pupil needs it as an inspiration or as a model toward which the pupil may aspire. Some pupils do not get interested in a piece until they hear it played. . . .
>
> . . . For the pupil who "plays by ear," the teacher should demonstrate only after the pupil has learned the composition by himself, and has reached a point where further progress seems unlikely without the help of the teacher's performance.[14]

Although she remembers that Burg sometimes demonstrated things in her lessons, Auda Marie Thomas was impressed that this was not at all his only way of communicating his ideas:

> He could explain it without having to show you, and that made a big impression on me. . . . So many times, [my other teachers would say], "Let me show you," but he would have a way of talking you through it, to get it across. I don't remember him . . . doing a lot of demonstrating.

Technique and Tone Production

Discussing technique and tone production in his thesis, Burg makes the following comment:

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[14]Ibid., 188-89.

> The criteria used in evaluating the performance of a piano composition are relatively simple, though they may be quite complex when heard simultaneously. Aside from pedaling, the basic determinants involved in the sounds which come from the piano are: timing, tonal intensity, and tonal connection or disconnection. Timing involves the beginning and the end of the tone, and it is the chief element in tempo and rhythm. The tone begins when the hammer strikes the string and ends when the damper falls back on the string. The tonal intensity is determined by the hammer velocity at the moment of its impact with the string. Tonal intensity is an important element in rhythm, accents, shading, and in the many different dynamic levels and variations indicated by the composer. Tonal connection and disconnection deal with legatissimo, legato, portamento, non legato, staccato, and staccatissimo.[15]

He further recommends nine criteria, to be used by the student in practice and by the teacher at the lesson, for evaluating the student's performance: note reading, fingering, tempo, note values, degrees of tone connection and disconnection, tonal intensities, pedaling, interpretation, and technic.

In a footnote on the item of technic, Burg says that a thorough discussion of piano technic is beyond the scope of his thesis. While referring the reader to his bibliography list of books on technic by Ortman, Matthay, and Schultz, he suggests that they might be too technical for most teachers in their treatment of the subject, and that a more practical plan "would probably be for the teacher to study with an authority on technic,

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[15]Ibid., 178-79.

one who is thoroughly familiar with the recent scientific discoveries."[16] He adds:

> Without a clear understanding of the subject, it is doubtless wise for the teacher to permit the pupil to use his natural technic, discourage him from playing too fast or too loud, and devote one's full attention to timing, tonal intensity, and tone connection and disconnection, as indicated by the composer and as conceived by the imaginative pupil.[17]

Burg's discussion of the teaching of technique and tone production frequently shows the influence of the study he had recently done with the great English pedagogue Tobias Matthay. Seven former students referred to Matthay by name in their responses to a question about Burg's teaching of technique and tone production, and many others who did not mention Matthay's name used terminology that reflects his teachings. Most frequently cited of these were forearm rotation; arm weight, playing into the key-bed, and relaxation; and finger mobility and lightness--those things involving awareness of the physiology of the hand, arm, and body and their proper use in playing. Roger Price describes Burg's teaching of these areas in some detail:

> He spent a lot of time working with technique, but not technique in the sense of wiggling the fingers, so much as technique in specific application, first of all, to freedom at the keyboard, and secondly, to . . . the accomplishment of your interpretive goals [in the context of a particular piece]. . . .

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[16]Ibid., 181n.

[17]Ibid.

. . . The center of technique is . . . loosening the large muscles and producing tone by dropping the arms into the keyboard . . . not pushing down the keys, but dropping, dropping weight. All the Matthay things that he had studied--the aspects of the different levers, start[ing] from the waist, which is the biggest, and then . . . the shoulder, the whole arm, . . . the elbow, . . . the wrist, and then the individual fingers. Working with the different tones and volumes that you get from using those different levers. . . .

. . . In addition, the aspect of weight distribution was a constant subject that he considered. The idea of not pushing the weight down, but holding the weight up with the finger and letting it go immediately to the next finger, so that it rolls along. When you do that, you're only using . . . what you need, so you don't use any more muscle than you have to. . . . You have to start getting into contact with muscles that you're not using and relaxing those, so that the other muscles are freer.

Another feature of importance to several students was learning to "feel the key resistance" to improve control of touch and tone production, as well as utilizing "partial key-release." Again, Roger Price:

> The partial key-release . . . tak[es] full advantage of the double-release action. [Burg] had a one-key action--a model,[18] in perfect working order--[to] show you how the thing works, . . . how you can put it down, and then lift it up just enough . . . [to] play it again, without letting the key come up all the way. That is the key to playing legato trills [and] legato repeated notes without using the pedal, in Bach or Mozart--that you only let the key come up part of the way. . . . It's of utmost importance, but no one ever talks about it. . . . I'm very happy to have worked with someone who put so much emphasis on that.
>
> [To work on that partial key-release,] you would . . . drop onto the key, then lift your arm weight slowly, so that you would feel it release--you'd watch the hammer and then feel it release--and then drop. . . . If you try to control it with an individual finger, it doesn't work so well. It has to be from a very loose hand and arm. . . . We did it on the model first, then would transfer that to the keyboard. [You] would look at the hammer and lift until you'd see the little hammer release, drop half-way, and then you could play it again. . . . It's what

[18]This model was mentioned by a number of students, in various contexts.

> he called portamento; it's as legato as you can possibly be with a repeated note. If you let it come up all the way, the damper comes down all the way on the string and stops it, and then you re-strike. This way, if you do it well, the damper never comes down to the string, and the only thing that stops the string for the tiniest instant is the re-striking of the hammer. If you do it with the right kind of re-attack, it sounds legato, almost as if that were just one tone continuing.

Utilizing the partial key-release, Price continued, was also the means of producing two different kinds of trills:

> One, we would lay a pencil across the two keys of the trill, and neither key was to come up and strike the pencil; so that was [done] completely from rotation and looseness, using this [partial key-release] technique. The other kind of trill, which we called the lift trill, was where both of [the keys] popped the pencil; so you get lots of brilliance in the trill. One's legatissimo, one's brillante.

Malcolm Blazer appreciated that Burg "always demonstrated, then supervised until understood," how to get "deep, big tone without pounding the keys." Gari Kyle also noted that Burg "used many physical demonstrations." She added that he taught

> much awareness of muscle groups, differentiation in tone due to arm or finger weight, specific suggestions regarding elbow attitude, height of finger drop, feet placement. He was at times precise in marking "elbow leads, fingers only," etc.

A contrary opinion was expressed by one person, who recalled that Burg "talked more about technique than he talked about sound." This respondent continued:

> I remember he would try to help me in using weight in the proper way, so that I could play forte without pounding. But when I heard him play, I didn't like the sound of the fortes, . . . the sound was not pleasing.

"Singing" tone was another important point, mentioned by several respondents. So was bringing out a melody line--one student said she was taught to do this by straightening the finger playing a chord note that was to be projected. Burg called this technique "stacking the bones," according to some respondents. In discussing these items, Myra Schubert made the following observations:

> He never allowed me to "slap" the keys. Anytime I would get careless and begin to play with "too high" fingers, and too much arm action, causing a harsh, slapping quality, he would . . . make me s-l-o-w way down where I was able to watch each finger "caress" each key with a rounded finger-tip action.
>
> He impressed upon me the fact that each piece had its own demands and needs as to technique and tone production. A slow, romantic, legato piece could be played on the cushion part of the finger for best results, whereas a brilliant toccata or Baroque-style should be played further toward the tip.

Calling Burg "a very technical teacher," from whom she "learned a lot of technique," Virginia Campbell said that producing a singing melody line, as in a four-voice chordal passage, required the use of "prepared finger attack"--i.e., the finger sitting on the key. "Unprepared attack"--with the finger above the key--would be used for very fast, leggiero passages. Campbell added that if pianissimo playing were desired, Burg advised using "very flat fingers."

Several students said they learned to play runs smoothly by preparing the thumb. Philelle McBrayer described this, asserting that she found it the most helpful technique she learned from Burg:

> Start moving the thumb under as soon as it releases a key in order to prepare for its next note in a scale passage. Also to flip the fingers over the thumb quickly and prepare the next two or three notes quickly. This not only helped my own technique but helped me aid students to play much more evenly when they play fast scale passages.

Careful attention to fingering was one of Burg's hallmarks, according to a number of respondents. Gerald Monson learned from Burg to use the fourth finger on black-key octaves, as well as the fingering for chromatic scales in both single notes and thirds. Evelyn Keeton was amazed that Burg "would not only allow, but actually encourage" her to change fingering marked in the music, if this would improve execution of a passage.

Several students mentioned squeezing a small rubber ball to strengthen double-jointed fingers and thumbs. Another exercise to combat double-jointedness, reported by Marilyn Witcher, was to press down five white keys, then play each note individually four times slowly, and finally, play double thirds in the same way. As a general exercise to strengthen hands and fingers, Stephanie Winkler Bouc recalled:

> He instructed me to play five-note chords with both hands, leaning forward and lifting my feet so that all the weight would be on my fingers pressing into the keys. (Fingers were not supposed to "lock.")

Although some respondents said they had worked a good deal on independent technical exercises--such as scales, arpeggios, and/or octaves; Hanon; or Czerny--many respondents said that technique was taken from

difficult spots in the pieces being studied. LaDonna Meinders' experience in this regard is interesting:

> Sometimes we would stop while he developed a point of technique that seemed necessary. Then he would go to his typewriter and carefully give a thorough description of this exercise he had just developed, give me the typed sheet to keep, and then we would proceed to do the exercise. It was amazing how helpful these were!

One student, who studied with Burg until age thirteen, gave negative feedback regarding Burg's instruction of technique:

> After having not touched the piano for several years since I quit studying with Dr. Burg and then taking up with another teacher, I was shocked to realize how very little technique (if any at all) Dr. Burg had taught me. Truthfully, I felt I had been robbed of some very important years of musical study. I learned more in one lesson with my new teacher than I had in several years with Clarence Burg. Technique [had been] limited to scales and arpeggios--two or three weeks before Guild Auditions--that was it!

Practicing And Memorizing

In his 1944 thesis, Burg makes these statements about practicing:

> [Primarily for young students,] some time should be devoted each lesson to going over the new assignment with the pupil, having him play passages at sight, and showing him how to practice the hard parts. After this procedure, the pupil will not be so apt to delay practicing on his new assignment. . . .
>
> . . . [Especially for advanced pupils,] a large part of each lesson should be spent on showing the pupil how to practice. In fact, if he knew how to practice he would need very few lessons. Thousands of practice hours are wasted on valueless repetition, practicing without an objective, without listening, and without concentration of thought and energy.[19]

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[19]Burg, 174, 186.

Studying with Burg in the late 1970s, Roger Price found Burg still held to these beliefs:

> He would often say, "What you attempt to do [in a lesson] is show your students how to practice.". . . Silent practice, slow practice. . . .
>
> . . . He had a method, an approach for every situation, and he would show you a diagnosis [for each] particular situation. He relied on that, . . . more than [on] developing technique, [such as] exercises, etc.--[his] ability to diagnose and come up with a [practice] solution for [each] particular problem. . . .
>
> Everything that he did in a lesson was showing you how to practice the piece. . . . To split things up into sections, and not just play through it; and [to] work on individual sections, mak[ing] a diagnosis and figur[ing] out how you could accomplish [each] section.

Many questionnaire respondents mentioned that Burg stressed the importance of practice with the metronome for improving rhythmic accuracy and for building up speed. He also frequently insisted that students count aloud, and that they break down the counting to the eighth or even the sixteenth note, if necessary, to achieve exact timing. On the other hand, Cordelia Bennett recalled that Burg introduced her to a new idea--playing "with no sense of rhythm"--to be sure to get all the correct notes in a complex passage.

Burg believed that evenness in fast runs could be achieved by practicing them with rhythmic variations. Virginia Campbell cited, as an example of this, the second section of Mozart's *Rondo alla turca*, where the phrases of steady sixteenth notes would be practiced as a succession of dotted sixteenth-thirty-second note figures, then vice versa. Another student

reported that to improve fast scale passages, Burg had suggested repeating each note of the passage two times or three times. "Then when [I] did it as written, it seemed easier," she said.

Articulation variations, such as practicing a legato passage staccato, were also noted as a helpful technique for spot practice by Margaret Lorince. The shape of a phrase was made clear for practice, recalls Virginia Campbell, when Burg wrote numbers, such as 1 through 8, in the score--small numbers as the phrase begins, increasing to the largest number to show the peak of the phrase.

Respondents said Burg stressed the importance of always listening to oneself. This sometimes meant practicing an entire piece without pedal, so that every detail could be clearly heard.

Other students recalled Burg's practice instructions:

> Practice slowly--sometimes silently. . . . work on one passage at a time until I worked it out. He liked for me to work out fingering (and write it in) on anything new as I learned it. [LaDonna Meinders]

> Recording oneself is a helpful tool. Study the score away from the piano. "Good practice is experimentation" (from C.B.), meaning don't just idly practice repetitively--always be trying a new approach to a difficult passage. [Kelly McSweeney Zuercher]

> He taught me to practice what needed to be practiced, not to begin at the beginning and play straight through each time. He said to work on problem spots, then blend them into the rest of the piece. However, once you had done that and were polishing a piece, he encouraged you to not stop to make corrections, but to go back after a performance-type run-through and work it out. He also emphasized not over-practicing before a performance. [Kaye Wilson]

Burg's admonition regarding the importance of practicing daily was mentioned by many respondents. For one student, it was highlighted by an aphorism: "One day of missed practice--I can tell; two days of missed practice--my wife can tell; three days of missed practice--the public can tell." Burg felt "that everyone needs a regularly scheduled practice time when possible," stated Ellen Govett. However, she added, Burg's most important lesson to her was to "follow through on those urges to play the piano anytime you can." Marilyn White told a similar story:

> I studied [with Burg] at the time that I was a full-time public school choral director--putting my husband through school--so practice time was tough to find, with so many after school rehearsals. He taught me how to make efficient use of small blocks of time--to quit waiting for an hour or two block of time, but to open up the music and woodshed two measures with a 5-10 minute time span.

One person reported that Burg recommended keeping a journal "to review practice." Florence Birdwell recalled that Burg had required her, each semester as a college student, to buy a practice booklet, in which daily practice time was to be recorded. "That book was vital," she declared. "He checked that book every lesson!"

In his thesis, Burg says, "From the first lesson, it is advisable to begin the use of an assignment and practice record book."[20] He then goes into some detail discussing the best type of book to use, including an illustration of the form he had devised for recording the student's lesson and practice.

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[20]Ibid., 171.

"The necessity of recording practice insures more regular practice and enables the teacher to evaluate the results in comparison with the amount of time spent in preparation,"[21] he asserts. Several systems for grading the lesson are also presented. He concludes with the following observation regarding youngsters:

> The practice and lesson record is an indirect contact with the parent after each lesson, and no one appreciates it more than the mothers of young children. Through its use, they are able to follow the progress of their children and to cooperate better with the teacher.[22]

Stephanie Winkler Bouc recalled Burg's teaching that "perfection requires repetition":

> [He] told me a story about a young girl who performed flawlessly for a great concert pianist. When asked how she did it, she responded, "Every day I put ten beans on [the] left end of the piano (by the bass keys). When I play the piece correctly, I move one bean to the right (treble) end of the piano. I do this until all the beans are on the right." Determination, tenacity and dedication were important characteristics for Burg pupils.

Silent practice--touching, or even pressing the keys down slightly, but with no sound--was advocated by Burg for learning a piece well initially and also for testing memory. Another use for silent practice was to achieve the proper balance between melody and accompaniment--play the accompanying hand silently, while playing the melody line aloud.

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[21]Ibid., 172.

[22]Ibid., 173.

Burg's belief that the mind must be active in all practice and in memory work was confirmed in a variety of comments by former students:

> He stressed focusing and concentration. [Patrick Hays]

> He . . . talk[ed] about how important it was to maximize the time; start off with the most difficult, challenging things first. [William Godley]

> I used to just go through the pieces until I thought I had improved. But he taught me how to find the sections that I was weak in playing, and how to work those sections. . . .
> . . . [He showed me] how to block runs off, and make chords out of [them]. That helped a lot, because I found out a lot of the runs were arpeggios, chords I was familiar with. . . . It helped me to analyze what I was actually doing. [Cordelia Bennett]

> "Don't practice your mistakes!" Dr. Burg would say. "Don't just repeat and repeat like an automaton, getting nowhere with each repetition." He would advise me to turn on the tape recorder, play through a phrase, stop and analyze what I need to do different, and <u>think</u> about each repetition so that each one was noticeably different and improved. [Myra Schubert]

> [As a memory test] playing on table top. . . . Play it with eyes closed or in the dark. [Gerald Monson]

Over one-third of all respondents specifically mentioned analysis as another mental activity very strongly promoted by Burg. One must analyze both the form of a piece--breaking it down into sections for initial study, as well as for memory security--and the harmonies--sometimes writing chord names in the score, marking the modulations, or naming the chords aloud while playing.

Similar to accounts of other respondents, Myra Schubert told how awareness of the form of a piece could be used as a memory test:

Before a performance, Dr. Burg would have me begin each phrase, then skip to the next phrase, then the next and next--skimming the piece from memory. He would have me to do the same with each major section. The value in this memory test is to be secure in the beginning of each section and phrase. Should a memory slip take place, I could skip on to the next phrase or section, rather than skip backwards, repeating a whole phrase or section. This gave me much security and daring in my performance, knowing that even if I had a memory slip, all would be well.

Burg administered other memory tests:

You'd be playing along and he would say, "Stop." Then he'd say, "Go," and you would have to be playing along in your head and would have to pick it up from where you were. That was very hard. [Jan Culver]

Sing melodies [from memory]. If you know [a piece], you can write it from memory. [Name withheld]

. . . A true test of memory was to sit quietly and mentally play through my piece away from the instrument--on Bach pieces he would urge me to transpose (from memory) to many different keys. Sometimes he would have me play Bach with one finger in each hand. . . .

. . . Teacher and pupil sit at two separate pianos. Teacher plays first few phrases--then stops at an unlikely point, pupil picks up the phrase and continues it, stopping most any place, teacher picks it up for awhile--they take turns playing through the piece without losing a beat or one note on the trade-off. [Myra Schubert]

Auda Marie Thomas remembers still another memory test:

I would be playing along and he would lift one hand and I had to keep the other hand going [by memory]. . . . He would always lift your hand in the most difficult places.

To prepare for this demanding test, Thomas says that she would lift one hand herself, in practice, and try to go on; this would enable her to find the weak spots in her memory, which she would then look up and study in

the score. Burg also recommended that two students practice together, taking turns lifting one another's hand. Still another of Burg's practice techniques was playing each hand separately, by memory. Thomas adds that she believes this type of practice and memory testing heightened the level of concentration in Burg's students so much that "you never heard his students have memory slips in performance." She recounted a Burg anecdote that reinforced this point:

> A student was practicing [in the auditorium] and they were building a set on the stage. She said she just couldn't play with all that noise going on, and [Burg] said, "Then, my dear, you don't know your music.". . . If you're concentrating and you know [the piece], it doesn't matter what's going on.

A number of respondents said Burg trained them in that most important of all performance skills--always to keep going and never stop, even if there is a memory slip. That, of course, was the goal of all the study techniques and memory tests he used.

Along with other former students, Marilyn Witcher mentioned the four different types of memory--kinesthetic, aural, visual, and analytical--which Burg always identified in lessons and workshops. She says kinesthetic (finger) memory "involves all parts of [the] body used in playing" and although unreliable by itself, is a "necessary element"; analytical memory is "the hardest to achieve [but] the most reliable." Witcher also enumerates other memory tests:

1. Test kinesthetic memory by carrying on a conversation while playing.

2. Test aural memory by: (a) playing melody from memory with one finger (eliminates kinesthetic memory), (b) playing runs with one finger, and (c) transposing [by memory].

3. Slowly, aware of count, play right hand audibly, left hand silently (move keys halfway down). [Then] play left hand audibly, right hand silently.

4. "Cue" phrases--play first few notes of phrase. Put hands in lap. Think rest of phrase. Then play first few notes of next phrase, etc.

Roger Price recalls Burg's strongest emphasis for memory work was

marking a certain spot, beginning of a phrase, in the middle of the piece, with an X or a number, and then you memorize that spot like the beginning of the piece. Then you fill in more and more X's as you go, so that more and more of the piece, you can just start at any place.

Burg urged his students to start memorizing early in the learning process--from the start, if possible--always breaking pieces down into logical sections. William Godley remembers that, because he did so much performing as a college student, he often felt overwhelmed by the amount of material he had to memorize in a short time. Burg said, Godley recalls, "If I did it bit by bit by bit, . . . pretty soon I'd have it done." For encouragement, Burg told him a story about a friend in Oklahoma City who found it necessary to drive to New York alone:

She was frightened at the prospect of driving all that distance [by herself]. [Burg] said, "You drive from Oklahoma City to Tulsa quite a bit to see your daughter, don't you?" She said yes. He said, "You're not apprehensive about that, are you?" She said no. He said, "You could drive from Tulsa to Joplin--that's even less

> distance--couldn't you?" She said, "Yes, I suppose so." He said, "Well, that's all that trip to New York is--just [a] series of trips like the one from Oklahoma City to Tulsa." That stuck in my mind, too. He would tell stories like that [to make his point].

Several advanced students, including Jan Culver, reported always playing their lessons from memory. When she began studying with him, Culver told Burg that she wanted to work hard on memory techniques. Since memorizing had always been difficult for her and she was a good sightreader, she had previously not wanted to put in the time required for memorizing. She said:

> He had a way of convincing me I could do that, and taught me so much about studying the music and memory techniques, that I was able to [play] every lesson by memory. . . .
>
> . . . One of the main [memory techniques] that helped me [was to] play the whole piece hands separate by memory. If you had a little trouble with a passage, play it all with just one finger; then you find out [whether] it was just finger memory. . . . He taught me that your brain really needs to be in control.

Some students said that Burg advocated visualizing the printed music, if possible, when playing by memory. To this end, it was therefore advisable to use the same score at all times in practicing, so the visual image of the score would not become confused. Burg himself preferred this method of memorizing, according to Myra Schubert:

> He had committed to memory literally hundreds, perhaps thousands of pieces which he never forgot. He could play one piece after another for me when he was demonstrating a certain technical point, and never get out the book. He could visualize the page numbers, the notes on the page, every marking on the page without having seen the music in years.

Gari Kyle commented that Burg served as a fine example, "often playing at his students' performance classes, and playing by memory in public right to the end of his musical life."

Musical Interpretation

Two ideas stand out when Burg's former students recall his teaching of musical interpretation: his constant desire to be true to the composer's intentions and his belief that there is not just one "correct" interpretation of any piece of music.

At first glance, these two ideas might seem contradictory. However, as Bruce A. Brown puts it:

> [Burg] allow[ed] me the freedom to put my "signature" on the repertoire. . . . His way was never the only way. He did, however, challenge me by having me always be able to justify my interpretative decisions.

Gari Kyle adds:

> I felt free to "do my own thing" and yet I knew that for him, no detail was too small for scrutiny. He demand[ed] . . . absolute awareness of all markings on the page. His love for playing, for music, for as beautiful a rendition as possible, was always apparent.

Margaret Lorince continues:

> I certainly was made aware of listening to nuance and composer's directions, an understanding of stylistic interpretation came later, . . . [and] working for a musical approach was always part of the lesson.

"Dr. Burg taught musical interpretation from a practical standpoint," recalls Marilyn Witcher. "The student studied the music to try to determine what

the composer wanted and tried to achieve it." Evelyn Keeton says Burg encouraged her "to play with the feel for the piece that I wanted to relay to others as I played." Virginia Campbell, who studied with Burg from age ten to twenty and then again for about twelve years as an adult, remembers, "In later years, about some things I would play, he would say, 'I never heard that played quite like that before, but I like it.' So he was open about it." Finally, Sharlyn Matthews' comment calls attention to Burg's wariness about the additions to a score by an editor: "[He gave me] the freedom to work from the composer's intent--adjusting editorial interpretations--and making the music mine."

In keeping with his desire for an accurate reading of the composer's directions, Burg promoted awareness of the style characteristics of the various periods and composers. "He encouraged me," Patti Lucas Briggs states, "to read and hear as much as possible to learn appropriate styles." Philelle McBrayer credits Burg with introducing her to "the fact [that] music from different periods had different styles and characteristics and to begin to recognize those characteristics," while Gerald Monson recalled that Burg taught him how to distinguish between "grace notes, turns and embellishments during [the] Baroque period as compared to [the] Romantic period."

Long-time Burg student Kelly McSweeney Zuercher reports that she learned from Burg "a great deal about each composer's unique style and

what was necessary to achieve it." Lisa Bond Bryan, who studied with Burg only as a child and teenager, comments:

> This was the time when I was really beginning to move into the music of the masters. He addressed the different periods and styles and was the teacher who really opened these doors for me.

For some students, Burg taught the different styles by demonstration:

> I think he was a master of musical interpretation. He spent a lot of time playing at our lessons to show me how the composer would have played the piece. He went into depth on the period and style of the music. [Jana Telford]

> [I learned] so much. The "singing" tone, the meaning of a musical phrase--the intent of the composer--the various styles of different composers. His own playing--demonstrating the styles--was inspiring. Rhythmic precision of Bach--emotional, romantic melodies of Chopin--fiery power of Beethoven. I learned to listen. [Joye Hopkins McLain]

Stephanie Winkler Bouc relates that interpretation was "greatly emphasized" and was communicated "primarily through modeling or oral comments"; but she adds:

> I don't recall his "directing" the interpretation as I played--nor did he ever suggest I listen to recordings. He did encourage me to play the melody line on my flute so that I could find a balance between melody and accompaniment.

Several other students remember that Burg did suggest listening to recorded performances as a source of interpretive ideas. One person writes:

> Dr. Burg stressed interpretation through listening to compositions of the same composer other than the piece I was working on. Also I listened to orchestral recordings of piano pieces--when I could find them.

An especially memorable listening experience took place for Ray Harris in the fall of his college freshman year, when Burg urged him and several other students to travel to Fort Worth, Texas, to hear the finals of the 1977 Van Cliburn Competition. Harris went on to say that Burg always encouraged his students to attend such events, as well as local concerts.

One person, who earned a Bachelor of Music degree while studying with Burg, said that Burg may have done "too much" demonstrating for him, and that Burg's teaching of interpretation "was done in sort of a broad way," rather than with the more detailed approach and verbal explanations of later teachers. But, the student added, "maybe that was appropriate to my level of musical development [at that time]."

Respondents had a variety of recollections regarding Burg's ideas on shaping phrases:

> [I learned the importance of] melody--hearing it in all cases, especially in multi-voiced pieces. [Patti Lucas Briggs]

> He was a great teacher in that he wanted our playing to "speak" to the listener--and he insisted on contrast in music--[in] long, uninterrupted phrases [with] very careful pedaling. [Dorothy Lee Carter Howard]

> He would sing and direct to help me feel the shape of a phrase. One time he numbered the notes of the phrase to show their relative importance. [Name withheld]

> He emphasized . . . learning phrases by putting numbers on [them]--the top of the phrase being 8, and the lower [part] of the phrase being 4 [or] 2 [in terms of volume]. . . . [When] I was learning the Beethoven Pathetique Sonata, he went through that with me with the numbers that shaped the phrasing. [Virginia Campbell]

He often put words to music to help hear the phrasing. [Name withheld]

To be free with interpretation and put life into the music, to let it move in a sweeping way by thinking of a longer line. . . to always be moving toward a point. [LaDonna Meinders]

One time when he was judging me, I was playing a Chopin Nocturne. When I got through, he said, "My dear, even slow music has to go forward." [Auda Marie Thomas]

I loved his arrows, to the end of the phrase, or to the climax. They were drawn from the beginning of the phrase to the high point, where you tend to drop off in dynamic level, to keep that phrase going. I've used that to a great extent--as much, if not more, in my vocal teaching--because so often, [students] will end their thinking process, and are not thinking on through to the end of the line. So even if they take a breath, [they must] continue that phrase, the thinking of it, [to the end]. [Ellen Jayne Wheeler]

In discussing phrasing, Roger Price points out how phrase direction, dynamics, and rhythm were all interrelated in Burg's teaching:

He had certain ideas about the interpretation of a phrase. . . . The importance of rhythm, not slowing down at the end of the phrase. . . . Moving to the top note, and pointing out the shape of the phrase--you have to [start] much softer and much lighter at the beginning of a crescendo, so that you point out the crescendo; and the opposite with diminuendo. . . .

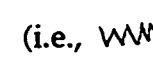
. . . A lot of emphasis on lightening up between major landing points, so that you aren't too heavy all of the time. . . . Lightening up the touch was crucial--he always said, "If everything is loud, then nothing is loud."

. . . [All these things must be done] so you hear the direction [of the phrase]. . . . Always direction, but always pointing out the architecture. . . . He spent a great deal of time emphasizing the architecture of the piece and how to accomplish it, how to bring it across. . . . and architecture comes down to rhythm, plus direction. So there was a big emphasis on playing rhythmically and [with] well worked-out rhythms. . . .

. . . Architecturally, this is one of the most important things: counting by the measure or by two-measure [units], rather than by the

beat. When you do that, you are simply recognizing that each measure is really another beat unit. [So] you're constructing phrases, rather than constructing measures, in reality. . . . You might be . . . [counting] by the measure in one part, and then suddenly, you're counting by the half note, and then, in another part, you may be counting by the 8th note. It all depends on the character of the music, what's going on at that point. And [all of this] really . . . emphasize[s] and undergird[s] what is happening in the music. [This rhythmic concept] is a major aspect of his interpretive thought.

Another significant area in Burg's teaching of musical interpretation was the proper use of rubato, as seen by the fact that fully 15 percent of responses to the question about interpretation referred to it. Burg's ideas on rubato were based largely on those of his former teacher, Tobias Matthay. Donna High recalls that when she was able to play pieces with strict tempos, she "learned how to become more flexible for Grieg and Chopin compositions." Patrick Hays reports:

> I was grateful for his introduction of expansive rubato (i.e., ).[23] Later in life I realized what he was trying to introduce to me--that music happens between the notes.

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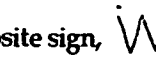
[23]This sign, which he termed "expansive rubato," was used by Burg to indicate slower motion in the center of the figure, where the vertical lines are taller and spread apart more widely, and faster motion on either end, where the lines are shorter and more closely spaced. An opposite sign,  called "contractive rubato," signified a faster tempo in the center (shorter, more closely spaced vertical lines), with a slower tempo (taller, more widely spaced lines) before and after. In both cases, the change in tempo was to be gradual, temporary, and in relation to an already-established steady beat, to which the music must return, following the rubato. Burg drew these signs into the scores of his students and on the chalkboard in his workshops, where he always planned a session on teaching the proper use of rubato, with some appropriate pieces for demonstration.

Several students mentioned working with Burg on pedaling, including the use of half-pedal. One person said that Burg called the pedal "the soul of the piano." Pedaling was to be carefully planned; along with fingering, it was never to be left to chance, but must be written in the music.

A number of students attested to Burg's belief in marking the score to insure that students would remember the planned interpretation. Markings already mentioned include numbers to show relative importance of each point within a phrase and arrows to indicate phrase direction. Ellen Jayne Wheeler remembered that Burg coached her and her partner on piano ensemble music, where he often marked the melody--in both parts--with a short vertical line followed by a long horizontal line. This gave each player a prominent visual reminder of which one had the melody. "He would also have us [each independently] mark the pedaling, or the phrase with the arrows," Wheeler recalls, "and then he would check to see if we agreed. If not, we'd discuss why each of us would do it a certain way, and come up with a consensus."

Regarding interpretation of individual compositions, Jan Culver states that Burg "nearly always would have some little story about the pieces." She continues:

> I did one of the Scott Joplin rags, and he had a little story about Scott Joplin. . . . There was a Rachmaninoff I was doing once, [where] he said, "Now that's the drum tapping.". . . He constantly incorporated things like that into the lesson. It wasn't like, "Well,

> now, we're going to have a music history lesson.". . . It just all blended together.

William Brackeen remembers that "Dr. Burg was such a great interpreter of Beethoven and Chopin that I feel like I knew them personally."

Finally, several ideas stand out for Kaye Wilson, as she reflects on Burg's interpretive teaching:

> He always pushed me beyond what I thought was good enough--he always wanted greater dynamic contrast, more energy, and used his conducting technique to bring out the best. He encouraged me to imagine different instruments playing different parts or voices of the music. He also stressed bringing out beautiful harmonies or a particular line, and playing beautifully and accurately as more important than speed.

Sightreading And Ear Training

"Sightread constantly," recalls Bruce A. Brown, was Burg's motto regarding this vital pianistic skill. "I became an excellent sight-reader," Brown continues, "because of Dr. Burg's insisting that I accompany vocalists, instrumentalists, and he advocated church work. I have been a church organist continually since 1958, when I was twelve." Other students also stated that Burg encouraged them to accompany. Patti Lucas Briggs recalls using some lesson time for assistance with her assignment as rehearsal accompanist for an OCU opera production.

Echoing Brown's comments, several other respondents also mentioned that Burg advocated using hymns as sightreading material.

Sightreading principles Burg espoused, as reported by many former students, may be summarized as follows:

1. Sightreading must be practiced daily, using music a grade or two below the level of the student's other lesson materials.

2. Notes might be omitted, and wrong notes must be ignored, with no attempt made to correct mistakes; but the beat must remain steady and the music must keep going. To accomplish these things, a slow tempo should be chosen.

3. Eyes must move ahead of the fingers and must remain up on the music. The hands find the right notes by feeling.

Among procedures Burg recommended to achieve these goals were "the silent scan before beginning" and learning to "read at a glance" by recognizing block chords and other patterns. Students mentioned some specific techniques Burg used:

> He would put a piece of paper over the music and move it from left to right, slightly ahead of where I was playing, forcing me to keep my eyes moving ahead of where my hands were. [Kaye Wilson]

> . . . Frustrating and humiliating [but] very effective. . . . Cardboard was fitted under [my] chin[24] so when I looked down . . . to see [my] hands, all that was visible was cardboard! Not just a "shouldn't look down" but a practical, effective cure or approach. Typical Burg. [Malcolm Blazer]

> [To sightread] with your eyes on the page, not looking at the keys, . . . you have to [learn] the geography of the keyboard, to feel an octave, a fourth, a fifth, and know what the shape of each one of those is. He had a pencil with erasers on both ends that was exactly an octave. He had you put that between your thumb and fifth finger, so

[24]Variously named by students as "Chin Board," "cardboard bib," and "apron," this device was described by one student as a semi-circle of stiff cardboard, twelve to sixteen inches wide, attached under the chin around the throat by a string tied behind the neck. Since it prevented students from looking at their hands, it helped them learn to keep their eyes on the music when sightreading.

> you could learn the feel of an octave. Then not look, put your arm down, and you would play an octave. . . . You learn [the feeling of] each one of [the intervals], playing by feel across the keyboard. [Roger Price]

> Using a cardboard Chin Board, feel edges of black keys. Take all [the] time needed. Make up exercises, such as c-e-g blocked and broken, g-b-d, etc. [Marilyn Witcher]

Several students related that Burg would usually have them read through new assignments, at a reduced tempo, at their lesson, to reinforce sightreading skills. However, one student, studying with Burg only as a child, reports

> a sense of resentment for seminal years wasted with Dr. Burg. Because I memorized quickly I didn't have to read much--and Dr. Burg let me get away with this. I feel now that he should have been continually making me read new music but he did not. [Name withheld]

Those who studied with Burg as college students or as adults said ear training was left to be done in theory classes or was not needed, since most reported ear training was not a problem area for them. With younger students, though, Burg did work on aural and reading skills. Two people who studied with Burg as children and teenagers comment:

> [Burg believed] both [sightreading and ear training] are very important. We spent time developing both areas, including theory exercises, ear training, etc. [Kelly McSweeney Zuercher]

> [For ear training] I do remember him playing intervals and drilling me on them. [Patrick Hays]

Virginia Campbell recalls that Burg encouraged attending recitals, as well as listening to other students play, while Donna High states that she

"learned to listen more carefully to the different elements [within a piece]." According to a number of respondents, Burg believed that the most important of all listening skills was the ability truly to listen to one's own playing.

Motivation

Since most respondents were piano majors, it is not surprising that many said they were self-motivated and did not really require motivation from Burg to work hard and strive to do their best. A number of students said that the chance to study with someone of Burg's reputation was sufficient motivation for them, and the fact that he still performed regularly, even when he was very old, was inspiring in itself. Leon Whitesell writes, "His living example supplied great motivation for me; he was one of the most powerful influences in my professional life."

LaDonna Meinders remembers being motivated by Burg's "high expectations" of her work, as well as by "his disappointment when I didn't work hard." Likewise, Donna High says that Burg let her know that she had talent to develop, and was "diplomatic with criticism and sympathetic."

A somewhat different perspective was reported by one respondent who was required, as a college student, to keep a record of daily practice time. Besides the knowledge that Burg would certainly check the practice book at each lesson, this student was motivated by Burg's "authority and

follow-through. He never left anything to chance." The student continued, "I liked him, we got along very well, but . . . he was the Dean of the School [and] he scared me."

Many respondents, such as Joye Hopkins McLain, mentioned Burg's encouragement and praise as motivators. McLain continues:

> He required your best at all times. . . . He hardly spoke of talent--he spoke of work. He made you believe in yourself--in your ability to be better with work. He spoke of the lasting "joy" of making music--of the satisfaction of performance even in old age when other joys have faded. I believed him--still do!

As Kaye Wilson points out, "he was not indiscriminate in his praise, so that earning it was something I really did work toward. When he said you had done well, it was very gratifying."

Several students said Burg was firm, demanding, but always kind. Jana Telford cites this kindness as the best motivator for her, "rather than intimidation, which many instructors can use." Another student, whose three older siblings also studied with Burg, states, "He never compared me with others, but compared me to me, and that helped me work even harder." The student adds, "Sometimes I would learn something on my own that was an old standard and he would praise me for those independent efforts."

This student further stated that Burg "was able to pick music that matched my personality and tried to find some new pieces my siblings had not played." Many others also mentioned Burg's wisdom in choosing

literature such that they would be challenged but not overwhelmed by it; one said Burg would even change repertoire, if necessary.

Linda Bond Bryan recalls Burg's good repertoire choices for her, as well as the motivation of performing:

> He provided performance opportunities that really pushed me forward (i.e., recitals, Guild auditions, workshop performances, OMTA competitions, NFMC competitions, etc.). He was also good at finding pieces I could play well and enjoy. Some of these are still treasures in my repertoire.

A number of respondents reported that frequent performances were important among the various challenges Burg presented to motivate his students. Kelly McSweeney Zuercher remembers that "he always had a new challenge waiting for me--a new piece, a new competition or recital."

Pearl Peveler was well motivated by her performances at the weekly group meetings Burg held with his twelve piano major and minor students at Southwestern State College. She says:

> [The meetings] broadened the repertoire for us all. We took notes on each piece and kept a notebook that was graded. I worked hard for those performances. It helped us to be musical comrades of encouragement. I still continue monthly group sessions with my students.

Several people mentioned that Burg had nominated them for membership to the Oklahoma City Pianists' Club, a select performance group of which he was a founding member. They agreed that this evidence of Burg's belief in their abilities was a highly valued motivator and confidence-builder.

One student commented that he felt motivated by Burg's "sincere interest in each student." Four respondents said Burg's personal concern for them--indeed, for every student--distinguished him from other teachers with whom they had studied. Following is a variety of examples of this interest:

> He [went] with me to give recitals in my home town several years. I appreciated that he took time to do that. [Name withheld]
>
> His personal magnetism, and his sincere interest in all his students--personal interest--meant a lot to me and made me want to make him proud of me. . . .
> . . . He was always very supportive of his students. He did so many things to make us feel that support and be conscious of it. For example, . . . driving long distances to be present for recitals in hometowns. . . . I gave a recital all four years I was at OCU in the summer in [my hometown,] Guymon, and he would always be there. I was usually working on some concerto, and he would play the second piano part. . . .
> . . . I knew that he was proud of me and interested in following my progress, and he was always eager to write letters of recommendation for me and try to help me. . . .
> . . . He would sometimes take me to Rotary Club for lunch. I remember him with fondness about those things. [William Godley]
>
> He went out of his way to introduce me to prominent pianists who performed in town. When I was twelve, he arranged a private audition with Van Cliburn.
> Countless times he called to advise me of an educational concert on TV, or brought me over to watch scores with him during a live concert. [Kelly McSweeney Zuercher]
>
> He would occasionally write a letter to my parents, commenting on my progress, on my ability, on what he could see might be some goals I could reach. . . . The motivation was that he really cared sincerely about his student, and because of that care and that concern, you wanted to [work hard]. Probably more than anything, he was driving out [to Weatherford] on a Sunday to

> teach. . . . [With that kind of dedication on his part,] how could you do anything less? [Auda Marie Thomas]
>
> I was motivated by feeling that Dr. Burg understood my needs for learning to become a better pianist and teacher. [Marilyn Witcher]
>
> Rather than motivate, Dean Burg inspired me. He was always a friend as well as a teacher. He was partially responsible for my marriage (which will soon be forty-two years) and always was concerned about my children even after I left OCU for study at the Eastman School of Music. [John A. Roberts]
>
> Dr. Burg supported me as my artistic career grew and he helped me win a Fulbright Scholarship. [Susan Smeltzer Snyder]

Burg's enthusiasm and spontaneity, as well as his great knowledge and curiosity, were motivational, according to several students. Kaye Wilson summed up the comments of a number of others:

> He clearly loved music. This enthusiasm was communicated to me in the lessons. He always had a goal to work towards, which was motivating, and he assigned music I was interested in and challenged by, but that was not totally beyond my abilities.

Roger Price remarked that by fostering an atmosphere of encouragement, Burg helped students accomplish a goal. This in turn led them to find joy in their achievement, which would then spur them on to further accomplishments. Price continues, "Primarily, it was engendering a love of discovery, a love of accomplishment, a love of the music. If that doesn't motivate you, you're in the wrong business."

Only one student had a negative comment on Burg as a motivator. This student writes, "I quit studying at age thirteen--largely because he did not motivate me."

Piano Pedagogy

Of the sixty-seven questionnaire respondents, all but one--who cited health reasons for leaving piano teaching--claim to be currently active in music in some way. A few have had concert careers, and many have combined various types of performance with teaching. However, for the large majority (73 percent), their primary musical activity has been piano teaching, nine of them at the college level.

Virtually all of these former students remember things they learned about piano teaching in their own piano lessons with Burg. Naturally, he himself provided a role model in the way he conducted their lessons. As Joye Hopkins McLain puts it, "I taught the way he taught me." His enthusiasm for teaching, as well as his curiosity and continuing desire to learn more, were frequently mentioned. Several students recall Burg saying that he considered a day lost unless he had learned something new about teaching and playing the piano. Jan Culver reminisced:

> When he would come up with a new way of teaching a passage . . . to meet your needs--maybe with a piece . . . that he'd taught many times before--that just made his day. He was just thrilled. He was going to stash that away for the next time.

Auda Marie Thomas cites Burg's way of teaching her rubato as an example of his enthusiasm, how "he was always actively involved in the lesson; it wasn't just sitting and listening." Even though Burg was in his late seventies, Thomas was impressed with his dynamic method of helping

her vividly experience the concept of rubato. She remembers that he got up and walked across the room with her, directing her to walk steadily, like the regular beat. He himself walked first quickly and then slowly, saying, "I'm the rubato. We're both going to end at the same time." Thomas found this to be an extremely effective teaching tactic.

Several other respondents also mentioned that Burg's ideas on rubato were important to their teaching. "The use of a little rubato in lots of music I had thought should be played 'straight' opened up a whole new way of thinking for me," writes Philelle McBrayer.

Margaret Lorince states, "Most of his basic technical ideas remain part of my teaching," while Ernestine Scott speaks for several others when she declares, "Every teaching technique that he taught me in lessons, I passed on to my students." Referring to Burg's use of each individual piece as a vehicle for teaching technique, Auda Marie Thomas cites Burg's oft-repeated philosophy: "Teach technique if you can apply it to something; don't just teach it to be filling up the time."

Finger and wrist exercises that were not in books were demonstrated by Burg, recalls Cordelia Bennett. She specifically remembers exercises for strengthening her weak fifth finger; these helped her to get a better balance in voicing, especially with the music of Bach. "So," she says, "I've passed that on to my students, starting with the little-finger exercises right away." Bennett also credits Burg with making her aware of the importance of

theory and putting it into practice--for example, the understanding of scales, chords, and arpeggios in all fifteen keys is vital to good technique and the playing of any type of music. She has stressed these interrelationships, along with development of good ears, with her own students, attributing the ideas to her lessons with Burg.

Donna High learned from Burg "that each student is a unique individual with definite needs and talents"; and, adds Kelly McSweeney Zuercher, "to be sensitive to each student's individual needs and to 'go the extra mile' to help and encourage the gifted students." For John A. Roberts, Burg's emphasis was "to take a personal interest in [each] student and continue to motivate them."

From all indications, teaching about teaching was never far from Clarence Burg's mind. "He was always saying <u>why</u> he did things a certain way," writes Bruce A. Brown. "Most important," Brown adds, "he emphasized <u>communication</u> between teacher and student." Auda Marie Thomas recalls that Burg was "always preparing everybody for more than just the performance of a piece of music. [He] was so far ahead, looking ahead." Roger Price asserts that, as Burg taught him each individual idea or technique, he also showed him how to teach that idea or technique to someone else: "He taught you not only the thing, but the approach to it." Besides this manner of teaching at a detailed level, Price adds that Burg demonstrated another level, an "overall approach [as] the kind authority

figure--75 percent praise, 25 percent criticism--always encouraging, establishing a certain [positive] atmosphere in [the lesson]."

Many others also mentioned Burg's positive approach as an important lesson for teachers. The following comments are typical.

> I learned to start with positive comments first, both in teaching or in adjudicating. [As a judge,] I've gotten so much positive feedback; people come up and [tell me], "I'm so glad that you had something good to say." I try to be very positive [in adjudicating] . . . and in teaching. [Ellen Jayne Wheeler]

> I appreciated his recognizing even the slight improvement made in a week's time in the repertoire. He never failed to compliment effort and progress. I try . . . hard to do the same complimenting [with my students]. [Pearl Peveler]

> [I learned] to be generous with praise, to be cheerful and supportive in every case, [yet] to <u>always</u> show the pupil that there is still room for improvement with each piece, and to be <u>faithful</u> in showing him how to play it better every time he plays it for you. "He pays you to make him play better, so do it," [Burg] would say. He showed me in a thousand ways that it is possible to make a student feel better when he leaves my studio than when he entered, no matter how well or not well he played for me. [Myra Schubert]

Patience, kindness, and "being tactful with criticism" were all mentioned by former students as traits of a good teacher that Burg taught by both precept and example. Kaye Wilson says she also learned "the value of gentle encouragement as opposed to harshness or criticism," as well as "the value of stories and analogies for the purpose of illustrating or illuminating a certain point or idea." Patience Latting observed that Burg used "praise as well as criticism." She continues, "Students need to be reminded of their <u>own</u> progress; I think Dr. Burg recognized this, and it was encouraging."

Letting her play through a piece without interruption, even when there were mistakes, was Auda Marie Thomas' example of Burg's patience. It has carried over into her own teaching, as has Burg's idea that he might learn something from listening to a student's interpretation. Thomas reports that now, when she is inclined to stop a student after only a few measures, she thinks, "No, maybe I'd better listen a little longer." She adds, "I really attribute that philosophy in my teaching to his attitude then."

Like several respondents, Sharlyn Matthews cited Burg's ability "to carefully match assigned challenges with attainable goals." She noted that Burg taught the importance of helping students develop good practice habits, and Florence Birdwell named discipline as the major factor Burg both demanded and displayed in his teaching.

LaDonna Meinders learned from Burg "to be thorough." Others, like Virginia Campbell, mentioned Burg's attention to details; she said, "There was no stone left unturned." Joye Hopkins McLain claimed Burg's "unswerving attention to details" was a trait that distinguished him from her other teachers, and two other respondents concurred. Jan Culver expanded on this idea:

> My teaching was drastically changed by him, in every area. I realized, from studying with him, that my responsibility went far beyond notes and rhythms, and it was my responsibility to bring out all these little details. If the student couldn't do it, it was my responsibility to figure out why and to fix it. Before studying with him, I think I probably would have thought, "Well, they just can't do that. That's just one of their weaknesses," instead of becoming the

> encourager, as he was to me. I feel I'm very much that way with my students now.

One former student offered a contrary opinion, however: "He didn't take enough time to explain in detail what he wanted. He could tell you what he wanted, but we were supposed to figure out how ourselves." Another student agreed, saying that he did not learn much about piano teaching in his lessons with Burg: "He could tell you and show you what he wanted. His answer or suggestion for everything seemed to be summed up in one word, Practice." This student added:

> I think, in the long run, Dr. Burg intended for his students to figure most things out on their own. I do use this technique on others, but I am always prepared to make the needed suggestions to help the students reach that goal.

Ray Harris, citing Burg's "specific ideas" on how a piece should be interpreted and played, has saved all the music books used in his study with Burg. Harris adds, "Any pieces I studied with him, I have the music marked and could always refer to it." He specifically named the Bach *Well-Tempered Clavier*, in which Burg had marked fugue subjects and other motifs, as well as the preferred tempo for the pieces. This and other kinds of formal analysis--such as sections, themes, and motives--were important lessons for several respondents, along with identifying and marking phrasing and pedaling.

Malcolm Blazer says Burg taught him to "be thoroughly prepared" and to "be able to demonstrate any part of a composition for a student," but

"never in a pompous or showy way." Judy Gorton comments, "I am only now realizing how important it is to give a young student a model." Burg taught her to "go ahead and perform that piece for the student, give him some idea of the possibilities. His [performance] is not going to be exactly like yours anyway."

Malcolm Blazer adds another important thing he learned from Burg:

> If a student has natural technical ability or can already do something well, don't mess with it. All you can do is ruin it. [For example, Burg] pointed out that my wrist action was very good, showing me what that enabled me to do well; so then we [did] not [need to] work on that.

Burg's business sense and organizational skill provided helpful lessons to several respondents. Leon Whitesell reports, "I found myself gradually applying his remarkably sane ideas on record-keeping, balanced repertoire, common-sense studio policies, (generally the 'business-end' of private teaching)." "The best thing I learned from him was organizational skills," says Ellen Jayne Wheeler. Burg's system of grading music for teaching continues to be very useful to Wheeler. She applies it to every new piece or book she buys, penciling the grade, for level of difficulty, on each one; by filing all materials in that order, she has quick and easy access to them when needed in her teaching.

Burg believed in providing his students with practical experience in teaching. William Godley recalled that piano majors had an opportunity to give piano lessons in OCU's Preparatory Department, where he taught quite

a number of students, thereby gaining valuable experience in teaching while still a student himself. In addition, many of Burg's students were already active teachers, whose needs were very practical and immediate. The comments of several of them attest to how well he met those needs.

> He knew what I mostly wanted was how to teach [each] piece. So his lessons with me would be . . . so many practical exercises for everything.
>
> [For example,] if [we] were working on voicing, he had an exercise. . . in playing a hymn, to play the chord and [hold] the top note down and make the bottom two notes staccato, to learn how to put the weight in the outside part.
>
> [For] balance of melody and accompaniment, play it on your legs, where you could really <u>feel</u> the difference in what your hands were doing. Start off with something [very] simple, like tapping your hands on your legs, [with] your right hand heavier than your left hand. Play a five-finger pattern on your legs, and then try to do what you actually [need to] do in the music, on your legs.
>
> I would take all of this information right back to the studio and try [it] out, put it to use right away. You remember it so much better then. [Jan Culver]

> Since I had been teaching many years before studying with him, he would always get my thoughts on how to teach certain things, and then would either encourage me to continue what I was doing, or . . . offer . . . suggestions as to what might prove to be better. [Evelyn Keeton]

> After I began teaching, I took private lessons mainly to study material that I would teach. He helped me immensely in giving me confidence to "go my own way" and use my own feelings and imagination in interpreting pieces. [Philelle McBrayer]

Most Influential Teaching Techniques

The variety of answers to a question about Burg's most influential teaching techniques indicates both his great breadth of knowledge and his ability to personalize teaching to a particular student's needs. Yet, there were also recurring themes. A number of students were unable to restrict their answer to just one influential teaching technique.

As seen in responses to other questions, many students were strongly impressed by Burg's positive, supportive attitude, both to themselves and to parents and other teachers. One student, who said she left home to study with Burg, noted that he supported her, even when her family did not, giving her his personal attention by sitting with her at a concert. Stephanie Winkler Bouc found that Burg "encouraged motivation from the student," calling this one of his distinguishing characteristics as a teacher. She added that he "did not invoke fear" in her, as her previous teacher had done. Leon Whitesell appreciated Burg's encouragement to him as a young teacher, especially because he was part of a "male minority" in the field of piano teaching. Auda Marie Thomas observed that Burg seemed pleased and interested in her work as an elementary public-school teacher. Rather than demeaning it, as her other teachers did, Burg's focus instead was, "Think of all the people you can influence if you teach in public school." Thomas claims this attitude on Burg's part inspired her to keep going.

Another student, who studied with Burg as a child, remembers that "music was a family thing. We had a family block [lesson] time." The student continues:

> I think what influenced me most was his positive attitude towards me and music. Being the youngest of four, deep inside I competed with my siblings, but I could never catch up in my own eyes. But he never let me think that way. He always praised me and made me feel special. For someone that is a perfectionist like me, that helped me not to give up but rather continue in a psychologically losing battle with my siblings . . . but a truly enjoyable one. He also helped talk my parents into letting me learn other musical instruments, and he was very encouraging about those pursuits. [Name withheld]

Several people related that Burg managed to be kind and encouraging, yet always in charge, an authority figure demanding respect. As an advanced college student, Roger Price recalls observing Burg as he auditioned a prospective pre-college student with her parents. Finding the student not yet ready to study with him, Burg informed the family of this, but made recommendations for her future study and, says Price, "made them feel good about themselves." He adds that Burg "was the smoothest guy I'd ever seen in my life. It was just amazing!" Burg practiced "a gentle approach to teaching," reports John A. Roberts. "He never demonstrated anger at my sometimes lack of preparation, but would make me feel terrible in his disappointment with me--thus, I would struggle to make it up in the next lesson."

Despite his authoritative stance, Burg fostered independence in his students, according to Philelle McBrayer, by "asking questions to help you find your own answers." Another student says that Burg did not insist on only one interpretation of a piece. Students might interpret a piece in their own way, but could expect to be challenged to justify their choices.

Judy Gorton has an unforgettable memory of Burg's typical gesture--gently placing the back of his hand beside her shoulder--to indicate that she should move over so he could sit in her place to demonstrate at the keyboard. A number of respondents were impressed by Burg's ability to demonstrate at the piano both the techniques he was presenting and also the style and interpretation of a piece. Stephanie Winkler Bouc calls Burg "a master of the piano," adding that "he played a composition (or sections) with ease and expected me to play likewise." Several commented that Burg had impressive amounts of music memorized, so that he could not only demonstrate from the piece being studied, but from similar passages in other compositions as well. Burg believed that a pianist should always have something memorized and ready to play at any time, recalls one student, who cited Burg's frequent performance of his arrangement of "The Arkansas Traveler" as an example of his ability to do just that.

Burg's skill in demonstrating at the keyboard, his continuing activity as a performer, or both set him apart from other teachers, according to nearly a quarter of the respondents. One of them made the following

interesting observation: "[Burg] seemed to play the piano at various levels: he enjoyed playing the piano and playing around on the piano." William Brackeen said, "Dr. Burg obviously loved the stage--he loved performing and being out front." Myra Schubert also mentioned Burg's "photographic memory which enabled him to keep memorized hundreds of pieces."

Besides demonstrating how to play, Burg also demonstrated how to teach. One student expressed the idea this way: "He viewed teaching (and practicing) as problem solving." This belief had been set forth in Burg's master's thesis. The student continued:

> He was very creative, and when he had a new idea, or found a new solution, he would write himself a memo and put it under the lid of his grand piano. He was always aware that he was teaching us to teach, by example as well as by exhortation. [Name withheld]

Gari Kyle noted as a key influence Burg's attitude that "the student with you at the moment is totally engrossing, worthy of all your best ideas, and capable of great musical knowledge." Assessing individual differences among students was one of Burg's strong points, says Marilyn Witcher, whose comment summarizes those of several respondents: "I was impressed with his ability to perceive the particular talents of each of his students and to help us to develop them." This ability was a unique attribute Burg had, compared to her other teachers, reported Sharlyn Matthews. She wrote, "I believe he had a truly clear view of the proper goals and directions in which to guide his students." Joye Hopkins McLain

agreed that Burg's "analytical ability to zero in on just what a pupil needed quickly" set him apart from others with whom she had studied. According to Roger Price, Burg excelled at teaching students "where they are, teaching them what they need to know at that point, and yet moving them toward where they need to go." Burg was also good at "choosing appropriate repertoire for students" that they could "enjoy and still learn," says Malcolm Blazer.

Virginia Campbell found Burg skilled at analyzing problems in each student's performance. Auda Marie Thomas was influenced to "be creative, to do whatever it takes for the student to understand, regardless of the age of the student." She added, "You have to [teach] in a way that [the lesson] will become visual and stay with them, not just talk about it." As an example of this, Thomas again recalled how Burg illustrated the concept of rubato: walking across the room with her, first rushing, then slowing down, to represent rubato, while she was instructed to walk steadily to represent the steady beat, with both reaching the other side of the room at the same time. She added that Burg "worked very diligently on rhythm" and had a way of teaching and explaining rhythms that was new to her. Rhythm was taught by Burg not by simply counting the rhythm, but in relation to the style of the piece; not in isolation, but as a part of the whole, Thomas declared.

Various practice techniques were named by many students as Burg's greatest influence on them. Several respondents mentioned Burg's careful

attention to every detail; as one student put it, Burg was "never sloppy. Everything was very precise, and that taught me a lot that applied to all areas of music." In this connection, Evelyn Keeton recalls, "Since I had always done most of my practice at top speed, he really made me see the importance of slow, deliberate practice. I would say accuracy was the most important thing to him, regardless of tempo." Margaret Lorince found Burg's "explanations of how to work with 'trouble spots'" most influential, while Mark Puckett named "a relaxed physical approach to the piano" and Burg's work on phrasing. Ernestine Scott recalls that Burg taught phrasing and movement through having her conduct, and Kaye Wilson reported that Burg "always conducted as I played, as if conducting an orchestra." An approach to phrasing that was most helpful to LaDonna Meinders was Burg's marking the score in four-measure segments, so that each measure receives one count, rather than counting beats by the particular note-value given in the time signature. This method of counting gives the music "life, movement and sweep," said Meinders. Another recollection regarding phrasing came from Pearl Peveler:

> Often as I played, Dr. Burg closed his eyes. However, he was intently listening to every detail. He breathed deeply at phrase endings. I tend to find this an effective technic with my younger students.

Exercises for hand coordination and for relaxing the small muscles of the hand, as well as regular work on proper hand and finger position, were

the most important lessons for some. Joye Hopkins McLain remembers most Burg's "constant encouragement to practice the technical exercises . . . to understand the physical possibilities of the hands." Jan Culver recalled Burg's emphasis on "really studying . . . what your hand is doing" to determine the reason for any problem in executing a passage as she wanted it. Culver said she also frequently uses an exercise Burg taught to strengthen the first joint of the fingers: facing a wall, place all the fingertips on the wall above one's head; then walk backwards, putting the weight on the fingertips, keeping them firm and round and not letting them buckle inward. Several students said that Burg's teaching about arm rotation was important to them. One student found this technique to be very evident in Burg's own playing, making it very facile; but the student did not observe that any of Burg's students seemed to be able to imitate this technique.

Technique and technical studies, including scale work, represent the area of Burg's greatest influence for a number of students. Sharlyn Matthews recalled Burg's "little schemes of technique," such as practicing scales with "wrong fingering" to "master the ability to play difficult passages with no wrong notes." Matthews continues, "Any of his students who worked at these--and the schemes themselves were many and varied--should have been grateful many times in their pianistic lives!" Burg worked on technique in the context of a particular piece, often making up an exercise out of the piece itself. Burg's attitude, according to one

student, was that technique should only be taught when it has a practical application. Myra Schubert also claims technique as Burg's most important influence, summing up her experiences this way:

> He knew every form and idea of technical approach, and knew which technical idea was appropriate with each piece. He did not have one "pet" technique that he forced on everyone. He innately knew which technical workout was needed by each student, and which was appropriate to the passage he was working on. . . . Dr. Burg was very practical in his approach to technique. He taught just what was necessary for one particular piece, but would also give me many other examples from other pieces using the same technique. His clear explanations enabled me to pass this knowledge on to others.

Burg's ideas on memorizing topped the list of influential teaching techniques for a number of respondents. In addition to encouraging advanced students to play their entire lesson from memory, specific methods mentioned include "thinking through musical passages" and "analyzing music as it was learned."

Malcolm Blazer expresses the sentiments of several respondents regarding Burg's influential teaching of performance skills:

> At lessons or recital rehearsals, no stopping was allowed once a section or piece was started. [Burg] stressed that if all you do is stop and start or play [a] few chords or a bravura passage over, that is how you will play it in performance.

Also of great significance to Blazer was the distinction between practicing and playing made in Burg's oft-repeated statement, "I walked by the practice rooms today but I didn't hear anyone practicing--I heard a lot of people playing, but no one practicing." Another point Burg made about practicing

was important to Marilyn White--namely, making efficient use of small blocks of time. Ray Harris was most strongly influenced in both his lessons and Burg's workshops by Burg's use of the bib-like cardboard device that covered students' hands to keep their eyes on the music when reading. It forced them to feel their way around the keyboard, instead of looking up and down from the music to their hands.

Teaching the appropriate style and interpretation of a piece was cited by many as Burg's most important contribution to their piano study. Kelly McSweeney Zuercher mentions Burg's emphasis on style in the areas of meter, phrasing, and dynamics, while Ellen Jayne Wheeler recalls that Burg taught her to listen for dynamic balance. Burg's feel for the "spirit" of each piece impressed Patience Latting. Ellen Govett appreciated Burg's thorough explanation of each new piece, its composer, and the time it was written. After having her sightread the piece as best she could, Burg would then play it for her; says Govett, "hearing him play always created the desire in me to learn to play it as he did." Cordelia Bennett also was much influenced by Burg's demonstration of his stylistic and interpretive ideas. She explained that her previous study had been mainly theoretical--notes, rhythms, and chords; but Burg introduced her to "expression" in playing.

Several students considered Burg's teaching of various aspects of pedaling to be highly influential. These included learning about the proper use of the damper pedal, differing pedal use depending on period and style

of the music, and requiring the student to determine pedaling and mark it extensively in the score. LaDonna Reynolds reported that Burg completely changed her way of pedaling hymns, relating pedal changes to changes of harmony and to phrases of speech and poetry.

One former student, a long-time piano teacher, remarked on a major and wide-spread influence Burg had on piano teaching in Oklahoma--namely, bringing the Guild auditions to the state. This student also said that Burg was "such a fine gentleman [that] he instilled that in his [students]," adding that there are other important things a teacher teaches besides "the technical part of music." Kaye Wilson concurred. She recalled that Burg's "gentlemanly demeanor" made him different from anyone else with whom she had studied.

William Brackeen's recollection of Burg's most influential teaching technique was unique: it was his "non-teaching technique." Brackeen explained, "If you came to a lesson unprepared (according to his standards), he couldn't or wouldn't teach you."

Influence on His Students' Playing

The question, "How did your study with Dr. Burg change your playing?" also produced a variety of responses. Many students mentioned that, under Burg's guidance, they had grown and matured as musicians,

gaining confidence, as well as an expanded knowledge of the piano repertoire:

> Since I studied with him from age seven through twenty-two, he literally shaped and molded my playing. [Kelly McSweeney Zuercher]
>
> Because he was well-rounded in the classical literature, my repertoire broadened. There were a lot of composers that I had never even been exposed to, and he exposed me to a lot of music. [Cordelia Bennett]
>
> I played a greater variety of music. Before, I was playing Haydn and Mozart. Under Burg, I played Beethoven, Copland, Schumann, Bach. . . . The music was more challenging and exciting. [Stephanie Winkler Bouc]
>
> He instilled a "can do" attitude that encourages me. [LaDonna Meinders]

John A. Roberts wrote, "I don't know that [Burg] had any exceptional skills, but he had a charisma that made you often perform beyond your current abilities." This trait set Burg apart from other teachers he had had, Roberts said. Myra Schubert confirmed Burg's ability to inspire:

> [My playing] acquired abandonment and flow, projection of line, a daring of excitement . . . instead of the nervous, hesitant, unclear playing which he first heard from me. . . . From his encouragement and belief in my abilities, I dared to fly around the world three times, giving sacred and classical piano concerts in twenty-five different countries. I would never have dreamed of doing this without Dr. Burg's help and confidence in me.

Burg's students were confident not only in themselves, but also in Burg's abilities as a teacher. Philelle McBrayer said that he inspired her more than her other teachers, adding:

> . . . I always felt comfortable with him, never apprehensive about a lesson, and, therefore, usually did well at the lesson. I had supreme confidence in him, knowing he could help me play well. His praise and encouragement always kept me going when the going was difficult.

Malcolm Blazer felt similar comfort in his lessons and confidence in Burg's ability to direct his studies:

> Everything always seemed natural in the flow and progression from piece to new repertoire. "Now you are ready for this," or "This would be [a] wonderful new composer for you." Never any doubt occurred to me. Nor that any piece, technically or musically was beyond his abilities.

The confidence Burg aroused in his students may have been due in part to his attention to detail, which nearly 20 percent of respondents cited as an important influence he had on their playing. Almost as many noted Burg's emphasis on strong technique. Following are representative comments:

> My work itself, my practice habits, my direction, my knowledge—all of that was very undisciplined. So [by] paying attention to every little detail, . . . [he began] laying the foundation of a disciplined approach to work at the piano. . . . What that meant over five or six years of studying with him was that my playing became cleaner, better thought out, more beautiful in sound. [Roger Price]

> My tradition came from the Russian school (Leschetizky) and my approach was essentially one of sweep and abandon; hence, details were often missing. Dr. Burg's insistence on slow practice, metronome build-up, and a preference for "local" events (vs. the overall "sweep") was also a part of my work with him. [Leon Whitesell]

> [He] took me from being a pretty good piano player to at least feeling that I approached excellence at times. Almost anyone can help someone learn to read music and find the notes and fingering on the

keyboard, but it takes something different to be able to communicate the "fine points." Dr. Burg brought polish and attention to detail to my playing, stage presence, and overall performance, I feel. [Kaye Wilson]

Several former students asserted that Burg placed great importance on good rhythm. Ellen Govett's comments are typical:

> [Burg] made me more aware of keeping the beat steady. . . . He was so helpful with solving clarity problems in difficult passages [by practicing with] accents [such as]
>
> 

Beneficial changes other students observed in their technique as a result of their study with Burg include cleaner and clearer playing, cleaner execution of scale passages, stronger rhythmic control, and not "covering up" with the pedal. One student said Burg had helped her expand her reach; another noted that "even the height of the piano bench changed" to improve posture and optimize use of the arms and shoulders. Still another said that Burg "expanded my physical and mental capabilities."

Several students mentioned improved mental processes as Burg's greatest influence on their playing. They said he taught them to think and to be analytical. He taught them how to memorize, and to do it with accuracy and "no bluffing." On the other hand, one student felt the biggest change Burg brought about in her playing was the ability to keep going in performance, even though it sometimes meant accepting a few wrong notes. These would be minimized, however, because, as other respondents pointed

out, Burg set high standards for his students, encouraging them to be disciplined and careful in their practice, so that they would be well prepared for performance. Furthermore, said one student, frequent performances, which Burg arranged for all his students, were a very important factor in improving her playing.

Several respondents remarked that Burg made them more aware of dynamics, including those beyond the printed score, and Ellen Jayne Wheeler added that proper balance between melody and accompaniment was "a big thing of his." Since a key element of successful execution of dynamics is careful listening, Marilyn White values Burg's influence in this area. "I think I listen better, and with a more critical ear," she asserts.

Regarding interpretation, Ellen Govett recalled that Burg was "so great . . . at trying different approaches." An important thing Ellen Jayne Wheeler learned from Burg was to keep the direction of a melodic line or phrase moving to its climax, while LaDonna Meinders relates, "Sometimes I can almost 'feel' Dean Burg at my side 'conducting' me and helping my music to move along rather than plod." Susan Smeltzer Snyder reports:

> He taught me a lot about sound and style. My playing continued to develop as an artist under Dr. Burg's tutelage. He made me more aware of style and shape within the overall scope of the works.

A number of students declared that, under Burg, their playing changed to give musicality top priority. According to Malcolm Blazer, Burg

urged him to "practice . . . the music, not just pieces," asserting that "technique was necessary, but the music must be the primary goal." From Burg, Blazer also learned "to recognize truly musical playing of great pianists."

Several students appreciated Burg's help in improving their sightreading and accompanying skills. Less tangible but at least as important was Burg's influence on his students' attitudes. Evelyn Keeton observed, "My desire for learning, especially in the classical area, became more intense," while Philelle McBrayer noted, "For the first time in my life I enjoyed practicing!" Lisa Bond Bryan studied with Burg as a child and a teenager and now works as an independent piano teacher, church musician, and children's choir director. She gives Burg credit for her continuing in music: "He pushed me ahead and kept me interested at an age when a lot of pupils quit." Stephanie Winkler Bouc reported a similar experience from her studies with Burg when she was a teenager:

> I learned interesting, challenging music, but did not derive intrinsic pleasure from piano at that time. Dr. Burg's persistence and patience were probably a strong influence that kept me interested in music during a period in my life when my interest definitely waned.

Bouc, who was a flute major and took piano as an elective, says she now spends considerably more time with the piano than with the flute, adding:

> I am most appreciative of teachers like him who continued to work with me, because music is one of the most important aspects of my life now. It is therapy, it is a means of sharing pleasure with others, it

> is my contribution to family weddings and funerals. It plays a vital role in my life.

Although the vast majority of respondents could name many benefits from their piano study with Clarence Burg, a few felt he had done nothing special for them. One student believes Burg lacked emotion, both toward the student and toward music. Another commented, "I don't feel I continued to progress at the same rate as I did under the [previous] more demanding teacher." More wrist tension was experienced by one student while studying with Burg. One response was completely negative: "[Studying with Burg] kept me away from the piano for many years."

Influence Beyond the Piano Lesson

Educational and career choices and directions were influenced by Burg, according to several respondents. One former student, who teaches piano and plays in a variety of settings, said, "He suggested me for the job I still have today, sixteen years later."

Another former student, Ray Harris, reported that he was "very discouraged after a couple of years in school [at OCU] about what I was going to do." He went to Burg to tell him that he was thinking about getting out of music and that his father would pay for him to switch to another area of study, such as law. Harris continued:

> He [Burg] opened the yellow pages and started flipping through there and showed me the section on attorneys, pages and pages and pages, and he said, "Look how many attorneys there are. You've got talent

> in music, and there are not that many great musicians. So do what you are talented at doing."

Harris said that Burg's encouragement, his "sincere interest in seeing me get the degree to do what I wanted to do in music," had a big impact on his life. Harris eventually changed his major to trumpet and earned a master's degree in performance from OCU, but believes the versatility of being quite proficient as a pianist, which he attributes to his training from Burg, has made him more marketable. Of his latest interest, playing jazz piano, Harris says, "The technique from [Burg] will carry over. It's all piano-playing."

Roger Price declared, "He [Burg] turned my dreams into goals. In other words, he assured me that I could accomplish my goals." Price remembers exactly when that happened:

> My junior year, I gave one of my two recitals. I had just played the Beethoven Opus 110. I came off afterwards, and he looked at me and said, "You can be a concert pianist." He told me why, things he heard in the playing. That increased [my self-confidence]. . . . That was the year I turned things around in how I worked and how I dedicated myself. That was the kind of encouragement [Burg gave]. . . . He took dreams that I had and gave them the reality of simply being goals to work toward. . . .

Many students bore witness to Burg's influence not only on their playing, but also more broadly on their current involvement in music and their life as a whole. Kaye Wilson studied with Burg about ten years, including the time while earning her piano degree at OCU. She commented on both aspects of his impact on her:

> My whole life was enriched by learning the beautiful music I did, by learning the attention to detail, the ability to work on many pieces concurrently and bring them to performance level at the same time, by the poise I gained in competing and performing. His approval was, at that time in my life, very important to me . . .

LaDonna Meinders expressed similar sentiments:

> I knew him from the time I was eighteen, and he was like "family" to me. I will never forget his telling me (in an effort to help me avoid stagefright) "not to take myself so damn seriously!" This is good advice for most of us, in many situations. His influence was profound.

Mark Puckett studied with Burg during his formative and early college years, going on to earn a doctorate and become a professor of music. He reflected that Burg "was a great influence in my interest in music as a young person" and that "he was a fine example as a person." Patrick Hays, who now works as a church organist and accompanist to singers, took lessons from Burg during junior and senior high school. Regarding his current involvement in music, Hays said of Burg, "He planted the seed." Beyond that, Hays feels that Burg was influential in that "he was wholesome and cheerful."

Reflecting on Burg's influence beyond the lesson or class, one student commented, "He tried to prepare us to take our places in the community." Joye Hopkins McLain has done just that, having long been an active supporter of musical activities in Oklahoma City, as well as a singer in her church choir. Although she taught piano for just a short time, McLain

occasionally performs at the piano for clubs or other small groups. She remembered, "'Keep playing,' he always said to me. I do."

Patti Lucas Briggs is another former Burg student who is active in music, though not professionally. Briggs has not had the opportunity to teach piano since college, except for elementary instruction to her young daughter. However, she reports, "I've had an ever-expanding interest in all music since graduation, from attending concerts to playing in bell choir."

Patience Latting did not major in music, but studied piano all through college, following lessons with Burg as a teenager. Besides seeing to it that all four of her children had piano lessons and supporting her grandchildren's efforts on the instrument, she currently studies piano herself and has recently accepted a volunteer position as accompanist of a small choir. A life-long supporter of community musical activities, Latting writes of Burg's influence on her:

> I have never forgotten the pleasure--and work--my year's study with him brought me, and my memories of that have certainly contributed to my desire now to take piano lessons. He helped to broaden my knowledge of the classical piano repertoire and helped me to appreciate it more, both as a performer and as a listener.

Burg's various admirable personal qualities were the subject of many comments by questionnaire respondents, as they recalled Burg's influence on them, both within and beyond their lessons. For some, these qualities were paramount:

> I remember his influence as a person and a musician more than I remember his teaching techniques. He was a wonderful man who was fun to be around. He treated the four children in our family like we were his grandkids . . . I think he had a way of making all of us feel very special. [Linda Bond Bryan]
>
> I think the influence he exerted on me was stronger personally than musically, although he pushed me, and I'm sure it was partly because of his recommendation that I got that Danforth [Fellowship]. He was always very interested in whatever I was doing, always very encouraging in the years that followed. . . . As a man, he was a very admirable person. . . . The things that he did in Oklahoma City must have been a great encouragement for young people. Many children must have been greatly inspired. [William Godley]

One of Burg's personal characteristics that was often mentioned was his patience. Students experienced Burg's patience with them and attempted to practice patience with their own students. In a rather unusual application of Burg's teaching, Sharlyn Matthews reported that he taught her "to be patient with myself. With proper and consistent practice one can achieve many goals." She continued, "I have applied his practice thought techniques in many areas of artistic endeavor, including calligraphy and pottery. What fun to know you 'can' if you work properly!!"

A number of former students felt Burg's concern for them included their whole life, as one person commented: "Dr. Burg took a holistic interest in each student." These respondents believed that Burg took a personal interest in them and that he was their friend, as the following statements indicate:

> I think that Dr. Burg took a personal interest in me, and we were friends. . . . not only he, but he and his wife. . . . He was a person who

did a lot of talking and giving advice, other than musical advice. . . . He gave me some personal advice from his experiences in life, and I think that really influenced me as I went along. [Cordelia Bennett]

At one point in my life, it was quite a thing when he stopped teaching. He was a very good friend, always interested in what I was doing and interested in me musically. . . . He died after my parents and grandparents did, so he was really a key to my childhood. . . . I'm very grateful that I had my great piano foundation with that man. [Virginia Campbell]

He took a special interest in me and prepared me for contests and performances. . . . Dr. Burg was mostly at the "root" of my musical tree. He guided me, encouraged me greatly, and praised me a lot as I grew artistically, and performed with orchestras and gave concerts. [Susan Smeltzer Snyder]

Snyder also said she was influenced by Burg's "warm personality and genuine approach to life," adding, "Dr. Burg was a good Christian man." Many others were similarly impressed by Burg's Christianity, standards of conduct, and positive outlook:

I know Dr. Burg was a Christian because we discussed our faiths in God and our dependence on God to get us through the tense and trying moments of life, whether it be musical or otherwise. [Gerald Monson]

I can recall him quoting passages from the Bible to me at low points in my life, or when I was in need of encouragement and guidance.

I believe I learned a lot from him about how to be a person of integrity and a person who works hard to fully develop his particular gifts.

I'm sure Dr. Burg is largely responsible for much of the success and enjoyment I find in the music profession today. [Kelly McSweeney Zuercher]

He was a man of tremendous faith and discipline. It was a challenge for me to emulate that. [Marilyn White]

> Optimism figures prominently in my memory of his life and work. He was so encouraging; I hope that I can convey just a fraction of his enthusiasm and professionalism. Dr. Burg was capable of inspiring one to think that "all things are possible." He taught me to rise above any "mood of the moment"--to look for the "sunny side" of life! [Leon Whitesell]

> He gave me a vision of music as a philosophy. He presented music as a means of communicating and expressing my joy for life. [Bruce A. Brown]

Burg's Strengths as a Piano Teacher

One or more of Burg's personality characteristics were cited by over 60 percent of those who responded to a question regarding his strengths as a piano teacher. "In a way, he treated his students like they were his children--or grandchildren!" Kelly McSweeney Zuercher declared. Several others made similar comments. "He was a 'people' person--always genuinely interested in everyone. He had an incredible zest for life which kept him young," Zuercher reflected. She cited these as qualities that set Burg apart from her other teachers. Donna High added, "He really liked people. . . . His enjoyment of people and life was a very attractive quality." An example of this is an anecdote, related by Gari Kyle, that also demonstrates Burg's "wondrous memory for names, social ties, pieces a person had played well many years ago--all enormously flattering to those around him":

> At a musical event, I (and she) were both astounded when Dr. Burg walked straight to the mother of one of my students and said, "Why, Thelma (maiden name), it's so good to see you. Are your parents still

> on that farm in Anadarko?" She had had a few "master lessons" with him as a high school student fifteen or so years before. I had no idea she'd ever played.

Kyle named additional personality traits among Burg's strong points: "He had a healthy ego, projected absolute authority . . ." Leon Whitesell agreed, commenting that Burg's strong personality set him apart from other teachers and allowed him to have "no fear when publicizing his own accomplishments, or those of his pupils." Kyle added that Burg's ego and authoritative manner were "softened by old-fashioned good manners and a fine sense of humor." Others also recalled Burg's sense of humor, noting that he had a relaxed manner and provided a relaxed learning environment:

> He could make a lesson a fun experience to remember--like when he told me he was ninety years old and then clicked his heels twice in the air, then just laughed and laughed. [Donna High]

> He was a wonderful man who was fun to be around. He treated the four children in our family like we were his grandkids--taking us to concerts, sitting with us, sharing ice cream, etc. . . . I think he had a way of making all of us feel very special. [Linda Bond Bryan]

> I always felt comfortable and relaxed with him. . . . I thoroughly enjoyed every lesson. He could laugh with me. I could get rather dramatic . . . Then he would just sit back and laugh at me, but he was never demeaning. Then I could laugh at myself. [LaDonna Reynolds]

Also mentioned as strengths were Burg's energy and enthusiasm. This enthusiasm, along with his high expectations for his students, set Burg apart from their other teachers, according to several respondents. Burg's "personal charm and polished manner" were also cited among Burg's strong

points, and here, too, Burg distinguished himself from other teachers. Joye Hopkins McLain's comment that Burg had "an extremely likable personality" typifies those of several respondents.

Besides Burg's "open friendliness with everyone," Myra Schubert also appreciated "his lack of prejudices." Echoing this, a black student, Cordelia Bennett, reflected:

> If he had any racial differences, those were put aside when it came to what I was able to receive educationally from him. Music was his life. He wanted to bring out your ability and talent, no matter what your color was. He never really showed me any indication of his having a problem with race.

Another important attribute Bennett mentioned was Burg's "personal concern for me as an individual and where I was going with music." As an example of this concern, she continued:

> A lot of times he called me personally, in my room, when he'd remember something that I'd need to do in my practice. He'd say, "Have you done so and so?" or "You need to look at this when you're going through that piece." I think he took special time with me, once he realized that I was wanting to apply myself.

Burg's "personal concern" was also experienced by many other questionnaire respondents. Ellen Jayne Wheeler observed Burg's "interest in the total life of the student," adding that "he kept up with them throughout their lives." Dorothy Lee Carter Howard confirmed this: "He knew my husband [and] children, and I saw him every time we were in Oklahoma City." Howard said "the great personal interest he showed in his students" set Burg apart from her other teachers. Philelle McBrayer recalled:

> He gave of himself and his experience the entire lesson time, making me think I was the only person who counted during that time. Even as dean of music at OCU, he wouldn't let anything interfere with my lesson.

William Godley felt Burg showed interest in him personally, and also "was really supportive of all his students, really cared about them, wanted them to excel." Another student explains how Burg's strengths as a teacher extended beyond the lesson:

> He was positive and was eager to share his love for music. This included not just the music lesson time, but the many times we saw him at the Symphony, or other music events. He seemed to want to expose me to lots of new, fun music and have me perform (polished or not) in as many contests and recitals as possible. That is good for beginners. He also helped my family to enjoy music as a family and I think that was very important at that time.

Burg's patience, kindness, understanding, and encouragement were mentioned again and again as strengths by his former students. Following are representative comments:

> [One of his strengths was] his forbearance of emotional or physical stresses in the student. (Often he would give me gingersnaps if I seemed tired or hungry, and listened, not indulgently but patiently, to something that might have me emotionally stressed out.) And he was usually encouraging. [Kaye Wilson]

> Great motivation and encouragement. Always willing to give extra. Many extra lessons. [Malcolm Blazer]

> He expected results, but was always understanding. [Margaret Lorince]

> He knew when to boost your ego. [Patrick Hays]

According to one student, Burg was firm, but objective. Others pointed out his positive attitude, "his unwavering optimism," and his "positive motivation to accomplish your best--by practice and by challenges; sometimes to exceed your best." Pearl Peveler commented, "His 'father' type person made students feel comfortable. His professional side made students want to try harder to get up to his standards." Peveler feels these traits set Burg apart from other teachers. Several other respondents agreed. Patience Latting referred to Burg's "high expectations of his students," while Marilyn White declared, "He never settled for the easy way out. He was demanding."

Burg's ability to challenge his students was often mentioned as a strength in his teaching. Kaye Wilson reported, "His ability to motivate and challenge me was way beyond that of anyone else." Among other things, Burg challenged students by arranging frequent performance opportunities, by setting high standards, and by using high-quality, interesting repertoire that was always geared to each student's capabilities. Burg also insisted on setting goals, such as a recital date, and meeting these responsibilities without delays or cancellation, recalls one respondent.

Many cited Burg's awareness of individual differences among students as a strong point. This allowed him to choose pieces and teaching techniques to fit each pupil. "One of his greatest gifts was his ability to choose music uniquely suited to the individual," declared Kaye Wilson.

Mark Puckett, who studied with Burg from childhood through college, commented that Burg "was able to keep a student interested through difficult ages." Ellen Jayne Wheeler admired Burg's "practicality, in realizing only the few continue as professionals." However, she asserts, "He was interested in the development of the love of music in the student, no matter what level of involvement the student chose later in life." Furthermore, wrote Marilyn Witcher:

> He had the ability to recognize the potential of his students, assess their strengths, understand their goals, and help them to achieve them. He helped develop performers, accompanists, composers, teachers, and leaders in the professional field.

One-fourth of the respondents were inspired by Burg's skill as a pianist, along with the fact that he continued to be an active performer all his life. A number of them also alluded to the importance of his demonstrations at the piano in their lessons. Jan Culver attested to another dimension of Burg's strength as a performer-teacher:

> Somebody who can perform so well often doesn't make the best teacher. . . . he really could perform well, and yet he had the patience to be able to teach other people how to do that, too. Those two things often don't go hand in hand.

Moreover, said Culver, Burg had the "ability to teach a teacher," as well as to "explain [something] until you caught on, so he didn't have just one way of explaining something." Mark Puckett admired Burg's ability to "describe concepts in concise terms."

"His ability to analyze problems and offer suggestions for the repair of these problems" was Burg's best attribute as a piano teacher, believes John A. Roberts. Philelle McBrayer corroborates: "I don't believe I ever had a problem in a piece that he couldn't help me solve, whether it was technical or interpretive."

Auda Marie Thomas feels Burg's great strength was "doing whatever it took to make the student successful . . . never what would make him look good as a teacher. It was always what was for the benefit of the student." This approach produced independent students, according to Bruce A. Brown: "Dr. Burg's greatest strength was his ability to turn the student loose, to find his own way musically." Sharlyn Matthews also valued the preparation for future success that Burg gave her:

> For me, he seemed to see clearly my potential and gave me the tools (mental and physical technique) to accomplish always more. [I was startled to be given almost no further technical studies when at Eastman for my M.M. I discovered that other students were given tons of it. Thinking on this I decided that I had probably been analyzed by the professor there as in not much further need of technical advice and proceeded to allow him (José Echaniz) to inspire and coach me at will. Probably gave my best recital ever at that point in life. Thanks to Dr. Burg for that freedom!]

Joye Hopkins McLain recalls Burg's "detailed knowledge and the ability to articulate it" as one of his strong points. Many other former students attested to Burg's vast knowledge--of the piano repertoire, of piano technique, and of interpretation and style. Ray Harris was impressed with "that definitive way of his, of knowing the music so intimately, and every

detail of it: 'Here's how this fingering will work on this passage,' 'Here's how this phrasing is,' and 'Here's the theme that you want to hear'--that complete knowledge of everything that he was teaching." Harris asserted, "That was just far beyond anyone else I had ever studied with." Kaye Wilson also said Burg was unique among her teachers in that he seemed "very knowledgeable as to repertoire."

Specifically regarding technique, respondents mentioned two areas in particular where Burg displayed special strength--wrist techniques for speeding up runs and pedaling. LaDonna Reynolds comments, "I just felt the man knew everything. . . . When I walked out of each lesson, I felt I had learned so much, that I had really gained. I never felt there was a weakness."

Respondents admired Burg's efforts to continue his personal growth. In spite of his already extensive knowledge, Burg engaged in a "constant quest for new/better/improved teaching and learning techniques," reports one person. Another notes, "He was interested and curious regarding many non-musical subjects." Still another says Burg set a fine example for his students in performance and involvement in public affairs.

Several people remarked on Burg's reputation as a great teacher, one who could develop a talented student. One student said this reputation was the characteristic that distinguished Burg from all other teachers. Calling him a "winning teacher," Virginia Campbell claimed, "When you studied

with Dr. Burg, you studied with the top of the tree in the state of Oklahoma." She said you could count on the fact that Burg's students would perform well and that you would hear good music when they were on the program. These things set Burg apart from her other teachers, Campbell said.

Others observed Burg's attention to musical concepts and listening for great music-making, as opposed to mere technical emphasis. Patience Latting was impressed with Burg's ability to make music a link between composer, performer, and listener. Kelly McSweeney Zuercher cited a particular gift Burg had: "A tremendous heritage to pass on from his teachers--Rudolph Ganz, Matthay, and others." Patrick Hays confirmed that "you learn a lot from stories of the past." Burg's "wisdom of the old school" caused Hays to feel "a musical link to the past," he said, adding that, in fact, this was a trait that set Burg apart from his other teachers. Kaye Wilson agreed with Hays, that Burg's sharing of his experiences was like no other teacher she had had. She recalled:

> I loved hearing his stories about his life, and was amazed at his seeming indifference to the historical events he had lived through. For example, during a trip to Germany he saw Hitler and his troops goose-stepping through the streets as well as Jews being herded into trains, but the point of the story was the magnificent opera and opera house in, I think, Bayreuth.

For Pearl Peveler, Burg's strength lay in his encouragement of students' interaction--to learn from and support one another. Leon

Whitesell found Burg's "disciplined business procedures" to be of great benefit. Burg was also business-like in the lesson, according to Stephanie Winkler Bouc. "He always wanted to see my notebook containing [a] list of compositions," she said. "Each lesson was dated." Bouc cited this requirement as evidence that Burg was "more organized than other teachers," a feature that set him apart from her other instructors.

One negative response to the question was received:

> Clarence Burg was kind to me and I do remember him fondly, but I have come to realize that his strengths as a piano teacher, whatever they were, were shared with and witnessed by others, not me.

Burg's Weaknesses as a Piano Teacher[25]

One respondent reported, "From the five to six years I studied with Dr. Burg, I am not aware of having learned anything from him." However, one-third of those answering a question regarding Burg's weaknesses as a piano teacher were unable to name a single one.

A number of former students cited various concerns with the lesson situation. One student felt Burg spent too much time playing in her lessons, while another found Burg's time management a problem:

> He would lose track of time. He would get so carried away on one point of concern that a full hour would fly by before he would realize it, then he would apologize for not being more careful with the time. He always answered his phone during lessons, and would

[25]Comments throughout this section will not be identified with the respondents' names.

> talk as long as necessary to meet that person's needs, never mentioning that he was teaching. He spent a great deal of time (toward the last) in telling me one story after another that happened years before.

Two others also mentioned that Burg received frequent phone calls during lessons, and three people said he sometimes did paperwork, such as typing letters. Four reported Burg dozed on occasion or was inattentive while teaching. However, most were forgiving of these lapses because they said Burg was getting old or was very busy, and that he still managed to give them the attention they needed.

Certain of Burg's personality characteristics were troublesome for some respondents. One person felt that Burg was overly interested in the money charged for lessons. A former student recalled that at times Burg seemed harsh and impatient, and one observed that Burg lacked emotion or empathy, as well as one-on-one communication skills. Another agreed, saying that Burg put concerns of the university, of "academia, money, time constraints, and discipline ahead of personal caring." Providing a personal example, the student reported that Burg advised dropping out of OCU during the senior year, instead of helping to work out a solution to some peculiar personal problems so the student could complete the degree. Others made it possible for this person to graduate, but the student says, "I resented Burg for a long time for that."

Citing Burg's "overpowering personality," one respondent claimed Burg "could be a bit overbearing in trying to make a decision for me, even as an adult student." In this student's opinion, such a trait might prevent weaker or younger pupils from developing independence or having their own ideas.

According to a few students, Burg was sometimes forgetful, repeating things that he had said in a previous lesson. One student recalled frustration in trying to anticipate what piece Burg would hear at the lesson:

> I'd spend the whole week working on all the details of, say, the Italian Concerto that we'd just gone through at the previous lesson. I'd come in excited to show him how well I'd followed his instruction, only to have him say, "Well, I heard that last week; let me hear your Chopin Scherzo."

"I was unable to respond to his motivation style," commented one former student. Another felt "Dr. Burg did not push me as hard as he could have." The student continued, "I knew that I could do so much more, and I knew that he knew. There were times when I secretly wished that he would get really firm and demand more work from me." One respondent complained, "I had many extraordinary musical gifts which Dr. Burg never knew of (i.e., improvisation, ability to play my pieces in different keys, ability to play anything on the piano after hearing it only once, etc.) I wished he had known how gifted I was."

Three students believed Burg's technique instruction could have been better:

He told me many times, "You have plenty of technique," and I never believed him. . . . He approached developing technique primarily through the repertoire that he gave. But I think [there should have been greater emphasis on] developing a daily technical routine. Like any other physical, athletic activity, if you have the daily routine, it warms you up and it develops what you do, develops your strength each day.

By the time I finished my junior year, I felt I was behind my peers in technique. That spring several of us were selected to perform for Nadia Reisenberg at a workshop. After hearing the others play, I felt pretty inadequate in that area. Although I performed just fine, I just felt something was lacking. I didn't know that two of his other students came away feeling the same way. We each talked to [OCU School of Music] Dean Mayer individually and selected new teachers for our senior year.[26] This transpired without any communication among the three of us.

If you had good technique, Dr. Burg could help you develop it more. If you didn't have good technique, Dr. Burg couldn't or wouldn't make the needed suggestions to make it better.

However, the following comments reflect a different perspective on technique:

We did just an awful lot of technique. . . . If there was anything that was lacking for me, it was the utter musicality. . . . [I wanted] a little less technical, analytical approach toward the music--a little too analytical.

He didn't ever talk, as I remember, about how important it was to make music. It was always technique . . . and this motion and that movement. Of course, in order to make music, one has to have a certain technical ability, a certain level of technique, or otherwise, it's impossible [to make music]. [But] I think it would have been better if there had been more of an emphasis on music, a reverence for music,

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[26]Several other students left Burg's studio, especially as he grew older, to study with other teachers. The reasons for these departures seem to be primarily age-related problems. Since he continued teaching until nearly ninety, many responses came from people who studied with Burg when he was quite elderly. As a number of comments here indicate, even students who did not change studios experienced some difficulties they associate with his aging.

an emphasis on how important it was always to listen and to try to make the piano sing.

Other students wished for more instruction in voicing and phrasing, more help with memorization, and "more attention to musical interpretation and style." Two would have liked more work with repertoire of modern composers, one with Baroque music as well; however, both these students blamed lack of time, not Burg's weakness, for the deficiency.

One student felt that "some of his ideas were old school." Another admired Burg's efforts to inspire everyone to study "very difficult 'oak trees' of piano literature." However, observed this respondent, "sometimes his dreams were not totally realized, of course. Also, sometimes pupils appeared to be 'miscast' and gave less than adequate performances."

Several students wished for guidance for the future or any sort of career counseling from Burg, but did not get it. Following are two opinions on the subject:

> [Burg gave] no career advice. I wanted to accompany singers! He discouraged this because he said the singers were just flattering me. It's great to know Chopin and Beethoven and Bach pieces, but those pieces you learned aren't practical for everyday "making a living."

> He never tried to warn me about the struggles that were ahead if I were going to follow [piano performance] as a career.

CHAPTER 4

TEACHER OF TEACHERS

High Standards for Music Teachers

Around 1915, while still in his early twenties, Clarence Burg became a charter member of the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association. As a representative of that organization, he worked in the Arkansas State Senate and the State Board of Education for the licensing and certification of music teachers, demonstrating his belief in the importance of setting high standards for the state's music teachers and improving the quality of the profession. He believed that the ASMTA itself should provide learning and growth opportunities for members at its annual conventions, as well as on other occasions. Burg helped to shape the organization and its activities toward accomplishing these goals through his active membership and as an officer, serving first as secretary and later as vice-president.

Moving to Oklahoma in 1928, Burg once again played an important role in forming a professional organization for the music teachers of the state. He was the organizing chairman and drafted a constitution and by-laws for the group, later called the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association.

At a meeting in 1929, the document was adopted and the newly organized group elected Burg as its first president. Less than two years after that, he began serving on the OMTA's committee that administered the first examinations for certifying Oklahoma private music teachers. As he had done in Arkansas, Burg worked to build the organization so that its annual convention and other activities would provide members with opportunities for professional development, thus enhancing the profession as a whole.

In the 1930s and 40s, Burg worked for the Oklahoma State Board of Education, the Oklahoma Board of Regents (Higher Education), and the Oklahoma Federation of Music Clubs in various capacities. All of these efforts were aimed at raising the standards for music teaching in the state.

Also in the early 1940s, Burg conducted a national survey of piano teachers while completing a Master of Music degree at the Eastman School of Music. The results of this survey and his own experiences as a college teacher and administrator led Burg to report in his thesis, "Problems of the Private Piano Teacher," that many piano instructors have minimal training for teaching, many do not have degrees in music, and many neglect continuing education after becoming active in the profession.

Piano Teachers' Workshops

As a result of these many and varied activities, Burg concluded in the early 1950s that he could provide a much-needed service by offering

workshops for piano teachers. At the time, almost no college courses or degree programs in piano pedagogy existed, so most teachers taught piano as they themselves had been taught, with few alternatives available. Therefore, Burg established his Eureka Springs (Arkansas) Piano Teachers Workshops.

Beginning in 1954, these workshops took place for a week each summer through 1965 and attracted teachers from a number of states. Topics of Burg's lectures were as follows:

> Use of a syllabus for pre-college piano students
>
> Grading and selecting teaching materials, with repertoire lists on handouts and displays of many pieces, graded and classified by Burg
>
> Teaching technique, rhythm and tempo, interpretation, memorization, sightreading, and pedaling, with sample pieces and demonstration teaching of these concepts
>
> Group teaching
>
> Motivating and evaluating students
>
> Overcoming stage fright
>
> Use of conducting by the piano teacher

Also included were sessions focusing on vocational problems of the private piano teacher, such as tuition rates, scheduling, teaching load, and certification; panel discussions by experienced teachers; and demonstration teaching of students of elementary through high-school ages.

Some of the students Burg taught in his demonstration-teaching sessions were enrolled in his Junior Workshop. This was offered at a reduced fee to students ages twelve through eighteen. Besides playing in demonstration lessons, they attended most of the workshop sessions for teachers and took advantage of the recreational activities available.

Always the wise businessman, Burg scheduled his workshops to coincide with the closing week of opera performances given in Eureka Springs by the Inspiration Point Fine Arts Colony. Workshop participants had evenings free, so they could attend performances if they wished. The workshop sessions were held at the Crescent Hotel, which provided attendees a "Package Vacation," including "swimming in the hotel pool, tennis, shuffleboard, croquet, horseshoes, ping-pong, bingo and a moonlight hayride with a stop at an old-fashioned Ozark square dance."[1] Besides nearby horseback riding and bowling, the hotel's location in Eureka Springs, "The Little Switzerland of America," provided guests with opportunities for shopping or strolling on the village's quaint, winding streets; hiking on scenic Ozark Mountain trails; or simply relaxing on its porch.

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[1][Clarence Burg], brochure for the Twelfth Annual Piano Teachers Workshop, Eureka Springs, AR, 25-31 July 1965, 1.

From 1966 through 1978, Burg held his workshops at OCU, where participants then had the option of receiving college credit.[2] Recreation opportunities, such as musical theater performances by Oklahoma City's Lyric Theatre, were also available. The format and lecture topics remained much the same as they had been at the Eureka Springs workshops, and teaching demonstrations and music lists and displays were still included. In one of the responses on her questionnaire, Gari Kyle summarized: "His workshops offered sample lessons, specifics of published aids such as cards, games, various drills. . . . He had a strong practical streak and used other teachers, panel discussions, student performers, . . . to excellent advantage."

Not long after moving his workshops to OCU, Burg tightened up the daily schedule and extended the workshop to six full days, with two three-day courses. The first course was the Piano Teachers Workshop, containing almost everything that had been in the Arkansas workshops. The second was the Pre-College Piano Repertoire Class, representing an expansion of the demonstration teaching and study of repertoire, focused primarily on the intermediate and advanced level student.

Burg began offering this second course at the request of a group of Oklahoma City teachers. They said many workshops were available on

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[2]Burg had long taught an OCU course in piano pedagogy for piano majors. When he began holding his teacher workshops at OCU in 1966, many university piano students opted to take the summer workshop, which satisfied their course requirement. Since the content of the pedagogy course and the summer workshop was essentially the same, the two were treated as one in the questionnaire to former students and, therefore, in this paper.

teaching beginners, but they felt they needed help in choosing repertoire for and teaching the more advanced junior and senior high-school students. Accordingly, Burg designed a class that differed from the teacher workshop in the areas that were emphasized. In addition to analyzing, playing, and discussing how to teach the repertoire suitable for these older pupils, Burg offered suggestions on "how to save the potential 'drop-out,' the student who needs the stimulus of new challenges and higher goals."[3] There was a daily teaching demonstration of more advanced students, who were taken from the studios of the teacher participants, with a few from Burg's own studio. A number of teachers attended the workshop and particularly, the repertoire class, year after year. They did so largely because of the teaching demonstrations that used different students and different pieces of music each year, as well as Burg's annual additions of new music materials to his display. Kay Scott is typical of these teachers and of the clientele Burg had in mind when he designed his workshops. Although she does not have a music degree and never attended college, Scott has for a long time operated a flourishing piano studio in the small town of Okmulgee, Oklahoma. After learning about Burg's workshops, she attended one and found it very helpful, especially the pre-college session. She returned nearly every year from then on until Burg stopped giving his workshops, because, she

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[3][Clarence Burg], brochure for Piano Teachers Workshop, 1-3 August 1977, and Pre-College Piano Repertoire Class, 4-6 August 1977 at Oklahoma City University, 3.

explained, "I wanted to really prepare high school students to the best of my ability." A number of Scott's students played for Burg's teaching demonstrations. She herself took many notes, collected lots of repertoire lists and other handouts, and "thoroughly enjoyed" the annual sessions, almost like a vacation. Scott said that the high-quality workshop, including only two dollars per night for lodging in the OCU dormitory, was a "bargain not to be beat."[4]

As the workshops gained in popularity, Burg was invited to present them outside of Oklahoma. So he expanded his schedule to include other states. Among them were Virginia, Illinois, Hawaii, Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, and Kansas.[5]

Junior Master Classes

Another teacher-education venture Burg offered was a "Junior Master Class." In the brochure publicizing Burg's twelfth annual piano teachers workshop in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, in July 1965, a brief biographical sketch of Burg included the following information:

> During the winter season and early summer Dr. Burg is available for workshops. These are usually sponsored by colleges, universities, music teachers associations, or by other groups. In connection with a workshop he may be engaged to play a "Young Peoples Concert" with explanatory remarks. Of interest to private

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[4]Kay Scott, Okmulgee, OK, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 27 June 1995.

[5]"Burg to Offer Teacher Tips," *Oklahoma City Sunday Oklahoman*, 6 August 1972.

teachers is his one-day "piano clinic" in the form of a "Junior Master Class" given in the teacher's studio.[6]

A 1964 newspaper article announcing Burg's annual workshop gave the following information about these classes: "He [Burg] is particularly noted for his one-day 'piano clinics.' Sessions are held for different age groups. Each pupil is heard in turn and Burg offers suggestions for benefit of the performer, other pupils and parents in attendance."[7]

As a child and teenager in Sulphur, Oklahoma, Jan Culver fondly remembers attending such classes annually, beginning in 1955, while studying piano with Ellen Govett.[8] Govett is not certain when she first invited Burg to Sulphur for a clinic, although she herself took piano lessons from him in 1940-42 while earning a degree from OCU.[9] Other teachers who availed themselves of these learning experiences may have sponsored Burg clinics before Govett did, but this cannot be determined because these teachers could not be located or are now deceased. Other teachers who are known to have hosted a junior master class by Burg are Georgia Winton of Altus, Oklahoma, and Dora S. Popejoy of Anadarko, Oklahoma.

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[6]Burg, brochure for Eureka Springs Workshop, 4.

[7]"Dr. Burg Set For Workshop," *Oklahoma City Times*, 16 July 1964.

[8]Culver, telephone interview by author, 21 June 1995.

[9]Ellen Govett, Sulphur, OK, telephone interview by author, Tape recording, Oklahoma City, 18 June 1996.

For many years, Burg devoted much of his time and energy to teacher-training activities. Whatever the effect of his work in other states, there is no doubt he played a large part in bringing the quality, and even the quantity, of piano teaching in Oklahoma up to the level it has achieved today.

Questionnaire Responses on Burg's Piano Pedagogy Teaching

A questionnaire (see Appendix A) mailed to eighty-one former Burg students yielded sixty-seven responses, or 81 percent. Chapter 3 reported answers to the twelve questions (numbers 7-18) regarding Burg's piano teaching. Also included were applicable responses to questions numbered 33-35, regarding skills and traits that set Burg apart from other teachers with whom the respondent had studied, Burg's influence beyond the lesson, and his effect on the respondent's current involvement in music.

This chapter summarizes responses to the fourteen questions (numbers 19-32) on Burg's teaching of piano pedagogy, as well as relevant responses to questions numbered 33-35. The responses in this chapter came from the forty-nine former students who said they had taken either a pedagogy class or workshop or both from Burg. Thirty-nine of these forty-nine respondents had taken piano lessons from Burg, as well as a pedagogy class or workshop.

Questions included in the pedagogy section of the questionnaire covered the topics on the workshop agenda in Burg's workshop brochures. Respondents were asked what they learned from Burg in the following areas: 1) differences in teaching young children, older children, teenagers, advanced students, including college students, and adult hobby students; 2) teaching fundamentals of music, piano technique and tone production, fingering, rhythm, dynamics, phrasing, pedaling, musical interpretation, memorization, and sightreading and ear training; 3) preparing students for contests or auditions; 4) motivating students; 5) grading, selecting, and presenting new repertoire; 6) group piano teaching; and 7) organizational and business aspects of independent piano teaching. Additional questions sought respondents' opinions on the influence of Burg's pedagogy teaching on their own teaching and Burg's strengths and weaknesses as a pedagogy teacher.

Teaching Students of Different Ages and Stages of Development

Former students were asked what they had learned from Burg about differences in teaching various types of students. Responses were sought regarding students of various ages--young children, older children, and teenagers--and at different stages of development--advanced students, including college students, and adult hobby students.

A number of respondents chose to comment in general about Burg's teaching of different types of students, rather than addressing each category separately. Burg's ideas on how to select literature appropriate for each student were frequently mentioned, with several people referring to his graded repertoire lists. Auda Marie Thomas recalled that pedagogy workshop participants would be asked to examine many pieces, some played for them by Burg. Then participants were to assign an age or grade level to each piece and give reasons for their choices. Thomas added that, in seeking music to motivate students at all levels, Burg advocated "meeting the students part way on their likes and dislikes, even if [the piece] isn't something that you particularly like." Cordelia Bennett pointed out that Burg also evaluated various method books as to their appropriateness for different types of students.

Bennett also mentioned another aspect of Burg's ideas on the teaching of different types of students--namely, his opposition to group teaching of piano. He felt individual differences could not be dealt with satisfactorily in this setting, and some students might be lost, she said.

Demonstration teaching, both by Burg and by pedagogy students, was often cited as a means of illustrating varied techniques for students in different categories. Roger Price recalled that Burg worked with students of different ages in his pedagogy class and workshops to show how to handle each age effectively. Another respondent, while earning a piano degree

with Burg, was teaching in OCU's Preparatory Department. This person remembers bringing a preparatory student to Burg, who then gave a teaching demonstration with the youngster. Several respondents mentioned that pedagogy students were assigned to teach one another. Malcolm Blazer describes these assignments: "[I] remember the demonstrations in class of students instructing other students in a mock lesson, then [Burg] critiquing them both and demonstrating what should have been worked on."

Those who took Burg's pedagogy class were required to read and take notes on his master's paper, which is quoted extensively in chapter 3 of this dissertation. One idea presented in his paper appeared consistently in his pedagogy teaching. Marge Dorris alluded to it in her generalized response to the question on the teaching of various groups of students: "Always look for something good. 75 percent praise, 25 percent criticism." Bruce A. Brown's response to this question reflects another of Burg's beliefs, as stated in his paper--namely, personal interest in each student: "Know your student. Be involved in their private lives. Know what each student's goals are."

The previous comments are unspecific as to categories of students. The following responses were divided according to students' particular age groups or stages of development.

Young Children

With youngsters, a number of people said Burg emphasized the importance of starting with basics. One "basic" habit that Burg trained students to do from the beginning was to keep their eyes on the music, recalled Myra Schubert. Another said Burg taught her that "there are no shortcuts to 'the basics.'"

However, while learning the basics, a child can still have a satisfying musical experience. Marilyn Witcher's workshop notes recorded several of Burg's recommendations for achieving this at the very first lesson: "Get pupil to keyboard as soon as possible. Keep him busy--let him do it himself. . . . Teach a tune by rote. Teach only what is immediately useful."

Myra Schubert stated, "He was careful to see that the younger ones had a firm arch in their hands." But two others recalled Burg's words otherwise:

> Arching of the fingers would come in time and not to pressure them. [Gerald Monson]

> Don't worry about hand position or rhythm with a beginning student. [Marilyn Witcher]

The latter comment was different from all other students' recollections regarding rhythm. Several specifically mentioned Burg placed great importance on rhythm and counting time from the beginning. As one put it, "Rhythm is all."

Even with beginners, Burg believed that musicality could be encouraged. Roberta Lewis learned "that young children could produce singing tones and musical ideas and progress into phrasing as such." According to Gari Kyle, the concept of interpretation could be taught by helping a child "make a story unfold" or "make lyrics to create phrasing."

Burg's philosophy of "keeping the pleasant, encouraging, positive attitude, filled with lots of praise," includes the little ones, Ellen Jayne Wheeler recalled. Marilyn Witcher noted additional Burg advice: "Get acquainted with the pupil. Win [the] child at [the] first lesson." Burg advocated giving as big an assignment as possible to children and having high expectations for them. Myra Schubert observed Burg's attitude that also showed his close ties to Piano Guild ideals: "He impressed upon me the fact that every child deserves the privilege of studying piano, not just the talented ones."

Older Children

Many things--such as the importance of basics, establishing good habits right away, and positive teacher attitude--apply to older children, just as they do to younger children. Analysis "of each piece, each phrase" should become a part of the older child's training, along with technique and memorization, remembered Myra Schubert.

One student recalled Burg's advice, "Don't expect them to be as serious about it as you are," while another mentioned that Burg urged using contests and festivals "to add interest." LaDonna Meinders added, "He was interested in the 'whole person' and showed that interest in each student."

Teenagers

Marilyn Witcher recalled that much of Burg's advice for teaching teenagers was the same as that for teaching children--positive attitude, interest in the student as a person, high expectations. In addition, she said Burg reminded his pedagogy students "that, statistically, most students had dropped out of piano by the age of fourteen." So it is not surprising that virtually every response in this category focused on Burg's ideas for motivating teenagers.

Choice of repertoire was especially important for these students, as seen in the following recollections of Burg's advice:

> Let them play some popular music and things they like. [LaDonna Meinders]
>
> Let them help choose as much literature as possible, but offer good choices. [Gari Kyle]
>
> [They] must have fast and loud pieces to work out frustrations. [Pearl Peveler]
>
> He gave helpful suggestions for pieces that motivate teenagers--I still refer to his list. [Marge Dorris]

Frequent performance was also used to motivate teenagers. According to Myra Schubert, "He stressed performance. He was always encouraging his teenagers to play in public whenever asked."

Burg urged teachers of teenagers to provide "enthusiasm, fun, and music of all types," recalled Roberta Lewis. So teenagers would feel they were not being treated like children, Burg advised using music with standard-size notation, not "big notes," said one respondent. Another remembered Burg felt it was necessary to mark pedaling for all but the most musically gifted, to "help them develop good taste in pedal effects."

Advanced Students, Including College Students

Respondents reported the following points of Burg's advice to teachers of advanced students:

> Strongly emphasize technique and analysis and be more demanding of perfection than for younger and less advanced students.
>
> Teach a wide variety of styles and many composers, including more obscure ones.
>
> Help them fulfill their goals or college requirements.
>
> Lots of public performance is important. Urge advanced students to be always prepared to play something in public and never to turn down a chance to play, even if it is impromptu.

Burg's positive attitude in dealing with his own advanced students was again mentioned. It served as a role model for others teaching such students.

Adult Hobby Students

Respondents most often mentioned that Burg stressed the importance of choosing enjoyable repertoire for adult hobby students. "Keep them interested by providing things that sound good," remembered LaDonna Meinders.

Motivation was also emphasized again. As one respondent put it, these students are "most difficult to motivate and make commitments." They should "play for pleasure, not [be] required to follow syllabus," said another. Still another cited "lots of performance, either accompaniment or social music" as a good motivator. She added, "Just use whatever amount of talent is there."

Gari Kyle once more noted Burg's positive approach: "I never saw him fail to say something good about anyone's playing, and he always commended the desire to learn about and enjoy music." Observing the therapeutic value of piano study, especially for hobby students, Marilyn Witcher provided a Burg quote: "Piano lessons are cheaper than a psychologist."

Teaching Fundamentals of Music

Former pedagogy students were asked, "What did you learn from Dr. Burg about teaching fundamentals of music (note-reading, counting, other theoretical concepts)?" One fortunate student had learned about how Burg

taught the fundamentals of music by assisting him in teaching beginning theory classes at OCU. Most respondents agreed with Philelle McBrayer's statement, "He always stressed a solid foundation in the basics."

More than half the responses referred to Burg's teaching of rhythm and the importance he placed on it. Regina Hays remembered Burg's insistence on completely accurate rhythm; an example is clapping exactly with the metronome. Others also said Burg often had students use the metronome, both to get the right tempo for a piece and to keep the beat steady. However, Cordelia Bennett said Burg did not favor "metronomical" playing, and Auda Marie Thomas confirmed that "playing musically" was always a top priority for Burg.

"I think his rhythm teaching was outstanding," declared Jan Culver. If a traditional counting method, such as "one-e-and-a" for sixteenth notes, was not working for a particular student, "then you better come up with a way that was," such as setting the rhythm to a word, like "watermelon." Culver recalled "a lot of counting out loud" and "a lot of work with the metronome." Burg advocated subdividing the beats to insure accuracy, she said. "The main thing would be breaking down the beat into the smallest unit. With the beginners, if there was one single eighth note in the piece, then every single beat had to be broken down into eighth notes."

But Burg also stressed musicality in counting, said Culver: "A 3/4 piece could be one beat for each measure, and four measures would be four

beats, making a phrase." Auda Marie Thomas expressed the idea this way: "[Burg taught that] you crossed the bar line with the beat, perhaps making three measures into one measure, working for the melodic line, rather than the strong beat of the measure." As an example of this, Pearl Peveler cited Schumann's "Soldiers' March," Op. 68, No. 2, written in 2/4, in which Burg suggested counting half notes and thinking 2/2 time, eliminating every other bar line. "He opened my eyes," claimed Peveler, "to feeling bigger beats . . . for a more forward feeling of the music." Myra Schubert added that Burg encouraged students "to count measures instead of beats in order to make the phrases flow better, bringing out the first and third measures."

Marge Dorris recalled the following regarding Burg's teaching of music fundamentals:

> He stated that you start with one concept at a time on a piece. You cannot enter in a child's mind all the things you wish to teach a child in one lesson. Start with correct notes, counting, then add dynamics, phrasing, interpretation, etc.

But Cordelia Bennett added another perspective, with her recollection that Burg had musical goals, even for beginners:

> He promoted not teaching separately--you teach interpretation, style and all that, even when a person is beginning. It's a part of fundamentals. You don't just teach notes and rhythm, you teach style and interpretation, and all of those things come together, not separately. . . . It's like reading word for word; that's not really reading. It's the same [with music]; playing note for note is not music.

Another important idea Bennett gained from Burg's pedagogy class regarding teaching fundamentals was that all music is just seven notes:

> I never thought of it that way--just the seven pitches. They may be altered, but they're still the seven pitches. I've been able to teach students, even in my general music classes, to read notes; they know that all notes are going to be one of those seven pitches, they're just in a different place.

Bennett says she has never had a problem with a child learning to read notes; the concept of "just the seven pitches" seems to simplify the task greatly.

Myra Schubert noted another aspect of Burg's teaching of music reading. He taught students "to read at least a measure ahead always," and later, "to skim a line ahead when possible." Roberta Lewis reported that Burg felt analysis and chord structure were very important, while Marilyn Witcher recalled that, regarding theory, "Dr. Burg's philosophy was to teach what was necessary to perform the assignment."

Teaching Piano Technique and Tone Production

Many respondents described specific exercises they had learned from Burg to help their students attain good technique, while others had more general comments. One affirmed that Burg stressed the importance of fundamentals, such as scales. Others pointed out that he insisted fingering be worked out in detail and always observed, either following the printed fingering or determining one's own fingering.

"We think scales by fingering," noted one respondent, adding, as did other respondents, that Burg recommended practicing scales and other

exercises in various rhythms, such as those found in the Hanon-Lindquist *Technical Variants* book. Several people mentioned Burg's advice to practice scales and exercises, doing different things with each hand; for example, the right hand staccato, the left hand legato, or the right hand loud, the left hand soft. Playing with the hands two octaves apart was also suggested as a way to hear more clearly what each hand was doing.

Several people said that proper use of the thumb in scale playing was something Burg stressed. According to Philelle McBrayer, he urged the player to begin to move the thumb under the palm immediately after it plays, so it is prepared smoothly for its next note; going the opposite direction, flip the fingers quickly over the thumb so they, too, are prepared for their next notes. McBrayer testified to the helpfulness of this technique both in her own playing and for her students. Also pointing out the importance of the thumb, Kay Scott quoted Burg: "A relaxed thumb is a relaxed hand, a tense thumb is a tense hand."

To improve smoothness in scale playing, two respondents said Burg placed a coin on a student's wrist. The coin was to stay in place while the student played a scale, thus eliminating extraneous motion.

"Velocity is built by slow practice," said Kay Scott. Expanding on this idea, another respondent explained that Burg advocated "slow-strong" practice--playing slowly and strongly twice, then once somewhat faster, and

once up to tempo. This technique should be followed even after the piece is learned and can be done at the required tempo.

Learning and practicing arpeggios as blocked chords was a helpful Burg technique mentioned by both Cordelia Bennett and Virginia Campbell. Said Campbell, "You learn them so much faster. . . . [Then] your fingers just go there automatically--it's like magic."

Stating Burg's belief that "technique was the hardest aspect of piano study to write or read about," Marilyn Witcher said he felt that "to achieve good technique, the teacher needed to work individually with each student to fulfill his/her own particular needs." Following his own advice, Burg urged teachers, according to several respondents, to make technical exercises out of difficult spots in their students' pieces.

Burg's workshop handouts listed technique books, such as Hanon-Lindquist, and various technical studies, such as the Schmitt exercises. The latter were designed to teach "the hands [to] convey the force of the arms," reported Kay Scott. She said Burg also cited the Brahms Waltz in A-Flat as an exercise for "floating the arm"--weight on the first beat of the measure, followed by "whole-arm rotation" on beats two and three.

Burg regarded technique as a means to an end only and as a mental process, as indicated in the following comments by questionnaire respondents:

Technique is only a means of reaching the musical ideal. [Bruce A. Brown]

Concentration on technique and mastery of control frees a person to interpret emotions and become truly musical. [Sharlyn Matthews]

Technic is mental. The student will never do anything he doesn't think first.
Stress music more than movement. [Marge Dorris]

There's a certain virtue in taking a piece and playing it faster than you can play it well. It makes the mind function faster, even if you garble the notes.
Hands have no power of their own; it's all in the mind. [Virginia Campbell]

With regard to good tone production, several respondents recalled that Burg often referred to the principles of weight distribution taught by Tobias Matthay, with whom he had studied. "But Dr. Burg was most effective," reported Marilyn Witcher, "when he showed a student what to do and how to work with his/her own physical equipment." Myra Schubert commented that Burg taught students to "draw the tone out of the piano, caressing the keys with a pulling back motion of the fingertip--not to 'pound it in.'"

Good tone production begins with following the marked dynamics, said Billie Buck, while Burg's advice on the subject of good tone was simply, "SING, SING!" wrote Bruce A. Brown. Burg believed training the ear to recognize a good tone is crucial, Philelle McBrayer remembered: "I did learn

from him the importance of listening to lots of good music, both live and recorded, as a must in listening for a good tone."

A workshop demonstration of tone production left a lasting impression on Auda Marie Thomas: "He would have you close your eyes and he would play a tone with a curved finger, with a pencil, and with [a different] kind of a touch, and you had to tell him which one was the best." After hearing workshop participants' opinions, Burg informed them that he had played all three times with a pencil. Thomas said Burg's point was that "you can have a lovely tone, regardless of what [you use to play the key.] But you have to have it inside of you before it comes out." Thomas continued, "Everyone was always so amazed that he could get such a nice tone with the pencil. But his comment was, 'Your finger isn't much more intelligent than the pencil. The finger is just the mechanism.' That was something that has stuck with me, that if it's not inside of you, the tone isn't going to happen. . . . regardless of whether you play it with a stick or your finger."

Roger Price said that, to Burg and to him, technique and tone production are not two separate things, but the same thing. "When you're wiggling your fingers, you're producing tone, so one of the things that you must be concerned with is the quality of tone you're producing. That is what he was teaching," Price asserted. He described in some detail the

process Burg illustrated in his classes and in his workshop to help a student produce good tone and achieve technical ease:

> The process started by sitting upright, with good posture, the correct distance from the piano, with your knees just underneath the edge of the piano, relaxing, taking a deep breath, letting your arms hang as ropes from your shoulders, and leaning forward and letting your arms just hang.
>
> The next step was [for Burg] to pick up the [student's] arm. Less than half the people are going to let their arm truly hang, relaxed; everyone else is going to hold it up for you. . . .
>
> [After] finally getting them to do that, [the next step would be] leaning into the piano, producing a sound, just a cluster sound, and then letting the finger pick up the whole arm. In other words, transferring the weight from the wrist, where you just landed on the keyboard, to one finger--say, the third finger--and then bringing that [finger] out to the edge of the key so that all your weight is on that one finger--and that's a lot of weight.
>
> Then, from there, [he showed] how you can lean back to reduce the weight, lean in and really increase the weight; and then take that weight and immediately transfer it, so that you're holding up the whole arm with the fourth finger. [The hand would be] in the five-finger position, and you would end up playing the whole five-finger position.
>
> [He further demonstrated the point by] leaning way back, and playing very fast and softly, and then leaning in and playing a little slower and louder, showing how you shouldn't, in order to change the dynamics, press harder and press more lightly. You should use the same finger action and actually just lean in for [more] volume and lean away for less. That is weight distribution, that's the technique. One thing he made sure to always illustrate [was the way one thing built right into the next].

Teaching Fingering

Burg believed that good fingering was "absolutely one of the most essential things that you can possibly do," according to Virginia Campbell, and a number of other respondents agreed. Campbell continued, "You have

to finger everything; don't leave anything to the imagination." Philelle McBrayer spoke for several others when she added that fingering is "vitally important from the beginning." Auda Marie Thomas quoted Burg: "Do it right the first time. If you don't . . ., you're going to play a lot of wrong notes. Wrong notes happen because of bad fingering."

Thomas recalled Burg's workshop sessions when teachers brought in their students to play for him. If a piece was played with a very poor fingering or no set fingering at all, Burg might send the student to the practice room to work out the fingering for every note and then come back and play the piece again. She says Burg did not mince words. He might say, "See. You wasted all that time before, because your teacher didn't have you do it right. It wasn't your fault, it's your teacher's fault." Thomas observed that teachers might be "really put on the spot" by this type of comment, but it was true. She said they needed to expect it, since it was a learning situation, not a performance. "[Burg] would say, 'That's why teachers come to the workshops,'" she explained.

Burg wanted students often to work out their own fingering and then write it in their music, reported several people. They said Burg advocated standard scale fingerings whenever possible, as well as logical, comfortable positions at the keyboard. However, "fingering is an individual matter," declared Cordelia Bennett. Therefore, she and other respondents said, Burg

did not hesitate to change printed fingerings so that clumsy movements were eliminated and smooth playing would result.

Roger Price gave an example of this: In a passage spread over an octave and a half, some editions might cross the hand over the thumb. Burg would suggest using all five fingers in order, with a wrist motion and a single, uninterrupted arm gesture, instead of a thumb-crossing. According to Jan Culver, "[Burg] really analyzed the hand. . . . He was very adaptable to the individual student's hand or abilities." Repeated notes could be played with the same finger, instead of alternating fingers, if a student had trouble with alternating, she observed. LaDonna Reynolds noted that if a student had a small hand, like hers, Burg might "rewrite my music."

Leon Whitesell said Burg favored "blocking according to finger groups," while Myra Schubert reported that fingering "should be learned separately, away from the piano. Practiced on a table top." The following Burg quote was contributed by Marilyn Witcher: "Fingering and pedaling differentiate the artist from the piano player."

Teaching Rhythm

Most respondents said Burg stressed the importance of establishing good rhythm in students from the beginning. "[Rhythm] is all. No compromises," wrote Gari Kyle, and Bruce A. Brown said, "It is the foundation. Clap, count aloud, involve the whole body."

Kay Scott quoted Burg: "Steadiness of beat is the greatest problem that young piano students have," and others were even more specific, naming rushing as the most common difficulty. To counteract these problems, Burg advocated using the metronome a lot. Also cited as techniques Burg used were counting aloud, clapping and tapping rhythms, walking steadily while counting a rhythm pattern, playing while the teacher conducts, and imitating after the teacher plays the correct rhythm. Cordelia Bennett remembered that Burg would have the student say words or patterns of words that would help with a rhythm; for example, "merrily, merrily" for triplets, or "ticka-tocka, ticka-tocka" for groups of sixteenth notes.

Several people remarked about Burg's ideas regarding the teaching of rubato. "Do not attempt rubato until you can play in perfect time," recalled Marge Dorris. Kay Scott offered a good image on rubato that Burg gave: "Rubato was like a huge oak tree, out in the pasture, in which the wind was blowing the leaves back and forth, but the trunk stays the same." This "picture-thought" was especially effective with students who are not especially musical and have trouble with rubato, she said. Burg's demonstration of rubato made a strong impression on Auda Marie Thomas.

> I can still remember walking across the room with him. [He said,] "You keep walking and I'm the rubato. We're both going to end at the same time.". . . His rubato was really extreme, and we would [still] end up at the same time. . . . It was a way of explaining it and visually presenting it.

Thomas also remembers that Burg believed "the rhythm was part of the whole," and "explained the rhythm in relation to the style of the piece." She added, "Unless you did everything else right, you really couldn't have the rhythm correct, either. . . . not isolating it, but making it a part of the whole performance."

Roger Price pursued this train of thought for more advanced students, recalling that Burg counted the measures of a phrase, not just the beats. He wanted the student to be aware of "the big beat," to think of it as a pendulum. "So when you feel that pendulum, you feel motion. That's very important. At the same time, you have the small beat within that." Price said Burg used this idea to help a student avoid rushing in Bach, for example:

> You have all these eighth notes and sixteenth notes, and if that's all you think about, you rush. But if you think of the big beat, the half note or the whole measure--if you think both of them--then you won't rush. [This is] the key to playing sound rhythm.

Teaching Dynamics

Respondents reported that Burg believed students should learn to play with a wide range of dynamic contrasts, from very loud to very soft, not just mezzo forte to mezzo piano. Expanding on this idea, Myra Schubert commented, "There are many more dynamic levels than written in the music. When deciding how much tone to give any one dynamic marking, think about the context of that section, that phrase." Bruce A. Brown added,

"[Dynamics] must serve the composer's intent." Auda Marie Thomas recalls that Burg would chuckle and say that the dynamics are never marked in the music in the right place. Then he would spend time in his workshops determining where the dynamic changes in certain pieces should actually be done.

Kay Scott often uses Burg's notion of assigning a number, such as one to five, to a particular dynamic level; she says this seems to give students a more concrete idea of where that dynamic should be in the whole dynamic spectrum. Scott added that Burg advised that "students should say the expression marks aloud as they play." Jan Culver recalled a difficult exercise Burg used to teach dynamic control: "Play just a single note pp, then p, [repeat the note] and keep increasing. [It] takes a lot of concentration." Cordelia Bennett says Burg taught

> a concept of pressure to acquire louds and softs . . . To him, it all happened from the wrist down. That was something new to me. . . . Leaning into the keyboard . . . when necessary. On very loud passages, he did want you to use more of your body. . . . playing down to the bottom of the keyboard on loud passages.

Questionnaire respondents offered other points Burg made regarding the teaching of dynamics:

> Students must listen carefully to determine whether they are achieving the desired dynamic level.
>
> Dynamic differences should be exaggerated.
>
> Never play the same thing, such as a repeated phrase, twice at the same dynamic level. Demonstrate--students can listen better if they

are not playing themselves--and emphasize the dynamic differences, first soft-loud, then loud and like an echo. Ask students to choose which way they want to play it.

The intensity of the tone is determined by the speed with which the hammer strikes the string. This is limited to 3/8 inch.

Roberta Lewis learned a new dynamic concept from Burg, "crescendo means soft." She reports that she still uses this idea daily. The following Burg statements on dynamics were provided by Marilyn Witcher from her workshop notes:

"A geometric or skyrocket crescendo is an exciting crescendo."

"Don't start runs too loud."

"Two notes may be heard more clearly if one is softer."

"Terraced dynamics are often used in Bach's music. Bach should have some dynamics--don't overdo."

"Dominant harmonies are active and louder. Tonic harmonies are inactive and softer."

"Dissonances are active and louder than consonances which are inactive."

"Dynamic design is the relative loudness or tonal intensity in relation to rhythm, meter, phrasing, pattern, melody and accompaniment."

"Longer notes . . . are louder, shorter notes softer."

"In sequences, each one should be softer if lower."

Teaching Phrasing

Help students to shape phrases by playing legato and articulating at the beginning and end of each phrase. This was Burg's advice to teachers,

according to Marilyn Witcher. Philelle McBrayer noted that Burg urged students to "listen to lots of good music." This would provide them with fine examples of good phrasing.

Burg compared musical phrasing to speech. He "related phrasing to sentence structure and punctuation," recalled Leon Whitesell. Several people mentioned that Burg would add lyrics to some phrases, especially when working with young people. Cordelia Bennett had these recollections:

> He thought you should think in phrases, play to the end of the line. It should taper, just as a sentence with a comma, in the right places. Sometimes when you come to the end of the line, it's going on. He would use poetry . . . to show me how the line should be played. I learned a lot about phrasing through his use of poetry. He would quote poetry while I was playing. He would use dynamics with his voice, using his voice loudly or softly while I was playing.

Jan Culver pointed out that the phrasing of many nursery rhymes, such as "Mary Had A Little Lamb,"--two short phrases, then one long phrase,--is similar to that in many pieces of music. Burg urged teachers to use this idea to aid students in achieving musical phrasing. Culver also explained Burg's counting procedure that helped to create longer phrases that flow freely forward; for example, in a piece in 3/4 meter, each measure would be one beat, with four measures, or four beats, making one long phrase.

Nearly half the people who responded to the question on Burg's teaching of phrasing talked about breathing. The following comments are typical:

> Everything in a vocal style. Breathe and sing your phrases as you play. [Bruce A. Brown]
>
> Think like a singer when you play, breathing when necessary. [Myra Schubert]
>
> Phrasing had to breathe, and you couldn't have phrases longer than the listener could listen without breathing. [Auda Marie Thomas]
>
> "Breathe" [phrases]; mentally sing, to endings. This would also promote appropriate tempo. [Gari Kyle]

Teaching Pedaling

A number of respondents referred to various exercises in the use of the damper pedal that Burg recommended. Several mentioned practicing music with the left hand alone, plus the pedal. Burg's reason behind this technique was that "the bass determines the pedaling," said one workshop participant, quoting Burg.

Auda Marie Thomas remembers that Burg compared walking and pedaling: "You can't walk with both feet off the ground at the same time, [and in pedaling,] you can't have your hands and foot up at the same time. You always do one and then the other, if you're going to pedal legato." Jan Culver commented that Burg's suggestions were "simple and yet so practical," as she related his exercise for "legato pedaling." The student plays a scale with one finger only, pedal goes up as each note is played, pedal goes down just after each note is played. Culver claims she uses this exercise every time she starts a student on legato pedaling. Another respondent also

noted that Burg stressed the importance of practicing slowly when beginning to coordinate hands and foot on the pedal.

"He said the pedal will cover up [and] muddle those sounds, and I want you to . . . hear every sound," reported Cordelia Bennett. Burg advocated using as little pedal as possible as a practice technique, sometimes even telling the student to practice certain pieces from beginning to end with no pedal, because "that's how you really acquire 'clean' playing," she said. "Sure enough, you can detect a lot of things when you don't use that [damper] pedal!" Bennett declared. Another respondent noted that Burg also urged students to use the soft pedal sparingly and to learn to play as softly as possible without it.

First Steps in the Use of the Pedal by Dorothy Gaynor Blake[10] is a very elementary pedaling book Kay Scott first learned about at Burg's pedagogy workshop years ago. Scott says its plain format and extremely clear directions make it easy to grasp, even for a young child, and she still uses the book with her students today.

Marge Dorris said that Burg believed students should often work out their own pedaling, with the teacher's help, and that different pedalings should be tried before deciding on the best one. Once determined, the pedaling should be marked in the music. A number of respondents recalled

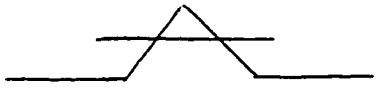
[10]This book, first published by Willis Music Company in 1925, is still available as #4412.

that Burg felt students would think harder about the pedaling and it would make a stronger impression on them if they marked it in the music themselves, rather than writing it in for them. Several people mentioned some of the marks Burg had devised to indicate the various types of pedaling he taught:

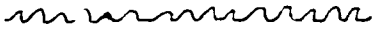
> Pedal crescendo--gradually adding the pedal to increase the resonance. Burg's mark is a combination of a pedal mark and a crescendo mark. Pedal diminuendo is the opposite.



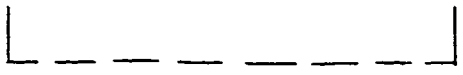
> Half-pedaling--lifting pedal only halfway to let only part of the tones escape. "Flutter pedaling" is a number of half-pedals in a row, accomplished by moving the pedal quickly up and down ("fluttering"). Mark is a normal pedal-change sign, with a short slash through it.



> Pedal vibrato--the toe vibrating up and down; much the same as flutter pedaling. Marked with a wavy line.



> Shadow pedaling--depressing the pedal only slightly. Normal pedal mark with a broken, not solid, horizontal line.



Although he did not recall a special marking for "passages where you deliberately created a slight smear" with the pedal, this was a new type of pedaling for William Godley when he studied with Burg. "Later I found out that these were really quite sophisticated techniques that were used in special places in the music," Godley reflected. Referring to the "squiggly

lines" Burg used to mark rubato, as well as to his pedal markings, Roger Price observed that Burg had "a method for music interpretation," which was specific and was to be marked as specifically as possible on the page.

Price said Burg called the pedal "the soul of the piano," indicating its importance in playing expressively. Price also mentioned the necessity of adjusting one's pedaling from one room to another. He related a Burg anecdote on the subject:

> I think [this story] was [about] Paderewski. [Some listeners] were in the back of the large hall . . . and they thought it was the most glorious pedaling they'd ever heard. They liked [the performance] so much, they thought they'd move up . . . Right on top of him, it was just a mess--they couldn't distinguish one note from another. That just shows how the pianist was able to project his pedaling into the hall, so that, [even though] it sounded a mess where he was playing, out in the hall, he knew that it came out.

Besides the acoustics of the room, the resonance of the piano determines how much pedal to use. One respondent noted that greater resonance could be achieved on a loud chord by depressing the pedal *before* playing the chord. Other factors that Burg said should influence pedaling decisions: touch of the player, musical taste of the performer, and desired mood for the piece.

Careful listening is necessary in evaluating all these factors. It is also very important to good pedaling, according to Burg's former pedagogy students. The ear should be used to determine the timing of pedal changes, and the player must "listen for unwanted tones," said one respondent.

Listening also helps determine the beginning and ending of phrases. Previous to her study with Burg, LaDonna Reynolds had been taught to pedal routinely at every downbeat in hymns. After studying with him, she was relieved to learn that her instinct to pedal with the phrasing was correct. She changed her playing and her teaching of pedaling accordingly.

Teaching Musical Interpretation

Respondents said Burg urged them to use their own ideas in interpreting a piece, while taking into consideration the style of the historical period and the composer. Burg urged students to "find things in the music that will help you achieve the mood, idea, style," said Roberta Lewis.

Personal ideas must be backed up by good reasons and good taste, but they might be as valid as the ideas of a music editor, reported Jan Culver. Students should be encouraged to use their imaginations and experiment with a variety of different interpretations. "[Burg] might have you take something very familiar, like the opening phrase of "Für Elise," and do it five different ways--with rubato, with crescendo, etc.," recalled Culver.

Unlike other respondents, Cordelia Bennett feels she was not encouraged to use her own interpretive ideas, even though they were sometimes quite different from Burg's. "He would have us listen to a lot of different recordings of [various] artists. That would help to establish our

own thoughts, and then he had his thoughts about interpretation," recalled Bennett. Others who replied to this question also mentioned Burg's advice to listen to other players for interpretive ideas.

It is important to listen for other reasons, too. Students must listen to their own playing to evaluate their interpretation. Roberta Lewis observed:

> I particularly remember working with Bach Inventions. I never understood [before] the importance of the student seeing, hearing, playing, singing the different voices. Those techniques went into all kinds of music. [I also learned about the] importance of analysis and chord structure.

Myra Schubert commented, "Do research--then listen, listen, listen!" Students also must listen to hear whether they are achieving what they set out to do.

In the area of teaching interpretation of fundamental concepts, respondents cited some of Burg's suggestions:

> In teaching staccato, tell students to think "detached," not "short."
>
> Bach did not mark legato or use pedal in chordal passages. Leave out ornaments if pupils cannot play them.
>
> Control tempo; don't let it control you.

Regarding tempo, Kay Scott recounted Burg's fairly concrete way of teaching inexperienced musicians to gauge a given tempo:

> Students can relate to . . . tempo . . . better if you give them, besides the name, a number. Moderato is a three, Andante would be two, and Lento a one. Four would be Allegretto, five is Allegro--[Burg] showed us on his fingers. It's just like driving a car--you know how it is when you're going forty or fifty or sixty, or even as slow as fifteen. If you will teach your students to think of a number for the

> tempo, they'll get adjusted to that; so when you hear what they've prepared for you, you can say, "What [number] do you think it was?" They get to where they can put a number on it, even fractional divisions, like three and a half or three and three-quarters.

Scott added that Burg recommended using this same system with dynamics as well. It seems to give students a more definite, less abstract standard for determining any given tempo or dynamic level, she said.

Rubato was a favorite topic of Burg's. In his workshops, he always urged participants to get a copy of Tobias Matthay's *Musical Interpretation*, published by Boston Music Company, and he especially recommended the chapter on rubato. Burg had spent four summers at Matthay's American Summer School outside London and felt his mentor's ideas on rubato were particularly helpful. Burg said Matthay spent an entire afternoon discussing rubato.

As Matthay did in his book, Burg represented rubato by drawing lines into his students' scores and on the board for his workshop participants. These vertical lines varied in height and in distance apart, to show the speeding up and slowing down of a rubato passage. Rubato that begins and ends slowly, going faster in the middle, Burg termed "contractive rubato." The Brahms Waltz in A-Flat Major, Op. 39, No. 15, is an example. "Expansive rubato" rushes, holds back, then pushes forward again; Godard's "Au Matin" is an example.

According to Virginia Campbell, Burg said rubato can be used in the music of any composer, even Bach; for example, in the "Chromatic Fantasy," although not in the Inventions. Rubato was also appropriate in Mozart's Arioso and Allegro in F Minor, reported Campbell, and she said Burg compared rubato in Chopin to leaves in the wind. "[Burg said] it would be impossible to play with an orchestra if you do not understand rubato," she added.

"Dr. Burg felt the proper use of rubato was very important," Marilyn Witcher wrote. She offered the following points Burg made regarding this aspect of piano performance:

Changes must be very gradual.

Compare rubato to speech.

Use rubato when you play:
- Wide leaps
- Harmonic changes
- Important notes
- Active harmonies (dominants, dissonances)
- Unusual melodic progressions
- Changes in repetitions--use more rubato in repetition
- Work into something new gradually
- Melodic sixteenth notes
- Delineation of harmony
- Change of melodic direction
- On any note you want to stretch

Burg used images and stories to help with interpretation, observed several respondents. Kay Scott and Jan Culver both mentioned the Bach Two-Part Invention in B-Flat Major as an example. The two voices might

be two people, a husband and wife at the breakfast table. As the voices enter in turn, the couple are having a discussion over her buying a new hat. She wants the hat, he doesn't think she needs one, and the two hands both play together, as the discussion becomes an argument. Scott and Culver both agree these stories are helpful to students. As Scott put it, "Clarence Burg could really make music come alive."

Teaching Memorization

There is little doubt Clarence Burg practiced what he preached when it came to teaching how to memorize. The memory techniques and tests recalled by Burg's former piano pedagogy students were virtually the same as those reported by his former piano students and discussed in chapter 3.

The four kinds of memory that Burg talked about--kinesthetic, aural, visual, and analytical--were named by several respondents. Burg believed that the analytical aspect of memorization was the most reliable one but also the one most likely to be neglected, so he focused a good deal of attention on it in his pedagogy sessions. Bruce A. Brown summed up Burg's attitude: "ANALYZE AND VISUALIZE--never depend on tactile, kinesthetic memory."

Not surprisingly, nearly all replies of Burg's former pedagogy students contained one or more memory techniques or tests that are based on

analysis of the work being memorized. Respondents mentioned the following suggestions Burg made for teaching students to memorize:

> Analyze the form of the piece; learn to start at each big section of the piece; note repeats, variations, contrasts.
>
> Find points throughout the piece to use as guideposts; look for something unusual.
>
> Look for patterns--scales, chords (see arpeggios as broken chords), interval patterns.
>
> Listen to recordings or model live performances of your piece, by a good student or other pianist.
>
> Memorize away from the piano.
>
> Play the piece mentally, one motif at a time; play mentally while lying in bed.
>
> Memorize a section of the piece without playing it, then play it by memory (for more advanced students).
>
> Insist that the student go forward, "not backwards, trying to get it right--you might not get it right then, either." [Name withheld]

Burg's former pedagogy students and pedagogy workshop participants cited a number of tests to make the memory very secure, once a piece is fairly well memorized. Among these memory tests are the following:

> Play with eyes closed or in a dark room.
>
> Play without looking at the hands.
>
> Play by memory first thing in the morning before warming up.
>
> Play with the score closed or across the room.
>
> Carry on a conversation while playing.

Start in different places, not always at beginning.

Start at any large section of the piece; in Bach Inventions, "be able to pick it up anywhere." [Kay Scott]

These additional memory tests were listed by Kay Scott, a long-time piano teacher who frequently attended Burg's summer teacher workshops in the 1960s and 1970s:

Play first phrase hands together audibly, next phrase silently, etc.

Play right hand audibly, left hand silently; then reverse; then both hands silently.

"Cue the phrases"--play first part of phrase, then hands in lap and finish phrase mentally.

Teacher stands behind student; lifts either hand or both hands; student continues to play (mentally).

Begin at different sections of pieces and skip.

With two pianos, teacher and student alternate playing; each plays mentally while the other is playing aloud.

Find a home base in the piece and mark it.

Play melody alone with one finger; play runs with one finger.

Five memory tests on Moonlight Sonata:

1) play very slowly in 3/8, instead of 4/4; think notes, not interpretation; eighth note = 76 or 80.
2) cue the phrases.
3) reverse melody and accompaniment hands.
4) play both hands in blocked chords.
5) play melody audibly, bass audibly, but triplets silently.

LaDonna Reynolds explained the following tests of students' memory:

> They would close their eyes and see the measure, tell me the note that was on the first beat of the measure, then play the measure.
>
> Divide the music down in sections and memorize a section. Then put numbers on it and play a memory game. You say a number and they play the phrase that corresponds to that number. So they might start out with number one, but when they get to the end of that phrase, they stop, and you might say "Number six," and then they have to play number six right away.

Auda Marie Thomas remembered that Burg devoted much time in his workshops to the subject of memorization. In addition to presenting techniques and tests for memory, there was discussion of how the brain works in the memorization process. Always stressing the importance of being able to go on in performance without stopping, Burg also had practical advice on "what's going to get you through a performance and what isn't," Thomas recalled.

Teaching Sightreading and Ear Training

Helping students from the beginning to become good sightreaders is one of the most important things the teacher can do, Burg told his pedagogy students. He said the best way to do this is to begin sightreading in the earliest lessons and continue to do lots of it regularly, recalled several respondents.

The materials used for sightreading should be easier than the pieces a student is working on by at least one grade level. One response pointed out that Burg was "amazing" in the area of grading materials of all kinds. Another recalled that Burg gave many suggestions about the type of piece a

student should sightread and appropriate features of the reading material for each level. Beginning with hands playing alternately in simple, short pieces, the student progresses to one note in one hand against three or four notes in the other, then hands in unison, and so on. The music should be "logical," she said. Easy arrangements of pop music, "primer classics and primer folk books" provide motivation to sightread because of student interest in the music.

For children who memorize very quickly, insufficient reading experience in the early stages of development may pose a problem later in their reading. To overcome this, recalled Marilyn Witcher, Burg recommended giving a large assignment of easy pieces, too much for the student to memorize all of it. "Dr. Burg recommended beginners use several books at same level of difficulty," Witcher reported.

As with other skills, developing good habits from the beginning is crucial in sightreading. Many mentioned the value Burg placed on keeping the eyes up on the music. Teachers should insist on this, said Myra Schubert; if necessary, cover students' hands with a towel until they learn to keep their eyes on the book. Others mentioned the cardboard bib or "Chin Board" to serve this purpose.

A number of responses indicated that Burg believed reading ahead is another essential skill in sightreading. Several mentioned an exercise to promote this ability:

> Let the student look briefly at the first measure, then cover the first beat or two with a three-by-five card. Continue moving the card along so that the student is always reading ahead of where he or she is playing; be sure to cover the last two or three beats at the end of the line to force the student's eyes down to the next line.

Jan Culver finds a demonstration of this technique effective. She has students cover two measures of one of their simple pieces, and then she plays it for them. "That really impresses them, and makes them want to try to do it also," Culver declared.

Burg urged the development of the hand's ability to feel its way on the keyboard. Again, Jan Culver recalled an "excellent exercise" Burg presented:

> Position your hand on your lap like a first-inversion chord, and then move [your hand] up onto the keys without changing it. It had to fit. . . . If you can grab that chord, [then] remember what the spacing of that chord looks like [on the page] and make your hand match the visual part of it on the page.

Virtually everyone said Burg emphasized the importance of keeping a steady beat; students should sightread at a slow enough tempo to do this. Burg also insisted that the sightreader keep going, in spite of missed or wrong notes. An effective and enjoyable way to acquire and reinforce this habit is to participate in any kind of ensemble work, such as duet playing. This also includes accompanying, for which Burg was a strong advocate. Marilyn Witcher quoted Burg on the subject: "Sightreading is more important to the community than is memorized playing. It is used to play accompaniments for church, school, community functions." Furthermore,

Witcher reported, the majority of one's students will not become professional musicians, so Burg believed that "at the end of music lessons, [some pupils] never touch [the] piano again . . . [but] good sightreaders keep on playing."

Bruce A. Brown said Burg not only stressed the importance of accompanying, he also urged students to listen to music as much as possible. Brown began studying with Burg when he was in high school. "By the time I was entering OCU," Brown related, "I had built up a large collection of 'classical' music records--symphonies, concerti, solo instruments, chamber, vocal, operatic, choral. I still listen a lot."

Numerous listening experiences train the ears. So, too, rudimentary knowledge of theory, including chords, trains the mind, says Roger Price. Burg advised the student to "improvise," he said, and to "learn how to fill in" the missing notes of chords or notes that the player could not reach, as in a hymn. This in turn allows the student, in sightreading a piece by Mozart or Beethoven, to "see not only the individual note that you're supposed to play, but the chord. You may miss a note, but maybe you'll get a member of the chord. At least the harmony will be there."

Listening and theory study help the piano student to "think before playing," to look at the music and "imagine how it will sound," reported Marge Dorris. She said Burg considered these activities essential to fluent sightreading. Contrary to the common perception, sightreading is *not*

playing unfamiliar material. One workshop participant affirmed this in offering Burg's unusual and instructive definition: "Sightreading is to recall quickly what you already know."

Regarding ear training, Roger Price noted that Burg stressed its importance. Price feels that the OMTA, of which Burg was a founder and the first president, reflects this emphasis today in its contests and auditions, which contain a strong component of theory and ear training for the younger students. Myra Schubert spoke for several others when she recalled, "Dr. Burg made the comment in a workshop that the most valuable ear training we will ever teach is to train the pupil to truly listen to his own playing."

Preparing Students for Contests and Auditions

"[Burg] encouraged contests and competitions," Cordelia Bennett remarked, and other respondents agreed. "Preparation for auditions creates growth," recalled one former student; on the other hand, this student pointed out, Burg urged teachers to emphasize that not every student will be a winner. He also advised teachers to stress the positive and provide many opportunities for success, Gari Kyle reported.

Since many students are bothered by stage fright, Burg addressed the problem in his workshops, said Kay Scott, referring to her notes. An obvious first step is to know your piece very well. Then check your attitude:

don't take yourself too seriously, and remember that everyone makes mistakes. Burg stated, "Fear is a form of conceit," Scott recalled, with the following inherent difficulties: being afraid you will not impress people, trying to outdo someone else, trying to convince people you are better than you are, wondering how you look. Avoid comparing yourself to others or comparing pieces. "Comparisons are odious," Burg declared.

Marilyn Witcher summed up the comments of a number of other respondents on preparing students for contests or auditions. Here is her concise, yet detailed statement of activities and ideas from Burg's pedagogy sessions on the subject:

> Dr. Burg discussed various auditions, such as the OMTA Achievement Auditions, Junior and Senior Auditions, and the National Guild of Piano Teachers Auditions. We looked at the critique sheets and Guild "Report Card," and discussed how to prepare students for performance in these events.
>
> He also discussed helping students develop the right attitude regarding contests--they're a gamble. Students should regard them as a learning experience and should not feel defeated if they don't win.

Many workshop participants testified that Burg had introduced them to the Guild auditions, in which he himself entered a large number of students and served as a judge for many years. Goals are necessary for all students, and Burg felt these auditions offered an extremely worthwhile goal. "I suspect he was instrumental in Guild audition success in this area, stressing to teachers its importance in providing goals for scales, chords, etc., as well as memory work," wrote Gari Kyle. She added that Burg provided

sample Guild report card forms and familiarity with the Guild syllabus in his workshops.

Roberta Lewis reported:

> He was so enthusiastic about Guild Auditions and was my judge for so many years. I used his comments (The teacher always had a conference after the students finished. He kept detailed records of each student year to year.) as my guide for all auditions. I still do Guild each year.

Lewis and others said they learned about appropriate literature for student auditions in Burg's workshops, where such literature was discussed and displayed. "He detested hearing students play literature that was too hard or too mature," commented Lewis.

Proper preparation is the foundation of a good performance. Questionnaire respondents disclosed a number of suggestions Burg made regarding this preparation. It should begin early, so the performer is very confident with the music--"lead-pipe-cinch sure," as one person put it--well before the performance date. Careful initial study, with attention to detail and use of Burg's memory techniques previously discussed, leads to a well-learned piece. "Spot" checks with the metronome were recommended, said one respondent, and he added that students should "apply metronome daily for control of nerves and ears."

Roger Price explained that Burg advocated at least two different kinds of practice. One is "performance practice," a straight run-through, to see how the piece goes at or near performance tempo. This should be done

infrequently, mainly to determine those spots needing attention. The bulk of one's practice time is then spent "working on spots," Price said. He added that one should "be able to hear the [piece] in your mind in tempo away from the piano. You should be able to write it down."

After the piece is memorized, all the memory tests mentioned before should be done to gain memory security. LaDonna Reynolds again mentioned the "memory game," in which the student begins at any numbered phrase or section of the piece as the teacher calls out the numbers. She said Burg attributed to this "game" the confident attitude and successful memorized playing she had noticed in his OCU students.

According to Virginia Campbell, Burg stressed that in performance "every detail is important--how a child looks, walks, presents himself at the piano, how he introduces himself, smiles, this sort of thing." All of this should be rehearsed with students, both in your studio and in an auditorium, if possible. "Have them pretend that they're at the contest," said Campbell.

As the performance date nears, respondents recalled, Burg advised the performer should play often before as many different groups as possible and on many different pianos. Philelle McBrayer learned that a student should "'perform' the program numerous times, starting without trying out the piano or warming up. If playing more than one number, play pieces in the order of the performance."

Practice in the auditorium or room where you will perform is also important. Burg stressed the importance of careful listening to everything, every aspect of one's playing, when warming up in a new hall, Roger Price reported. This enables one to know, as much as possible, what to expect from both the room and the instrument.

On the performance day, Burg favored various kinds of physical preparation. Relaxation is aided by deep breathing: "Two or three deep breaths will help slow down body processes and help control beginning tempo," read Kay Scott from her workshop notes. Gerald Monson noted Burg's advice: "Keep hands warm with gloves. Begin flexing fingers and hands a half hour before performance (especially the thumb)." Cordelia Bennett described Burg's pre-performance routine for her, saying it was "like a prize-fighter":

> He would rub my hands down with alcohol and lotion. He would take each finger and massage it. He <u>really</u> believed in taking time with exercising the fingers and the wrist, and massaging and relaxing, and trying to get the tension out.

Bennett said that Burg did not want her to practice on the instrument immediately before a competition. He preferred mental preparation. He would ask her to think through a phrase and then "play" it in the air with her fingers. She found that these mental exercises taught her to focus her mind and concentrate, so that much of her nervous tension was lost. "He would be with me every minute before a concert or competition, and he

would keep me focusing and exercising and massaging," Bennett explained. "That's something that I learned to pass on to other students."

Motivating Students

Nearly every respondent said that Burg believed praise and encouragement were essential motivators for piano students. One said, "Criticize minimally." Philelle McBrayer added, "Criticize positively rather than negatively: "'Let's try it this way,' rather than 'You didn't do this right.'" Roberta Lewis said Burg's advice was "always to be encouraging." He also modeled this behavior, Lewis declared: "He always treated his students as though they were the most important student around. He made you feel good because he expected so much, and when you did it, he was as excited as you were." Kay Scott recalled Burg's admonitions, "Don't talk down to a student. Never coax. Never preach."

Scott also pointed out that Burg was quick to praise and encourage his own students who played in his workshops. Although she tries to follow Burg's example, Scott frequently feels the pressure of time in lessons to make corrections and work on trouble spots, so "when they leave, I'm chagrined to think that I didn't really brag on them about anything." When that happens, she makes the notation "P & E" in her appointment book beside the student's name, "as a reminder to me of Dr. Burg, and to remind myself to be sure to give them praise and encouragement at their next

lesson." Scott continued, "It sure worked with him--those students acted like he was God himself. I think they would have done anything for him."

Bruce A. Brown observed that students may become self-motivated if teachers "try to get them to realize their strengths." Likewise, "seeing one's own progress is very motivating," wrote Marilyn Witcher. But, she added, this is "not likely to happen without thoughtful, regular practice." Marge Dorris noted the importance of helping students know *how* to practice, while another noted the student should be told to practice in a room away from the television set. Witcher made the additional point that students are more likely to be motivated to practice regularly if the teacher has made the proper selection of pieces.

A number of respondents noted that setting goals with students is very important. They said both short-term and long-term planning must be done, and the goals should be attainable. Wise literature choices were frequently mentioned as vital in keeping students interested and motivated. One person recalled Burg's recommendation, "Choose repertoire that interests and excites each student. It needs to be a little bit challenging, but success should be achievable in a reasonable length of time." Several teachers affirmed that Burg placed value in letting students sometimes choose their own music. Virginia Campbell stated, "If they express an interest in learning a certain piece, of course you learn it."

Recitals, festivals, auditions, competitions, school and civic programs, accompanying--in short, any performance--can be motivating, many respondents reported. Frequent performance classes should also be made available. Piano Guild auditions were specifically highlighted as motivators by several people. However, one former Burg student disagreed about the motivational value of Guild auditions, after entering students in them for several years:

> I feel [preparing for Guild auditions] holds students back, when they could be going on. They'd just be on ten pieces the whole year. I found that I had to be a nag, as a piano teacher, constantly pushing [the students] . . . I couldn't smile. I noticed it was holding them back; pieces were ready to be passed right then, but no, they had to keep them ready for three more months for Guild. It was not worth it to me. [One year] I told my piano students they would have a choice [whether to be in Guild or not the next year], . . . and not one chose to be in Guild the next year.

This teacher is no longer a Guild member, but finds better motivation for students in other auditions, such as those of OMTA, where only one piece is required. Replacing the Guild scale-playing requirement as motivation for this teacher is "paying" the student ten M&Ms for playing a perfect scale. The teacher added:

> At the end of the year, if they've passed all fifteen major scales, then I hand them at the recital a one-pound Hershey candy bar. Do you think my kids care whether I'm in Guild or not? They beg me for scales!

While Guild auditions work well for some teachers and students, this respondent concluded "[they] do not match my teaching style."

Burg believed it was important for teachers to "plan events for [students] to succeed," recalled Myra Schubert, as well as to "make music fun!" and others agreed with her. "Be a fun person yourself--be happy, be encouraging and keep the music alive for [the student]--always!" Schubert added.

Good teaching leads to student success and thus, to continued motivation. Virginia Campbell said Burg felt "showing was a great part of [good] teaching," and quoted his adage, "Teaching is not telling."

One of Burg's workshop participants said Burg urged them to be sure both teacher and students understand "how much you expect," then "hold them to it." This person claimed that Burg also supported the notion that students should have a day off from practice each week.

Parents can be good motivators, one respondent pointed out. Burg said the wise teacher will include them in studio plans and activities.

Pedagogy workshop participants quoted their workshop notes, listing the following motivational activities and ideas:

Stars and stickers
Achievement charts
Ensembles
Music clubs
Theory class
Attending concerts
Recital of pieces selected by students
Correlate music with countries studied at school or with hobbies
Studio scrapbook
Monthly report cards

Studio contest for the year, with points awarded for a variety of things, such as attending musicianship class (10 points), learning new scale (10 points), practicing pre-determined time weekly (30 points), bonus for more time weekly, performing memorized piece at class (20 points), performing memorized piece at school or church (20 points), and many more.

Especially for boys--appropriate materials, sympathy and interest, an all-boys recital, link with band music, refer to men in music

Grading, Selecting, and Presenting New Repertoire

Most responses indicated that Burg had extensive knowledge and experience in the area of grading, selecting, and presenting new repertoire. Fourteen respondents to a question on this topic mentioned his highly organized system of grading and filing music, and five of those teachers disclosed that they still use his system, or something much like it, in their own studios now. Leon Whitesell commented, "His detailed coding . . . is ingenious, not only because of the ease of finding and assigning needed materials, but because it creates a consciousness of this type of categorization in the mind of the teacher."

The chart below shows a portion of the handout, titled "System for grading, classifying, and filing teaching materials," that Burg provided workshop participants:[11]

[11]This chart and the following description of Burg's grading system and index card file are taken from his workshop handout and the author's notes from her attendance at his OCU teachers' workshop, 1-6 August 1977.

Folder Number	Grade	Classification	Code	(Write on music and on 3x5 card)
1.	1	All Classifications	1	
2.	2	Pre-Classic	2 PC	
3.	2	Classic	2 C	
4.	2	Romantic	2 R	Elementary
5.	2	Modern	2 M	
6.	2	Folk & National	2 F-N	
7.	2	Others	2 *	
8.	3	Pre-Classic	3 PC	
9.	3	Classic	3 C	
10.	3	Romantic	3 R	Intermediate
11.	3	Modern	3 M	

The number in the far left column of the chart above corresponded to a number on a file folder in Burg's filing cabinet. In the folder were placed pieces of sheet music and music collections of the difficulty level ("grade") and style or type of music ("classification") found in the next two columns. On each piece of music or collection was written the code found in the right-hand column. The code simply abbreviated the information from columns two and three. The asterisk in the code for the "Others" classification referred to a footnote where the types of music filed in this folder were listed: "Misc. Cl." (Miscellaneous Classifications); "Pop." (Popular); "Sac." (Sacred); "Seas." (Seasonal); "Son." (Sonatas, sonatinas); "Tech. St." (Technical Studies); "Ens." (Ensemble--duet, two-piano, piano and other instruments, including concertos). The term on the far right gave a descriptive name to the grade that appeared in the "Grade" column for all styles/types of music of a given difficulty level. Thus, folders numbered two

through seven contained only elementary-level music, but of all style classifications. The music in Grade 1, filed in only one folder, was the very easiest, or what might now be called "pre-reading." Grade 2 contained six folders, one for each classification, as shown on the chart. Each other "Grade" following Grade 2 contained six folders, bearing the same classification names as those shown for Grade 2. The other descriptive names and folder numbers were "Intermediate," folders eight through thirteen; "Preparatory," folders fourteen through nineteen; "Collegiate (Freshman-Sophomore)," folders twenty through twenty-five; "Collegiate (Junior-Senior)," folders twenty-six through thirty-one; and "Post-Graduate," folders thirty-two through thirty-seven. Additional folders, numbered thirty-eight through forty-three, held "Special Books of Music (All grades)," filed under the following headings: "38. Keyboard Harmony; 39. Misc. spec. (sight-reading, playing by ear, polyrhythms, stories with music, etc.); 40. Pedal studies; 41. Scales, chords, arpeggios; 42. Technics; 43. Workbooks." The last set of folders was for "Beginners' Books" and bore letters A through F instead of numbers, with the following titles: "A. Pre-School," "B. Ages 6-7," "C. Ages 8-12," "D. Ages 13-15," "E. Adult Beginner," and "F. Popular--All grades."

Locating a given piece or collection in the file was made easy by a box of three-by-five index cards that contained one card for each piece or collection. In the upper right-hand corner of each card was the same code

number that had been written on the music sheet or book, along with other abbreviations that further classified the music. Following is an explanation of the code in the upper right-hand corner of the sample index card that appears below: "L3R" means "low grade 3, Romantic period"; "T" means "Technique" (as opposed to "Interpretation"); and "B" means the piece is for a student of "B" or "above-average" ability. The rest of the card gave all identifying information on that piece or collection, including composer, title, and publisher of the piece. There was space for the teacher to write comments about the piece, as well as which student played it and when. The date the card was made also appeared in the lower right-hand corner.

Robert Schumann	L3R T-B
"The Wild Horseman"	
Publisher	Student who played it and when
Comments	
	Date of card

On a second handout, "PERIODS AND COMPOSERS,"[12] Burg identified the classifications more fully, as follows:

PC PRE-CLASSIC-BAROQUE (circa 1600-1725).
Description: Polyphonic and homophonic. Four-measure phrase. I-V relationship and major and minor tonalities established. Harpsichord. Organ. Orchestra.

[12]From Burg's OCU teachers' workshop, 1-6 August 1977.

Forms: Fugue. Suite. Classic dance forms. Fantasia. Short sonatas. Toccata. Rondo. Variation. Prelude. Opera. Oratorio. Chorale Prelude. Overture.
Composers: J. S. Bach (1685-1750); Handel (1685-1759); D. Scarlatti (1685-1757); Couperin (1668-1733); Rameau (1683-1764). Last three in Rococo style.

C CLASSIC (circa 1725-1815), known as 18th-century music.
Description: Principally homophonic. Emphasis on form. Impersonal, objective. Four-measure phrase and eight-measure period established. I-V relationship more frequent. Piano idiom and orchestral style of writing for the piano.
Forms: The 3- or 4-movement sonata, symphony, concerto--all with crystallized ABA form. Rondo. Variations. Opera. Oratorio. Overture.
Composers: Haydn (1732-1809); Mozart (1756-1791); Beethoven (1770-1827).

R ROMANTIC (circa 1815-1900), known as 19th-century music.
Description: Homophonic more prevalent than before. Form de-emphasized. Personal and subjective. Expressiveness, emotion, feeling, imagination. Four-measure phrase and eight-measure period. I-V relationship continued. Idiomatic piano writing and orchestral style expanded. Chromaticism.
Forms: ABA and rondo forms expanded. Concertos. Fewer sonatas. Idealized dance forms--waltz, polonaise, mazurka. Program music--ballade, legende. Fantasia. Transcription. Special titles--nocturne, moment musical, etude, impromptu, intermezzo, songs without words, tone poem, rhapsody, opera.
Composers: Schubert (1797-1828); Chopin (1810-1849); Liszt (1811-1886); Schumann (1810-1856); Wagner (1813-1883); Mendelssohn (1809-1847); Brahms (1833-1897). Late Romanticists: Tchaikovsky (1840-1893); Dvorak (1841-1904); Grieg (1843-1907); Franck (1822-1890); MacDowell (1861-1908); Saint-Saëns; Bizet; Verdi; Puccini. Post-Romanticists: R. Strauss (1864-1949); Sibelius (1865-1957); Rachmaninoff (1873-1943).

M MODERN (Beginning about 1900), known as contemporary or 20th-century music.
Description: Impressionism. Emphasis on dissonance and unresolved dissonance (prior to 20th century, emphasis on consonance and resolved dissonance). Atonality (absence of major

and minor tonality and I-V relationship). Polytonality. Mixed meters. Primitivism.
Forms: No new forms. Previous forms de-emphasized. Rhythms more complicated.
Composers: French --Debussy (1862-1918); Ravel (1875-1937). German --Hindemith (1895-1965); Schoenberg ((1874-1951). Russian -- Prokofieff (1891-1953); Stravinsky (1882-1971); Shostakovitch (1906-1975).

STYLES

F FOLK, composer unknown, handed down from generation to generation.
"Home on the Range," "Arkansas Traveller," "Turkey in the Straw," et cetera.

N NATIONAL, composed music in national style.
COMPOSERS: Spain --Albeniz, deFalla. Russian --"The Five": Borodin, Moussorgsky, Cui, Rimsky-Korsakoff, Balakirev. Hungary-- Bartok. Latin America --Lecuona.

P POPULAR, American popular music--blues, jazz, boogie woogie, light opera, etc.
Composers: Gershwin, Romberg, Kern, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, Richard Rodgers.

Three teachers specifically said they did not use Burg's system. One of them remarked that, although it was very organized and seemed to be a useful system, it took a lot of work and time to set up and maintain. "His [music] was [arranged] this way, and he was always so highly organized, but I never did know how he got it all done," she said.

Burg provided lists of repertoire to workshop participants. On the lists, he classified pieces or collections by style period, such as "Pre-Classic," "Romantic," or "Folk & National"; grade or difficulty level, such as "Ages 8-12" or "Adult Beginner"; or type of music, such as "Sonatina/Sonata,"

"Popular," or "Pedal Studies." Participants also became acquainted with additional repertoire as they observed Burg working with students in a "master lesson" setting within the workshop.

Several respondents reported that Burg advocated selecting varied repertoire. It should also meet the student's needs, technical and otherwise. Things to consider, according to Roger Price, are "what is most important for that student to accomplish, and what piece will do that." He added that consideration should also be given to the size of the student's hand. Furthermore, if students had a weakness, Burg would give them a piece in which they would have to practice and learn to deal with that particular technique or problem. Pearl Peveler recalled Burg's advice to "be sure the student is ready for the technic needed for the piece."

Burg said repertoire should be "always balanced . . . in style-period-technical requirements," as Roberta Lewis put it. "The music must be examined from many angles--reading range (for young students or beginners), rhythmic problems, technical and interpretive factors," explained another respondent. With his piano students who were also teachers, like herself, Lewis says Burg would spend time at their piano lessons studying the *student* repertoire, discussing such things as its technical difficulties and the teaching purpose it might serve.

Respondents also mentioned that Burg felt students should be assigned pieces they would enjoy. "Give the student a choice of new

literature, rather than selecting everything for him. Let him choose between three or four pieces that cover the same teaching principles," explained Myra Schubert. Recalling that one student had played "Bumble Boogie" at Burg's workshop, Jan Culver commented: "It's not the piece, it's how you play it. It doesn't always matter what the literature is; you can use any piece to teach something."

Marge Dorris said Burg urged teachers to "have new music on hand, ready for the student." Burg did this himself, selling the student a copy of the music directly from his own files, as Gari Kyle pointed out: "He was very organized with his own music files. When an item was removed for sale, he immediately went to his desk and added all information to his running list, with carbon, of reorders."

Workshop participants reported that they became acquainted with pieces by composers who were previously unfamiliar to them. For example, Regina Hays remembered, "I was introduced to music by Jon George at the workshop and used the music frequently in my studio."

Burg was "always was on the lookout for something new," according to Virginia Campbell. In presenting her with a new piece, Burg would first play it for her. Often, he would say, "I think this is so nice" or "I think it'd be just for you," Campbell recalled. Burg's enthusiasm for the new piece was contagious, she said:

> If he was interested in it, I was interested in it. . . . I try to motivate my kids like he did. Anything that's new and interesting to me, I'm sure will be new and interesting to them. You just want to keep the enthusiasm at a high level.

Group Piano Teaching

Burg's 1944 master's paper contains fairly extensive sections on "Class Piano" and "Group Teaching as a Supplement to Private Teaching." In the first of these, he discusses briefly the class piano movement in American public schools, which he says grew prodigiously from about 1920 to 1930, but then declined. Referring to a 1940 survey by Doris Moore, director of class piano in the public schools of Rochester, New York, Burg reports that "class piano in the public schools is not nearly as widespread as some people believe."[13] Next, he presents data from the four questions regarding class piano teaching that were included in his nation-wide questionnaire survey of piano teachers. The data are from the responses of teachers who said they taught classes. Burg concludes this section of his paper with the following comments:

> At this point one may compare the problems of the private teacher in teaching class piano with the problem of teaching class piano in the public schools. The survey revealed that the difficulty of organizing and conducting piano classes accounted for over forty-four per cent of the teachers who have discontinued teaching class piano. The public school class piano teacher, on the other hand, has very little difficulty in finding homogeneous groups, in scheduling, and in solving the transportation problem. The problem in the public schools, according to the surveys of Miss Moore and the National

[13]Burg, 192.

> Bureau for the Advancement of Music, is one of finding adequately prepared teachers.
>
> In solving the whole problem of class piano teaching it would seem that: (1) the logical place to teach class piano is in the public school; (2) the schools should engage those teachers who are qualified; and (3) qualified teachers may be found among those who are now teaching class piano in their private studios, or who have taught class piano and have discontinued it because of the almost insurmountable difficulties. These provisions, with the previous recommendations of the writer, in which he suggested that the public schools employ full-time class piano teachers, permit them to teach class piano only, and limit the period a child may study class piano to one year or to two years at the most, should be adequate to meet the problem of class piano teaching.[14]

In the second section, "Group Teaching as a Supplement to Private Teaching," Burg reports that the survey replies indicate many teachers start their students with piano classes. He lists the topics covered in these classes and then states:

> The transition from class piano to one private piano lesson and one theory class lesson a week is relatively easy, and those teachers who begin their pupils with class piano have much less difficulty in getting them to attend theory classes. The transition from class piano in the public schools to one private and one class lesson a week with a private teacher should also be easy, as the pupils are already accustomed to class lessons in connection with their piano study in the schools.[15]

Next, he offers a plan for the contents of group classes and how to organize them. He concludes with a thorough presentation of survey results on the subject, along with his own comments on the value of group teaching by the independent teacher:

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[14]Ibid., 195-96.

[15]Ibid., 197-98.

> The teaching of theory in class as a supplement to private lessons is not as prevalent as it should be. The various subjects under the heading of theory can be more effectively taught in class than in the private lessons. Class lessons stimulate the individual to exert greater effort; there is an incentive to excel and a friendly rivalry which is not present in the private lesson. Furthermore, nothing improves the morale of a teacher's class more than to have his students meet regularly for the common purpose of learning more about music.
>
> . . . When theory and elementary history and appreciation of music are taught in the local high school, it is usually advisable for pupils to take this work there instead of from the private teacher. In high schools, the classes usually meet daily and consequently more time can be given to subject matter. Relieved of the necessity of teaching theory and history and appreciation of music, the private teacher would be able to devote the time in his class teaching to technic, keyboard harmony, ensemble, sight-reading, and student performance of solos.[16]

Although Burg's workshop syllabus listed the topic of "Group Teaching," with subtopics of "Class Piano" and "Theory Classes," all but a few respondents claimed there was no discussion of this subject in his piano pedagogy workshop or class. One who did remember learning about class piano from Burg was Cordelia Bennett; she reported that he opposed the teaching of piano in groups. This was based on his belief that individual differences between students must always be considered, she declared. Bennett stated Burg's philosophy on the subject like this: "Everybody learns at a different rate, and some people will be . . . lost; they just couldn't keep up in a group situation. They might be able to learn, but not in that setting."

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[16]Ibid., 198-99, 205.

Pearl Peveler recalled that Burg recommended group piano teaching for "performance opportunity and repertoire only," while another respondent said Burg taught that "it is an effective way to teach beginners, and can be used in combination with private lessons for intermediate and advanced levels." Someone else wrote that Burg felt public school is the logical place for class piano to be taught and that groups are "good as supplement to private--for theory and ensemble playing."

Ensemble playing was a type of group work that Burg clearly favored, as seen in his numerous productions of multiple-piano concerts. "He was very proud of the fact that he, even early on in Oklahoma City, had organized concerts featuring twenty-five pianos, fifty people. He had photographs of those, the stage filled with pianos," William Godley remembered. Auda Marie Thomas mentioned these concerts and also remarked on Burg's advocacy of two-piano music and duets, which he regularly included in lessons and recitals: "He just enjoyed making you think orchestrally when you would do two-piano or duet music." Commenting on Burg's "foresight in seeing what was to come," Thomas added, "I would imagine that he would thoroughly enjoy the new electronic media for the keyboards."

Organizational and Business Aspects of Independent Piano Teaching

In response to the question on Burg's teaching of organizational and business aspects of independent piano instruction, Malcolm Blazer remembered that Burg made his points on the subject with "always appropriate and insightful anecdotes." Virginia Campbell quoted Burg's statement that every professional studio should have two pianos. Nearly all respondents echoed the sentiments of one: "[Burg] was very good at the business aspect in teaching."

"To this day, I have not read anybody's text that was more accurate and practical," Marilyn Witcher testified, referring to Burg's master's thesis, "Problems of the Private Piano Teacher." Expressing her regret that the thesis was never published, Witcher stated that students in his pedagogy class were required to read and outline it. She continued,

> The thesis went into detail regarding vocational problems and business methods. The latter included finding a suitable location for the piano studio, what to charge for lessons, when and how to raise rates, bartering, advertising, bookkeeping, collection of tuition, and missed lessons.

Other questionnaire respondents also mentioned one or more of these items as topics of discussion in Burg's workshops and classes.

Roger Price confirmed the fact that Burg gave "practical advice in every area to piano teachers," adding that he believed Burg was ahead of his time in offering piano pedagogy classes. He discussed "laying out a credit-debit sheet and the importance of being paid up front, preferably by the

month," Price reported. Burg also stressed the importance of having a studio policy statement to give the parents, including, for example, the policy that the full lesson fee will be charged for any lesson missed with less than twenty-four hours' notice. One respondent mentioned another policy Burg advocated: "Don't be too kind to sickness--it just costs you money and patience."

Calling Burg "a very practical man," Gari Kyle noted that his workshops afforded opportunities for the "exchange of information among teachers regarding lesson fees, makeup lessons, acquiring students, equipment." Auda Marie Thomas explained how this was done: "[Burg would have] various teachers who had been teaching for awhile and that he thought were rather successful present their way of doing [things]." This would be followed by a period for questions and answers. This kind of workshop activity was no doubt what Leon Whitesell had in mind when he pointed out a skill that set Burg apart from other teachers; he said Burg practiced "'networking,' long before this term was in common use."

Thomas, Whitesell, and a number of others said Burg stressed the importance of conducting one's studio as a business by keeping accurate records and by presenting oneself and all one's materials in a professional manner. Burg's attitude regarding one's method of keeping records and doing other things was to do "whatever works for you," Thomas declared, "but make sure it looks professional and businesslike."

Burg felt that being professional involves being organized, his former students said. Leon Whitesell asserted that part of this is being prepared and planning ahead, and that Burg urged teachers to "know where you are going and how you'll get there." Burg also advised keeping your files organized, noted Myra Schubert. She said he followed his own advice: "Dr. Burg's was as organized as a doctor's office. He could always find what he was looking for within seconds." Cordelia Bennett confirmed that Burg "had good office skills" and a good filing system that enabled him to find easily the music he wanted to assign next. She said that Burg always kept a record of the music she had learned, as he did for all his students, and that he took notes on a file card during her lessons. Many others agreed that Burg himself was well organized, and several mentioned that he taught them his system of grading and classifying music and of organizing files.

Gari Kyle observed that Burg stayed organized and avoided accumulating "stacks" by means of "instant problem-solving." She related, "He took time from your own lesson for on-the-spot handling of any of your own paperwork, telephoning for a musical score, changing an audition time."

Roberta Lewis pointed out that another aspect of professionalism Burg highlighted was taking part in the Guild auditions, to which he introduced her. Furthermore, he urged involvement in her local and state

professional organization, including state conventions and workshops, and he helped her achieve OMTA certification, Lewis said.

Burg also recommended "maintaining contact with other serious players with high musical standards," reported Gari Kyle. Such contact would provide motivation for keeping up one's own personal practice, which Kyle said Burg likewise deemed important. He demonstrated these beliefs, Kyle maintained: "He was an absolutely loyal civic and musical club member--always there, enthusiastic, involved." Leon Whitesell named similar lessons he learned from Burg: "How to win friends and influence people. Collegiality, congeniality. Love and devotion to a cause."

Besides practicing, Kyle cited two additional elements of personal care that Burg emphasized. He held that exercising and getting plenty of rest should both have high priority for the independent teacher.

Burg's Influence on His Pedagogy Students

Influence on His Students' Teaching

The question, "How did your pedagogy studies with Dr. Burg influence your teaching?" elicited a large variety of responses from his former students. Although two respondents said they could not tell which ideas they use came from Burg or from some other source, others were able to pinpoint one or more ways in which Burg influenced their teaching.

Several teachers credited Burg with stimulating them to their best efforts:

> [Burg] inspired me to try to be a better teacher. [Sue Halpain]
>
> He encouraged me so much that it caused me to want to be a better teacher. Being able to "just do it" really wasn't good enough. [Kay Scott]
>
> Motivated me to give 100% to each child in every lesson. [Philelle McBrayer]
>
> Without his teaching, I would have been very average. I'm very grateful for having studied with him. [Ernestine Scott]

Burg's students reported that he was a fine role model to them as a professional piano pedagogue and taught them to be professional as well:

> My first impression recalled is <u>pride in professionalism</u> that Dr. Burg exuded.
>
> . . . Naturally, his pianistic and pedagogical ideas were sound and successful, but his warmth, professionalism, and polished personal manner set him on a pedestal in my life. [Leon Whitesell]
>
> He certainly presented the professional side of teaching always. . . . Because you had piano as a little child and on up through high school, it doesn't mean that you can consider yourself a professional. [Burg] actually motivated me to attend a lot more things. I studied piano pedagogy about two years at T[ulsa] U[niversity]. I've been to just countless [workshops]. [Kay Scott]
>
> I was already teaching when I began my study with Dr. Burg. I became much more confident and more businesslike. [Marilyn Witcher]

Several other respondents also said they became more confident through their pedagogy studies with Burg. More specifically, Marge Dorris

reported that she gained "confidence to 'edit' music (fingering, pedalling, dynamics)--Dr. Burg said that the teacher must be the editor."

Dorris further stated, "I feel more organized and sure of how to categorize music." Another respondent also mentioned Burg's organizational systems as his biggest influence on her studio.

Workshop participants received valuable information from Burg regarding the "tools of the trade." One commented, "I used his syllabus of teaching materials quite extensively in the beginning, and still refer to it occasionally." Sue Halpain asserted that Burg "reinforced and taught me many musical concepts," while Evelyn Keeton said, "I kept a notebook on his teachings and still refer to them." Auda Marie Thomas declared, "I still use my notebook," and added that Burg gave an outline for the notebook the first time a person took his workshop. She continued:

> You had to put articles in [the notebook and] keep your notes in it. As you took the workshop year after year, he didn't want you to start a new one. He wanted you to keep adding to it, and he expected to see things that you added to it, even when you weren't in the workshop. A lot of teachers would say there was no way they were going to do such a silly little project, [but] he would always say that you have to have things at your fingertips [so] you know where to get them. He said if they're in a drawer, you won't find them.

Thomas, current president of OMTA who for years served as vice-president in charge of certifying teachers, noted that non-degreed teachers who seek OMTA certification now must create a pedagogy notebook that is similar to the notebook outline from Burg's workshop. Thomas introduced

this notebook and outline to the OMTA certification process, and she recalls comments from teachers over the years: "They didn't like doing it, but they realized how much they had gained from it." Thomas reflected, "I think [Burg] would be pleased about that."

The notebook, like the entire workshop, was very practical, said Thomas, adding that Burg never assigned "busy work." Myra Schubert corroborated Thomas' comment:

> He taught me to be practical in my teaching, not ethereal, talking over my pupils' heads--but to use down-to-earth terminology. His was the most practical teaching I ever received. What he taught me, I could transfer immediately to my own students. And I still quote him almost daily.

Marge Dorris confirmed Schubert's last statement. Dorris took Burg's teacher workshops four times, but never studied piano with him. However, she took piano lessons from Schubert for several years. "She [Schubert] was always saying, 'Dr. Burg does it this way,' or 'Dr. Burg suggests this,'" Dorris reported. I felt I had his teaching through her."

One aspect of Burg's practicality had a strong impact on Roger Price. He recalls, "A huge influence of [Burg's] style of teaching on my style of teaching--and I admired him greatly for this--[was that] whenever he taught you something, he taught it to you in a way that would not only teach it to you, but teach you how to teach it." That Burg was "so aware of pedagogy," Price added, was "*the* thing that distinguishes him from other teachers."

Through Burg, Price became acquainted with the writings of Burg's mentor, Tobias Matthay, whose books Price subsequently read and studied. Price credits the ideas from both Matthay and Burg with exerting significant influence on his teaching. The two pedagogues do not advocate a "method," Price said, but rather "an overall approach to teaching, with very good guidelines. . . . A method makes you think of somebody like Clementi, a way of wiggling your fingers, and that's not it. It's a bigger picture thing, much broader."

Burg promoted certain general teaching techniques and attitudes that affected his students. "Be consistent in what you say and do," one person reported. Another said, "[I] developed a love for teaching." Billie Buck recalled that Burg advised students to "make haste slowly," and Gari Kyle offered the following memorable Burg quotes:

> New teachers always try to teach all they know in one lesson. Be happy if in one lesson you achieve one thing.
>
> The thing I see most often as early teaching error is bad choice of piece for that particular student.
>
> Don't tell the parents, but for a while, you should be paying them. You'll learn the most.
>
> If I could find my first students, I'd give them a refund.

Kyle found that Burg's influence on her early in her life has retained its importance. She reflected:

> I have frequently thought--as I attended numerous events by some leading authors, musicians, teachers--that Dr. Burg was amazingly

> forward thinking, thorough, and ingenious in his delivery. Truth to tell, I have had practically no reason to enlarge on, or make changes in, that original foundation.

Influence Beyond the Pedagogy Class

Burg had a profound effect on the educational and career choices of a number of former OCU students. Joye Hopkins McLain stated, "He was my college advisor and guided me in course choices (electives) to broaden my knowledge. Several times he helped me avoid situations that would have been detrimental to my college career."

Bruce A. Brown recalled, "As a senior in high school, I was all set to go into electrical engineering. My study with [Burg] during that year changed my direction. It was he who caused me to see music as a professional career choice." Brown added that Burg was able to secure three sizeable scholarships for him so that he could attend OCU. "I AM ETERNALLY GRATEFUL! " Brown wrote.

Another OCU student's life was also changed by Burg's intervention. John A. Roberts told the following story:

> I was going to drop out of college at the end of my freshman year, but Dean Burg called me in to his office and devoted an hour of his time letting me know of my future possibilities. Fortunately, I took his advice and stayed in college and met my future wife in the first week of my sophomore year. (In years to come, he would often remind me of this fact.)
>
> Through his encouragement I went on to the Eastman School of Music where I was accepted as a student of Artist-in-Residence, José Echaniz. I then went on to the Ph.D. degree and have been involved

> in college teaching since 1960, the past nineteen years as a music administrator.

Dorothy Lee Carter Howard recalled that as an OCU student, she shared with Burg the responsibility of teaching a piano class in Wewoka, Oklahoma. Howard taught one Saturday, Burg taught the next. "He made me have the desire to teach," she declared. Another respondent said the influence of Burg's teaching was "very much. I decided to become a teacher while I was in his class." Malcolm Blazer's career choice was also influenced by his work with Burg:

> [I] taught for almost twenty-five years, at least twelve of which were as a full-time private instructor. Many of my students became music majors in college. Declining health forced [a] career change, or [I] would still be involved. Maybe yet again.

An OCU graduate and long-time teacher there, Ernestine Scott, stated, "Without Dr. Burg, I might not even be in music." Two other OCU graduates were hired by Burg to the OCU piano faculty and have also taught there many years.

Many former students commented on Burg's impact on the quality and growth of their teaching, as well as their professional involvement. Kay Scott reported that she went to "countless one-day music store seminars by educational composers. Mark Nevin, Howard Kasschau, Bernice Frost--I went to all of them. But Dr. Burg came along in my life at a time where I needed a different outlook." Scott added that Burg encouraged all teachers

to join OMTA and become accredited, and she did. "So," Scott concluded, "he certainly influenced my professional life."

"A workshop of his [Burg's] was my introduction to thinking as a teacher rather than a player," Gari Kyle recalled. "I later took pedagogy for credit, and I gradually attended several other workshops of his." Kyle recounted her experience with Burg that led to her return to school:

> He heard me play and actually telephoned and requested that I study with him and pursue musical goals. I was an adult, contributing to a family budget with a "real job," returning to college after several years, unsure of juggling time, two children, "rusty" musical skills. If he doubted the wisdom of my undertaking, he never showed it, but marched with me upstairs to the Dean, gave a glowing report, actually helped me enroll, suggested certain classwork substitutions or waivers due to OU credits or "real" accompaniment experience. It was a vulnerable time in my life when his take-charge attitude made all the difference. I always knew he valued me as a person as well as a musician.

Kyle concluded, "My musical self-image was in great part his creation."

"About 90 percent of what I do with my private teaching, I feel I owe to Dean Burg," Jan Culver declared. "I don't think I would begin to be the teacher I am if it hadn't been for him. I just cannot give him enough credit for the pedagogy part of my music training." Roberta Lewis observed that, except for Burg's influence,

> I would probably not be teaching and certainly not as well as I do. He made me realize that you could always learn something and you could always do something better. So I have continued to go to workshops, summer seminars, etc. He also was most instrumental in my involvement with the state and national organizations.

Myra Schubert added, "He taught me to be involved . To be active and helpful in any organization or group that I was a part of." Another respondent noted, "As a young teacher, he encouraged me to enter students in the Guild auditions, and I still do. He also helped me apply for state accreditation as soon as I was eligible." Philelle McBrayer's statement is representative of many others:

> He introduced me to OMTA and National Guild of Piano Teachers, both of which have helped me and my students. I have been very active in local, state and national activities related to OMTA and have become a Guild judge, as well as entering my students in Guild auditions each year.

McBrayer currently serves OMTA as first vice-president and president-elect. Other former Burg students have been leaders in music organizations at all levels, including a current member of the MTNA Board of Directors; a recent MTNA president; the immediate past president of the South Central Division of MTNA; several OMTA presidents, including the current one; and numerous OMTA district and local association presidents.

Marilyn Witcher is one of these leaders, formerly president of OMTA and of the South Central Division of MTNA and now a member of the MTNA Board of Directors. She says of Burg, "He had the capability to understand a student's strengths and help develop them. Both he and I understood that I did not have the gift or desire to become a great performer." Therefore, Witcher recalled, Burg helped her develop her teaching abilities, as well as confidence in them, and promoted her

involvement in various teachers' organizations, including all levels of MTNA, the NGPT, and the National Federation of Music Teachers.

Burg believed piano teachers must develop a professional attitude about all aspects of their work, an attitude that he himself exhibited, according to many questionnaire respondents. The following comments are representative:

> He inspired me to be a better person, a more professional musician in every area in which I was involved. He brought out the best that I was capable of and inspired me to do things "beyond myself." [Myra Schubert]

> I got into teaching piano accidentally years ago, probably about 1956 or '57. I went into Jenkins Music Store and asked for beginner books, got Schaum "Pre-A" and Thompson's "Teaching Little Fingers to Play," and I thought "Well, that's it." Dr. Burg was inspiring to me. He shook me out of any kind of complacency that just getting a couple of books [was sufficient for teaching]. I decided very quickly that I needed to really get down to business. He definitely caused me to attempt a more professional attitude and do something about it, and I did. I was very impressed with him. [Kay Scott]

> I emulate him in pursuit of building a studio, so you could very well say that my professional life is very much built on the foundations that he laid. It's inseparable from me. [Roger Price]

A number of respondents reported Burg's positive, encouraging attitude as an important influence on them. Judy Gorton recalled:

> Dr. Burg made me feel like I was one of the best students out at Weatherford. That surely has been a mind-set I have not forgotten. He treated me (this insecure, country child) like I could play up there with the best. Somewhere in my mind, I must still believe this!

Further explaining Burg's influence in her life, Gorton added:

It has always been an honor to be included in his group of students. I've always been proud of Dr. Burg and the OCU connection, all through the years. His was the biggest, most influential name around, for many years. This was and is prestige on my resume!

Respondents also reported that Burg's positive outlook on life and high expectations for himself and his students were inspiring models for his students. Some recollections follow:

I loved him almost as a second father. He reminded me a great deal of my own father whom I admired very much. As with my own father, he influenced me to do my best in all things, not just piano. [Philelle McBrayer]

I think he gave me such a role model to follow, not only musically but in all aspects of life. Ethics, honesty and integrity in what you did and felt, but always kind. [Roberta Lewis]

Because of my association with Dr. Burg, not only in lessons and classes, but socially, I came to appreciate his approach to life and music as a balance between devotion to the art and to people. [Leon Whitesell]

A memory often recollected: I had arranged for Dr. Burg to critique, in my home, a group of my students. Each had a definite time slot. The weekend arrived and the weather was even worse than the dire forecast. The phone rang all morning with parents' cancellations. I offered Dr. Burg cancellation, but he said, "Oh, no," that he'd just have more time to work with the ones who <u>did</u> show. He had a longer icy drive than any of them, and though it continued to snow and blow, he asked my husband a number of interested carpentry questions regarding our studio remodeling. He leisurely, thoughtfully, worked with each student who showed, stayed for a snack afterward, lingered in the front yard, snow gathering on his coat and bare head, spread his arms, and said, "Isn't this wonderful? Isn't this a beautiful world?" I aspire to his outlook, his sense of proportion. [Gari Kyle]

Several respondents cited Burg's dedication to OCU and his recruiting efforts as exemplary. Frank Pollock observed that Burg was "a real gentleman, a man with a God-given talent. He was a man of high ideals and service to his students, and OCU was a priority." Another former student remarked, "He had survived the Depression and World War II, and I had to admire him for coming through such difficulties and building OCU into the fine music school it was." Eve Wegener noted that Burg "was always recruiting for talent everywhere." She felt highly complimented when Burg immediately responded to her letter of inquiry and encouraged her to come and study with him.

Mae-Ruth Foth Swanson came to OCU as a voice major, recruited by Burg. She went on to professional work as a businesswoman whose duties included promotion and fund-raising. She also has played a significant role for a number of years in keeping the Civic Music Association alive and flourishing in Oklahoma City. Burg's influence on Swanson was certainly positive, but quite different from that of many others. Her story also shows Burg's belief in the importance of making contacts with the business people of the community and of supporting community arts organizations:

> When I first went to OCU, Dr. Burg had me drive him downtown and attend Chamber of Commerce meetings with him. I met and learned to know many civic leaders of the community. These contacts became extremely valuable as I pursued both music and business vocations. As a director or executive in the field of financial development, I worked with these civic leaders in fund-

raising campaigns, boards and committees. These contacts were useful when promoting Civic Music as well.

Dr. Burg was a strong supporter of Civic Music Association. He constantly dropped me notes, congratulating me and expressing appreciation for the organization which brought such outstanding music to Oklahoma City. He served on its board and was one of those persons who initiated the process to establish the association in Oklahoma City.

The kind of personal attention and support Wegener and Swanson experienced was mentioned by many respondents throughout the questionnaire. Many said these kinds of things represented Burg's strongest influence on them. Cordelia Bennett observed that Burg's personal concern for her is reflected in her own work today as a high school vocal teacher. She recalled:

> I did some things that all kids do: I would slack off from my practice at times. He [Burg] would talk to me like I was his child, kind of chiding me for misbehaving. I find myself doing that with some of my students, . . . doing a lot of counseling with my students. I have personal concerns for them, other than music. I think he [Burg] influenced me to do that.

Respondents remembered that Burg always inquired about their families and their students, was interested in their extra-musical activities, and kept in touch with them by letters or notes of congratulation on their accomplishments. Pearl Peveler said that she often sent Burg copies of her students' recital programs, to which he always responded by letter. Sue Halpain recalled, "He was wonderful about sending articles, notes of congratulation and encouragement. He was free with praise, if and when deserved." Observing that "some people are very stingy with their

knowledge and ideas," Halpain said she especially admired Burg's "willingness and desire to share his vast knowledge."

Burg encouraged any musical endeavor of his students. Marilyn White testified, "He told me never to turn down an opportunity to play. He also nominated me to be a member of OKC Pianists Club, of which I still am an active member."

Several former students also had success as composers, and as usual, Burg was supportive. Cordelia Bennett composed a children's album for Melody House, a national children's music publishing and record company. She said that she used many of the skills that Burg had taught her in her writing.

Although he did not study composition with Burg, Roger Price called him "a mentor," adding, "It's his whole approach again--encouragement, giving you confidence." According to Price, Burg commented on his compositions and encouraged him greatly with them. As a member of the OMTA Board, Burg secured for Price his first commission, as OMTA Composer of the Year in 1979. "That was a great boost for my career," Price declared.

Susan Smeltzer Snyder also got her start as a composer because of support from Burg. "Since Dr. Burg asked me to write a violin part to the Prelude and Fugue in D major by Bach," Snyder explained, "I have continued to compose. He did make a very special and valuable

contribution to my life in music." Snyder likewise appreciated Burg's encouragement when she became a church organist, an occupation in which she is still employed. She feels her ability to improvise at the organ is an outgrowth of her study with Burg, as are her technique skills. Burg's influence is to be found in her teaching, too, Snyder says.

A rather unusual example of Burg's influence on his students can be seen in a very interesting project that involved former Burg student LaDonna Reynolds. She was chosen from over five hundred applicants to be one of twenty elementary music teachers in the Midwest region to take part in a special workshop, "Creating an Original Opera," sponsored by the New York Metropolitan Opera. After an intensive two-week summer workshop, Reynolds was to guide her fourth and fifth graders the following school year in creating and producing their own opera. The huge project was quite expensive for the small Bethany, Oklahoma, school district where Reynolds teaches, and it consumed large amounts of her time and energy, but it was a big success, she reported. Reynolds was surprised and pleased to discover, when she reached the workshop in Milwaukee, that the workshop leaders had heard of Burg and some of her other teachers at OCU, as well as the OCU opera program. She felt that her studies with Burg, listed on her application, had played a part in her being selected to participate in the workshop. Furthermore, she added, "From what they [workshop leaders] taught me, and from what Dr. Burg taught me, in phrasing, I was in a

position that I could really help my students write their own original music."

Although most students felt Burg's was a positive influence on their lives beyond their studies with him, a few said he affected them only in the area of their studies, and two felt that Burg had a negative impact on them. One of them said, "I am now rather involved with music--it is and will remain an essential part of my life--in spite of Dr. Burg." The other felt that graduation from OCU as a music major became an insurmountable obstacle because of Burg's indifference to the individual's problem, as compared with the interests of OCU's School of Music. The student graduated, but only with the help of two other more sympathetic people. The incident did have one indirect positive effect: the respondent reported gaining strength because of overcoming the difficulties.

Burg's Strengths as a Pedagogy Teacher

Former students gave their opinions of Burg's strengths as a pedagogy teacher. They named a variety of strong areas in his pedagogy teaching.

Bruce A. Brown described one of Burg's pedagogy class assignments that he found most helpful: "He had us 'practice teach' each other in class, making comments and having us make comments about each other's teaching styles."

Workshop participants also had the opportunity to observe Burg's teaching skills firsthand as he conducted master-class sessions with his own students and those of teachers attending the workshop. "The demonstration teaching was the most interesting thing to watch. That was worth the trip," declared Kay Scott. She added, "I was very favorably impressed with him as a teacher, and what he turned out. His students could play. . . . I was really impressed with his students. I just thought they were wonderful."

Burg's success with his students may have resulted from what Ernestine Scott called his greatest strength as a teacher: "He knew exactly where the problem was and corrected it." In addition, Marilyn Witcher offered her opinion that "he was instinctively a good psychologist," while Leon Whitesell listed the following among Burg's strong points: "Astute judgement in all matters, ability to 'size up' given situations, to make 'lemonade' even when handed lemons!"

One respondent mentioned Burg's strength was teaching fundamentals. According to several respondents, Burg was realistic about what any given student could accomplish, beginning wherever the student was. Marilyn Witcher cited Burg's "ability to take the student from his/her present level and systematically progress" as the trait that set him apart from her other teachers. "He dealt well with the student at the level of the student and then took them forward," Pearl Peveler noted. No doubt Burg

could do this because "he had extensive experience with all levels of teaching and with students of all ages," Witcher continued. In fact, one respondent said the feature that distinguished Burg from other pedagogues was his "great amount of experience in teaching the younger students."

Burg had a "genuine love of teaching [that] carried over to his teacher-students," Philelle McBrayer remembered. Others also commented on his love of his students. He showed "respect for all, from neophyte to professional," Leon Whitesell asserted, and Gari Kyle also noted that Burg "gave value to ideas from any attendee."

Burg was enthusiastic and encouraging to her and other workshop participants, declared Roberta Lewis. Even though she was very inexperienced, Lewis recalled, "He always made me feel I had something to offer my students and that I was good at what I was doing." Virginia Campbell commented, "He was good with students, cared about each one individually, cared about their progress and what they were doing. He told me he was never too busy for me to call him for questions." Gari Kyle related her experience with Burg's "personal touch": "He put me 'under the wings of' [older, more experienced teachers] Frances McCall and Louise McCampbell, with instructions to guide me into the local independent teachers' group. [This was] flattering to them and very helpful to me."

Respondents appreciated the fact that Burg's classes and workshops were well-organized and thorough. These qualities of Burg's teaching were

reflections of Burg's "amazingly ordered life and mind," features that Leon Whitesell regarded highly. Other personal characteristics were named among Burg's strengths. One respondent valued his versatility and humor. As an example of the latter, the teacher related a memorable quote: "When parents ask what their child needs to work on, say 'Rhythm, always rhythm.'" Another former student remembered Burg as "a kind, quiet personality," who "seemed easy to get along with." Kay Scott attended a number of Burg's workshops. She said she thoroughly enjoyed them, calling them "very stimulating." Scott also named characteristics that set Burg's workshops apart from the many others she had attended. She said he was "very down-to-earth; no 'art-y' mannerisms of any kind. He included humor in many, many things he said; it was a very pleasant experience."

Many respondents felt Burg's greatest strength was his vast knowledge of teaching and the teaching literature. "He had a total grasp of subject," said one. Kay Scott commented that Burg "certainly seemed to know exactly what he was talking about." She said her notebook from Burg's workshop "covers so much. . . . He really didn't leave a stone unturned." She has pulled many things, including repertoire lists, out of her notebook and filed them in her music room, where she can easily refer to them.

Several respondents noted that Burg also exhibited a willingness and desire to share his wide knowledge and experiences, "and for a nominal

fee," added Philelle McBrayer. She observed, "He was truly interested in raising the standards of private teaching." Gari Kyle expanded on this observation: "For workshops, [Burg] made great effort to reach out to those from small towns [and] rural communities."

Several students admired Burg's practicality. The following comments are representative:

> He could explain things in a way that you would remember and use forever. [Myra Schubert]
>
> Everything he did was practical. I can't recall any time doing anything in his workshops . . . that wasn't practical, and in the lessons, I don't remember anything that seemed to be a waste of time. It was always practical. [Auda Marie Thomas]

Roberta Lewis noted another aspect of Burg's practical nature. She said he could translate musical profundity into basic practice techniques, commending his "ability to transfer his deep love and understanding of the music into how do you accomplish this, always in simple terms and in detail." Lewis continued, "He instilled in me this idea of commitment to the composer's ideas but [also] to the student's ability to portray [them]."

Although Burg could recognize a student's limitations, "he always brought together the theory and technic to enhance the music, not as an end to itself," Lewis pointed out. LaDonna Meinders expressed a related idea: "Phrasing was probably [Burg's] greatest strength, teaching a student about building to a climax, about movement. [He was] always thinking musically--seeing a piece in large, sweeping segments." Meinders said

Burg's concepts of phrasing and movement were skills unique to him among all her teachers.

Burg's Weaknesses as a Pedagogy Teacher[17]

The following two criticisms came from students who had taken Burg's college pedagogy class long ago:

> Not enough attention to personal imagination and creativity.
>
> We did not learn "how" to teach. The class was a review of a paper he had written and making lists of literature.

Several other respondents commented that too much time had been required to take notes on Burg's master's thesis and outline it, and they felt the work was outdated. However, Roger Price pointed out that it had formed the basis for the pedagogy notebook required today by OMTA in the certification process for teachers without degrees in piano, after it had been updated by Auda Marie Thomas.

One former student complained, "[Burg] seemed mainly concerned with our notebooks we were required to keep during the class. In fact, I believe our grade depended on how well he liked our notebook. I received an 'A' but really didn't learn much." Another said, "I recall not liking [the pedagogy class]. He apparently did not stimulate my teaching abilities." This student thought Burg's grading on a bell curve was "inflexible. . . . No

[17]Comments throughout this section will not be identified with the respondents' names.

matter how accelerated the class, someone had to be on the down side of the curve."

Burg's strong personality could be a drawback, explained one former student. His opinions would be presented so forcefully that students might feel they could not thoughtfully consider and evaluate these ideas for themselves. For example, Burg did not like Schaum arrangements and discouraged their use. Since he was quite dogmatic on this point, the respondent never considered Schaum arrangements at all. "Then I worked for a short time in the music store," the student recalled, "and I discovered that the Schaum solo arrangements of popular music are ideal for adult students who . . . could never possibly do it in the original."

The preceding comments came from students who had taken Burg's college pedagogy class. The following were made by those who took his summer pedagogy workshops.

> He spent too much time "performing" rather than teaching.
>
> He sometimes moved too fast and was always impatient with sloppiness that was really just lack of understanding.
>
> There were several times that I felt he embarrassed students (especially teenagers) by keeping them at the piano too long and having them go over and over something he wanted to emphasize to the teachers.

One respondent observed that Burg began to be forgetful when he was quite old. Another said Burg repeated some things year after year, such as the information on the Bach Two-Part Inventions. "Of course," the

respondent added, "he had a different audience each year," so some repetition was understandable and probably necessary.

A number of respondents could name no weaknesses in Burg's pedagogy teaching. One said, "I could not presume to answer this question, because I am so humbled by his life, experience, and his total devotion to my profession. His great contributions far outweigh any so-called 'weakness.'"

CHAPTER 5

PROFESSIONAL LEADER

Beginning in his early twenties and continuing throughout his life, Clarence Burg was a member of numerous professional organizations for musicians and music educators. However, he was not satisfied with being simply a member; he took an active leadership role in virtually every group he joined. He helped to found several groups to which he belonged, most notably the state music teachers' associations in his two states of residence, Arkansas and Oklahoma. This chapter details Burg's activities and accomplishments in the professional organizations of which he was a part.

Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association

The Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association began in 1915 at a meeting of a group of twelve music teachers. The thirty members present at the first convention the following year formed the professional organization to improve the standards of music teaching in the state by establishing a certification and accreditation program for Arkansas music

teachers.[1] Clarence Burg became a charter member of the ASMTA, setting the pattern for a lifetime of activity in professional music organizations.

Beginning in 1920, with his election as secretary, until he moved to Oklahoma in 1928, Burg held elective office in the ASMTA. After serving as secretary of the young organization, he was elected vice-president.[2]

Chief accomplishments of the ASMTA, according to Charles Wright's history of the group, were to establish standards of proficiency for music teaching and to make music part of the regular curricula of a majority of schools throughout the state.[3] Burg helped to further both goals. He appeared on behalf of ASMTA before the Education Committee of the Arkansas State Senate to present a proposed law to license private music teachers. This led to the first state accreditation of music teachers in Arkansas.[4] He also was influential in gaining the approval of the Arkansas State Board of Education for granting high school credits for music study

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[1]Wright, "A History of the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association," 12.

[2]Ibid., 14, 15. Also in Clarence Burg, "Principia," Personal resume, TD, 17 April 1935, Clarence Burg Collection, Archives, Dulaney-Browne Library, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City, 1.

[3]Wright, "A History of the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association," 8.

[4]Clarence Burg, Personal resume, TD, 1947(?), Clarence Burg Collection, Archives, Dulaney-Browne Library, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City, 1.

with private teachers.[5] Current ASMTA officers have found no records of the first years of the ASMTA; therefore, it is impossible to document any further contributions Burg may have made to the organization.

Oklahoma Music Teachers Association[6]

The Oklahoma Music Teachers Association was initially organized in 1913, but was discontinued in 1917, when its president, Mrs. Dewitt Hunt of Stillwater, resigned because her husband entered military service during the First World War. Therefore, when Clarence Burg moved to Oklahoma in 1928, there was no professional music teachers' organization functioning in the state.

Since he had been actively involved in the formation of such an organization in Arkansas, it is not surprising that Burg became similarly involved in his new home state. A group of music teachers gathered in Tulsa in April 1929, following a meeting there of the National Federation of Music Clubs, and discussed forming a professional organization primarily for music teachers. Burg was appointed chairman of planning for this new

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[5]Clarence Burg, "Summary of Training and Experience," TD, 1942(?), Clarence Burg Collection, Archives, Dulaney-Browne Library, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City, 2.

[6]Information regarding the history of the OMTA was gathered from numerous photos and documents of various kinds in the archives of the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association, especially Henry Hobart, "Oklahoma in the Spotlight," TD, 16 April 1953. The following source was also extensively used: W. Earl Cox and Roberta Lewis, "History of the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association," Convention program booklet of Oklahoma Music Teachers Association 62nd Annual Convention, 4-5 June 1993, 38-45.

organization, his assignment being to draw up a constitution and by-laws. He did so, patterning them after those of the Oklahoma Medical Association, and presented them at a second meeting on November 30, 1929, in the Oriel Room at OCU's Fine Arts Building.[7] Thirty music teachers in attendance gave birth to the Oklahoma State Music Teachers Association[8] by approving and signing the newly written documents. Within a short time, another nineteen people also signed, for a total of forty-nine charter members. Those attending the November meeting also elected officers. Burg was chosen as the first president, serving from 1929-34.

A number of noteworthy events occurred within the organization during Burg's term as president. At the 1931 state convention, the Executive Board of OMTA chose him as their representative to the December national convention of the Music Teachers National Association[9] in Detroit. That

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[7]A plaque beside the door of the Oriel Room bears witness to the occasion. It reads, "During the administration of Dr. Clarence A. Burg, Dean of the School of Music, 1928-62, the Oriel Room was the site of the organizational meeting of the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association, 1929, . . ."

[8]The original constitution names the organization "Oklahoma State Music Teachers Association" and all convention booklets show this name through 1940. However, the 1941 convention booklet cover reads, "Oklahoma Music Teachers Association." That shorter name has been used continuously by the group since then, and it appears as the official name of the organization in Article I of the present constitution. Minutes of any meetings during the years 1938-1940 are missing, so it is impossible to say whether the action to drop the word "State" from the organization's title was formally or informally taken. Throughout this paper, the organization is always referred to as "Oklahoma Music Teachers Association" or "OMTA."

[9]Although the original constitution of OMTA does not mention affiliation with MTNA, OMTA did affiliate with MTNA. The current constitution confirms the fact in Article I: "The name of the organization is the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association, an Affiliate of the Music Teachers National Association, Inc. . . ." All OMTA state convention

year also saw the appearance of the first edition of *The Oklahoma Music Teacher* as the official quarterly journal of the OMTA. In that issue it was reported that two examinations had already been held by the examining committee, which included Burg. This committee was charged with implementing a newly approved plan for certifying private music teachers through certification examinations several times each year. These exams tested current and prospective members to insure that they were providing instruction of the highest possible quality to their students, thereby fulfilling one of the chief purposes of OMTA, as stated in its first constitution; namely, "to elevate the standards of music instruction in Oklahoma."[10] Only those who passed the test could hold fully-certified membership in the organization; others could hold associate membership. It is no surprise that Burg served on this committee, since improving the teaching of music was

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program booklets prior to 1939 contain only the name of the organization. However, the first page of the booklet for the 1939 state convention for the first time reads, "affiliated with the Music Teachers National Association," following the name of the state organization. Either the state organization was affiliated with the national from the beginning and simply did not list the affiliation, or else the affiliation took place around 1939 when the listing first appears. Archival records, including all existing minutes of meetings, fail to reveal an exact date when the affiliation began. Clouding the issue further is the following statement in Cox and Lewis' "History of the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association" (OMTA 62nd Annual Convention booklet, 1993): "In 1952 OMTA obtained affiliation with the Music Teachers National Association on a fifty per cent basis, and at the state convention on July 7, 1954, in Stillwater, the membership voted to maintain one hundred per cent affiliation." The fact that a delegate from Oklahoma--Burg--attended the MTNA national convention less than two years after the Oklahoma organization was formed suggests that a close relationship, either official or unofficial, existed between the two groups from a very early point in OMTA's history.

[10][Clarence Burg], "Oklahoma State Music Teachers' Association Constitution," TD, 30 November 1929, Historian's Archives, Oklahoma Music Teachers Association, 1.

one of his life-long concerns, reflected in his many teachers' workshops and master classes, as well as his work in professional organizations such as OMTA. Years later, Auda Marie Thomas, in her capacity as OMTA's vice-president in charge of teacher certification, updated the notebook outline from Burg's piano teacher workshops and piano pedagogy classes. This outline, which had been based on Burg's master's thesis, became the basis for the pedagogy notebook required today by OMTA in the certification process for teachers without degrees in piano.

The first two conventions of the fledgling organization, in April 1930 in Chickasha and in April 1931 in Lawton, were held jointly with the Oklahoma Federation of Music Clubs. Thereafter, it was decided, OMTA would meet separately, so that the entire time could be devoted to problems and issues of interest to professional musicians. Burg and OCU hosted the first separate convention in November 1932.

At the December 1933 convention in Tulsa, with pianist Rudolph Reuter as the guest artist, a new policy went into effect. Each OMTA convention would feature an artist-teacher of national prominence in a master class and a recital. This policy continues today.

Burg was actively involved in OMTA until the end of his life, serving on the Executive Board and numerous committees through the years. He also entered his students in the various competitions sponsored by

OMTA.[11] As all the auditions became highly competitive, a need was felt for a non-competitive audition in which each student simply received a rating of his or her ability, with the judge's constructive criticism. So the OMTA Achievement Auditions were started in 1969. Originally for junior and senior high school students, these auditions later were expanded to include elementary students. In 1986, not long before Burg's death, OMTA established a new award in his honor, a plaque given annually to every twelfth-grader who has participated for four consecutive years in the State Achievement Auditions. (The complete inscription on the plaque can be found in Appendix D.) The award was proposed by Janell Whitby, an OMTA member and Tulsa piano teacher who had worked with Burg in OMTA and had attended his summer workshops. She felt the workshops had helped her and many others so much in their teaching that Burg deserved recognition by OMTA. Called the Clarence Burg Achievement Award, the award not only recognizes hard-working students, but also commemorates Burg's lifetime of activity in and support for OMTA.

[11]The first of these competitions began in 1944. These "Senior Auditions" selected performers for each year's state convention program from high school students, ages fourteen through nineteen, from across the state. Junior Auditions for students aged eight through thirteen were added in 1946, with a written theory examination required from 1954 for both Junior and Senior Auditions competitors. Also in 1954, Collegiate Auditions were initiated.

National Guild of Piano Teachers[12]

In 1929, Irl Allison, Dean of the School of Music at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, organized the first "All-Southwestern Piano-Playing Tournament," with forty-six students and three teachers participating. Thirty-three of these students were Allison's. Students played memorized pieces for an outside judge, and each received a critique. Allison discovered that the Tournament was an extremely successful motivator for his students, and that it stimulated better work, even from his slower students. So, a few years later, he founded the National Guild of Piano Teachers to promote and sponsor a nationwide version of his Tournament.[13]

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[12]Information on Burg's involvement in the NGPT was gathered primarily from the files and Yearbooks of the NGPT; back issues of NGPT's official publication, *Piano Guild Notes;* and Irl Allison, Jr., NGPT consultant and past president, and Richard Allison, NGPT president, interview by author, Tape recording, Austin, TX, 6 January 1994, American College of Musicians, Austin, TX.

[13]To advance the cause of the Guild, Allison left his family behind and moved to New York City during the Depression, in late 1935. From there, he traveled extensively, mostly in the northeast United States, until about 1943, when the family finally settled permanently in Austin, Texas. Allison and his wife Jessie always operated the Guild themselves, out of their home, living very frugally and contributing large amounts of time and energy to the growth of the organization. Their children grew up helping with the family business, beginning with simple tasks like stuffing, addressing, and stamping envelopes.

The Guild has remained in the Allison family, despite the fact that the son and grandson of Irl Allison, Sr., who followed him as the Guild's second and third presidents, are not musicians. Irl Allison, Jr., began working for the Guild full-time in 1949 and became president when his father stepped down from the position in 1960. Richard Allison, son of Irl Allison, Jr., likewise began working for the Guild at a young age and took over the presidency from his father in 1986. In the NGPT office in the headquarters building that opened in Austin in 1963, one still senses a feeling of family today, even though the staff now numbers about twelve employees, none of whom is a member of the Allison family.

From its humble beginnings, Irl Allison's idea has expanded greatly. Today, it has become the NGPT's National Piano-Playing Auditions, which in 1996 attracted 110,669 students of 7,604 teachers. These students were judged by nearly 700 judges at 848 organized audition centers throughout the United States and in Canada, Mexico, and Taiwan.[14] However, the original purpose of these auditions has remained the same--to motivate piano students and raise the standards of music education. Any teacher may become a Guild member and enter students in the auditions. Auditions are open to all students, beginners through advanced artists, from the slowest to the most gifted.[15]

Clarence Burg had met Irl Allison in 1927 when Allison was Dean of Music at Hardin-Simmons University and Burg and baritone Arthur Middleton performed there during a concert tour of the Southwest. In that meeting, Burg discovered that he and Allison shared a number of beliefs

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[14]Information provided by telephone by NGPT headquarters, Austin, TX, 26 March 1997.

[15]Currently, students may enter NGPT auditions in one of a number of categories, determined by their level of advancement and the level and number of memorized pieces performed. There are also several special classifications in which pieces need not be memorized. A well-qualified musician privately hears each auditioner, who plays from one to twenty pieces. Using the standardized Guild Report Card, this judge evaluates each piece performed in the areas of accuracy, phrasing, pedaling, dynamics, rhythm, tone, interpretation, and technique. Besides this Report Card, with judge's marks and comments, all participating students receive a certificate and pin. More advanced students may compete in addition for plaques, diplomas, and scholarships.

Because the auditions were conceived not only to inspire better work in students, but also to help teachers improve their teaching, teachers entering students may have a post-audition conference with the judge regarding their students' performances, or they may request a "confidential opinion" report from the judge about their students' playing. All participating teachers also receive a certificate.

about motivating students and helping piano teachers improve their instruction. So when Allison formed the NGPT in 1933, Burg found that its goals matched his own ideas very well, and he gave the new organization his enthusiastic support, becoming a charter member. The following year, he established and chaired the first NGPT audition center outside the state of Texas, in the Oriel Room at OCU's Fine Arts Building. In the succeeding years, Burg founded audition centers in many communities throughout the state of Oklahoma, including Tulsa in 1947 and Lawton in 1952. In an article in March 1955 for *Piano Guild Notes,* the NGPT's official publication, Burg reported on the terrific growth in twenty years of the Guild in Oklahoma and named twenty locations of Guild audition centers throughout the state.[16] In 1996, NGPT auditions were held at twenty-seven Oklahoma locations.[17]

Burg was the first Guild auditions judge in Oklahoma, according to his own biographical materials. Guild records for the years 1933 through 1937, including the first Guild Yearbook, which was published in 1937, have been lost. However, because of his interest in the Guild as a charter member and his close ties to founder Irl Allison, Burg very likely served as a judge in

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[16]Clarence Burg, "More Teachers List National Auditions As Best Motivation," *Piano Guild Notes* 4, no. 9 (March 1955): 1.

[17]NGPT headquarters, 26 March 1997.

Oklahoma and possibly Texas during that period.[18] In the first extant Guild Yearbook--1938--Burg is listed as a member of the Board of Directors and Advisers of the NGPT and as the Oklahoma City Chairman for the 1938 National Piano Playing Tournament. His name first appears in the Yearbook as an "examiner" for the 1940 auditions in Wilson, Oklahoma. The next time Burg is listed as a judge is 1943,[19] when he went to Altus and Ardmore, Oklahoma, and Amarillo, Texas. From then on, he served each year, usually in multiple locations, from six to sixteen different audition sites. Most of these were in Oklahoma and Texas. Especially in Oklahoma, Burg returned year after year to a number of centers, where the chairs requested him as their judge. Their many enthusiastic letters and comments on Chairman's Report forms can be found in the Guild files.

These files contain records of a very few instances where this precedent caused minor problems for the Guild when other Oklahoma teachers asked for a specific judge and/or a specially arranged audition time for their students. The Guild responded by granting the requests for one year only, calling attention to the difficulty of a Guild position that would grant favors to some members and not to all. Various file documents

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[18]Allison and Allison, interview by author, 6 January 1994.

[19]Since the author has documented several omissions of judges' names in NGPT Yearbooks, the lack of a listing of Burg as a judge in the 1941 and 1942 Yearbooks may be simply an error. If Burg did not, in fact, judge in 1941 and 1942, it was likely due to his summer studies for his master's degree at Eastman School of Music in New York.

indicate that Burg, because of his status as "our old and dearest friend," was indeed an exception to this policy, regarding judging assignments and audition dates and times, and that it was the Guild's intention to eliminate such unusual practices for the future.

Some correspondence in Guild files indicates that Burg's judging style frequently put him well behind in hearing students play at their scheduled times. However, these kinds of comments were always tempered by the writer's appreciative words about Burg's obvious interest in each individual student and his willingness to give each one as much attention and time as he thought necessary. This tolerant attitude was apparently held by most teachers and students about this aspect of Burg's judging behavior. A long-time Burg student, who became a Guild judge herself with Burg's recommendation and assistance, summed it up in the following observation on her questionnaire:

> As an adjudicator, he [Burg] often ignored guidelines and the safe route. He felt free to "teach the piece," mark on the music, ask who the teacher was, suggest repertoire, visit leisurely with the student while others waited. Somehow, it seemed to work for him. Each student felt special. They loved his judging.

Except for a lengthy letter from one Kansas teacher who complained that Burg's ratings of her strongest and weakest students were too close to

each other,[20] all reports on Burg's judging are overwhelmingly positive. In an interview with the author, Irl Allison, Jr., stated that while there could be "legitimate variations in opinion" regarding judging of any particular student, he had never heard Burg's musicianship questioned. "I don't ever recall anybody being seriously upset with Clarence Burg," Allison declared.[21]

Although the Guild files, especially for the early years, are incomplete, there are records showing that, in addition to many Oklahoma and Texas locations, Burg also judged at centers in Hobbs, New Mexico; DeQueen, Arkansas; Topeka and Columbus, Kansas; Boise, Caldwell, and Jerome, Idaho; Richmond, Virginia; and Honolulu, Hawaii. When he went to judge, Burg often arranged to give a piano teachers' workshop before or after the judging period, especially in the out-of-state locations. Since Guild judges receive minimal compensation, such workshops made the judging trips financially feasible for Burg. In all his workshops, Burg promoted the Guild and its auditions as excellent motivators for students, urged workshop participants to join the Guild, and provided information and membership forms. In addition, Burg regularly sent names and addresses of prospective members to the Guild office throughout his life.

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[20]This complaint was received when Burg was in his late seventies and had been judging Guild auditions for many years. The Guild responded immediately by letter, acknowledging the teacher's concerns, while expressing confidence in Burg's judgment and experience. The letter also requested permission to forward the teacher's letter on to Burg, who, it was believed, would like to know her thoughts.

[21]Allison and Allison, interview by author, 6 January 1994.

According to NGPT files, 1979 was the last year Burg judged auditions. He was eighty-five. Even after that, the Guild office sometimes called on him to help resolve problems with Oklahoma City auditions, as some Guild file documents indicate. The final communication from Burg in the Guild's files was their 1984 form requesting "Number of days available for judging." His response: "None. Retired as Dean Emeritus, School of Music & Performing Arts at OK City University. 91 years old. Still giving private piano lessons to advanced students in our home."[22]

Besides judging, founding new audition centers, and recruiting new members, Burg contributed to the Guild in other ways. In the very early days of the Guild, he helped develop the standard Guild Report Card, still used today to provide students their audition grade and comments from their judge. Burg is also credited with originating the Guild's motto. In a letter to Allison, as reported in the November 1955 *Piano Guild Notes*, Burg wrote, ". . . The number of piano students served in each state and the amount of money spent by the Guild in serving these pupils certainly proves that the motto of the Guild could well be 'Growing through giving.'" Allison's letter of response said, "You may be sure that as long as the Allison Family is permitted by the Grace of God to continue the work it has begun successfully, the motto which you have been inspired to suggest,

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[22]Clarence Burg, "Number of days available for judging," TCS, [Fall 1984], "Clarence Burg" file, American College of Musicians, Austin, TX.

'GROWING THROUGH GIVING,' will guide the movement."[23] This motto was soon adopted as the official motto of the Guild, appearing until recently on Guild diplomas and certificates and still on the Guild's stationery.

The establishment of the National Music Scholarship Foundation was announced by the Guild in March 1955,[24] after the Guild had provided, over a two-year period, about twenty-five $100 scholarships to high school seniors for further music study in a college or university or with a private teacher. The Foundation's goal was to seek donations to the scholarship fund so that it would grow and be able to assist many more worthy students in continuing their musical education. Correspondence in the Guild file on Burg shows that he made personal contributions to the fund several times and encouraged others to contribute, and that at least one of his students was a $100 scholarship recipient.

After a number of years of successful Foundation operation with many scholarships granted, Burg inquired in a 1976 letter to Guild president Irl Allison, Jr., "Has anyone thought of endowing the fund?" and noted that "the burden of the $100 college scholarships is getting heavier each year. . . .

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[23]Irl Allison, "'Growing Through Giving' Is Fitting Guild Motto, Says Clarence Burg," *Piano Guild Notes* 5, no. 6 (November 1955): 6.

[24][Irl Allison], "The National Music Scholarship Foundation Idea Is Evolving," *Piano Guild Notes* 4, no. 9 (March 1955): 1.

[The fund is] certainly worthy of every assistance."[25] Allison and Burg discussed the strained scholarship fund in a series of letters over the next several months. Burg suggested printing and distributing nationwide a small brochure similar to one then being used to seek donations for the Clarence Burg Music Scholarship fund at OCU. The brochure would contain information about the fund and the scholarships and request donations. Regarding the scholarships themselves, Burg offered his opinion that stiffer requirements should be set up for the students who want to receive a scholarship.[26] Today, the scholarship fund is endowed and students compete for the 150 $100 scholarships that are given annually.

Another suggestion was made by Burg, early in 1968, to allow some popular numbers on audition programs.[27] Whether any specific action was taken on Burg's suggestion is unknown, but popular music is allowed today in certain Guild audition classifications.

It is unlikely that Burg was the only person to propose endowing the scholarship fund or allowing popular music in auditions. However, making suggestions like these is an example of the continuous interest and

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[25]Clarence Burg, Oklahoma City, to Irl Allison, Jr., Austin, TX, 20 August 1976, TLS, "Clarence Burg" file, American College of Musicians, Austin, TX.

[26]Clarence Burg, Oklahoma City, to Irl Allison, Jr., Austin, TX, 4 November 1976, TLS, "Clarence Burg" file, American College of Musicians, Austin, TX.

[27]Irl Allison, Jr., [Austin, TX] to Clarence Burg, Oklahoma City, 18 January 1968, copy of TL, "Clarence Burg" file, American College of Musicians, Austin, TX.

contact Burg maintained with the Allisons and the Guild, as well as the Guild's encouragement of members' comments and its openness and responsiveness to members' ideas, a stance it preserves today.

When the Guild established its Hall of Fame in 1969, Burg was among those named for the honor, which recognizes teachers for "achievement in Guild Projects through their pupils."[28] Those given this distinction had produced student winners among the Guild's highest categories of accomplishment.[29]

Over the years, Burg regularly placed ads in *Piano Guild Notes* for his workshops and tours and contributed news articles and supportive letters to the publication. One of the last pieces he wrote must have filled a special need, since it was printed a second time about a year after it first appeared. "What the Guild Auditions Can Mean to the College Teacher" points out the benefits of entering college piano majors in the Guild auditions. Many teachers, Burg declares, believe the auditions are only for children. But he adds that the Guild's challenge of setting an annual goal and working to achieve it is as valuable for the college student as for the pre-college pupil. Burg had found that his college piano majors, in preparing for the Guild's

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[28]"New Recognition: The Piano Guild's Hall of Fame to Honor Guild Members in 1970," *National Guild of Piano Teachers 1969 Yearbook*, 1969, 296, 298.

[29]To enter the Guild's Hall of Fame, a Guild member must have produced one of the following: two $100 scholarship winners, five Guild Diploma winners, five Paderewski Medal winners, ten five-year National winners, twenty Guild Founder's Medal winners, or twenty Bach or Sonata Medal winners.

Collegiate Diploma, "worked harder, learned a larger repertoire, and in covering the five musicianship phases, accomplished considerably more than is required in the usual piano curriculum of a university."[30] He further urges college piano teachers to experience the rewards of judging for the Guild, at the same time performing a much-needed service for the organization.

Irl Allison, Jr., NGPT consultant and former president, named Clarence Burg as one of two people, in the early days of the Guild, who had the most influence on Allison's father, Guild founder Irl Allison, Sr. and on the Guild itself. At that time, the Guild had a nationwide student membership of only twelve to fifteen hundred, Allison recalled, adding:

> The Guild program didn't just spring up overnight. . . . So if Clarence had a hundred up in Oklahoma, that was a big portion of the Guild. His opinion and the opinion of his teachers came directly back to Dad, and the program changed to [include] . . . what worked [for those teachers].[31]

Although Irl Allison, Jr., and Burg never worked together in person, they were well acquainted through many letters and telephone calls and, said Allison, "I just had the highest regard for him." He continued, "Without people like Clarence Burg, the Guild couldn't have become what it did. It

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[30]Clarence Burg, "What the Guild Auditions Can Mean to the College Teacher," *Piano Guild Notes* 40, no. 6 (May-June 1971): 23. Also in *Piano Guild Notes* 41, no. 2 (September-October 1972): 35.

[31]Allison and Allison, interview by author, 6 January 1994.

took that [kind of] help all over the country. We had to have a lot of Clarence Burgs."[32]

The American Matthay Association

The American Matthay Association (AMA) was founded in 1925. Incorporated in 1927, the AMA By-laws adopted by the nine Incorporators state the purposes of the organization:

1. To further an understanding of Tobias Matthay and his work, and to present it not as a method, but as a basic, comprehensive analysis, which directs the attention to the musical side of the pianoforte through the specific act of tone-production.

2. To protect his genuine exponents and to encourage a high standard of performance and teaching.

3. To bring about a spirit of co-operation among the ever-increasing number of his pupils here in America.[33]

The AMA today aims to carry out these purposes by publishing the organization's semiannual official journal, *The Matthay News*,[34] and by holding an annual five-day workshop meeting, the Matthay Festival, each summer. The journal contains news and information about members, as well as articles of particular interest to Matthay teachers. The Festival

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[32]Ibid.

[33]"By-Laws of The American Matthay Association, Incorporated," *The American Matthay Association Journal* (Summer 1928): page number unknown. [photocopy]

[34]At first, the official publication of the AMA was called *The American Matthay Association Journal*. Later, the name was changed to *The Matthay News* and subtitled "Journal of the American Matthay Association."

features recitals, lectures and lecture recitals; teaching demonstrations, teaching workshops, and master classes; and meetings of the Board and the membership.

Originally, membership in the AMA was secured only upon the recommendation of Tobias Matthay himself; he chose the members of the Association from among his American students. After Matthay's death in 1945, members were also drawn from among those pianists who had studied with a Matthay student. Current membership categories are defined in a recent issue of *The Matthay News:*

> Active members are those who studied with Tobias Matthay, those who have been proposed by an Active Member and those who have studied with a Matthay teacher approved by the Board of Governors or approved at an annual meeting. Those who have attended one summer workshop may be designated as Workshop Members. All categories of membership are subject to approval by the Board of Governors.[35]

As of March 1997, the organization numbers 130 members in all categories; about one hundred of them are active members.[36]

Clarence Burg first studied with Tobias Matthay in England in the summer of 1934. That year, he was recommended for membership by

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[35]"Categories of Membership," *The Matthay News* 32, no. 2 (Spring 1995): inside back cover.

[36]Elizabeth Vandevander, Dayton, OH, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 29 March 1997.

Matthay and joined the AMA.[37] Burg's enthusiasm for the great teacher and his methods took him back to England for further coaching the next three summers, 1935-37. He is listed as an Active Member in the 1934, 1936, and 1937 issues of *The American Matthay Association Journal;* the 1935 issue is missing.

From 1937 to 1939, Burg served a term as Vice-President of the AMA. According to Article IV of the first AMA By-Laws, "The officers of this Association shall be a President, a first Vice-President, a second Vice-President, a third Vice-President, a Secretary-Treasurer and four Directors."[38] The term of office for all officers was to be two years; the three Vice-Presidents were forbidden to serve two terms in succession. The By-Laws contain no information about the Vice-Presidents' duties or responsibilities, except to direct that they were to be chosen from different sections of the United States. In a letter to the author, Elizabeth Vandevander, current editor of *The Matthay News,* suggests that the role of the Vice-Presidents may have been to insure communication between the organization and its members at a time when communication was slower and more difficult than it is today; thus, the requirement that they would be selected from different parts of the country. Vandevander was unable to

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[37]"Students Proposed by Mr. Matthay, 1934," *The American Matthay Association Journal* (1934): 41.

[38]"By-Laws of The AMA," page number unknown. [photocopy]

find any further definition of the Vice-Presidents' duties in AMA documents or journals, adding, "Our revised (1982) by-laws include [only] one vice-president, whose job it is to take the place of the president, if needed--a rather standard concept."[39]

Burg apparently held no other office in the AMA. However, news of his activities appears periodically in the "Among Our Members" section of the journal through 1954. It is not known whether he served on AMA committees or attended the annual Festivals. However, it is an established fact that Burg actively espoused Matthay's principles in his studio teaching and his teacher workshops to the end of his career.

American Guild of Organists

Clarence Burg was active as a church organist from an early age in his hometown of Fort Smith, Arkansas, and continued throughout much of his life. He also toured as an organ recitalist in the southwestern United States, especially in Arkansas and Oklahoma, and gave organ dedication recitals.

Burg's interest in promoting high standards of performance and education for musicians can be noted again in his membership in the American Guild of Organists (AGO), a national organization for organists and choral conductors, formed in 1896 in New York. The AGO sets such standards, according to its statement of purposes:

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[39]Elizabeth Vandevander, Dayton, OH, to author, Oklahoma City, 15 January 1996, ALS.

A. To advance the cause of organ and choral music, to increase their contributions to aesthetic and religious experiences, and to promote their understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment.

B. To improve the proficiency of organists and choral conductors.

C. To evaluate, by examination, attainments in organ playing, choral techniques, conducting, and the theory and general knowledge of music, and to grant certificates to those who pass such examinations at specified levels of attainment.

D. To provide members with opportunities to meet for discussion of professional topics, and to pursue such other activities as contribute to the fulfillment of the purposes of the Guild.[40]

The Oklahoma City chapter of the AGO was chartered in 1929. Burg was active from its inception, serving as its second Dean (president) from 1930-36. Except for the list of chapter Deans, no records exist prior to 1954 for the Oklahoma City AGO chapter, according to local AGO historian James Minton.[41] Unfortunately, therefore, specific activities or accomplishments of the organization during Burg's term cannot be substantiated. Minton further reported that in records available to him, he found nothing that could document any activity in which Burg may have been involved at the national level of the AGO.

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[40]American Guild of Organists Oklahoma City Chapter, "The American Guild of Organists," AGO Directory 1995-1996, 8.

[41]James Minton, Oklahoma City, telephone interview by author, Oklahoma City, 20 August 1992.

Other Professional Leadership

Burg filled various leadership roles in music education for the State of Oklahoma. He was a member of the state Music Examining Committee from 1932-35. Appointed by the Oklahoma State Board of Education, this Committee was charged with the evaluation of music teachers for the State Board. From 1943-47, he served as secretary of this Committee, and later, as its chairman. The Oklahoma Board of Regents selected Burg as a member of the College Music Curriculum Committee; he also chaired its subcommittees on harmony and counterpoint.

Besides his active part in the OMTA, Burg was a leader in several other organizations that promoted music and high standards for musicians. Among these was the Oklahoma Federation of Music Clubs. It was this group that selected Burg as chairman of a committee to organize a state music teachers association. The OMTA was established as a result of Burg's and the committee's efforts. In the 1940s, he also chaired the OFMC's Education Committee. Burg sometimes served as a judge in Federation contests, and he also supported the organization by regularly entering his students in the various competitions it sponsored. Although many of his students did very well in these contests, Burg produced at least one national winner. His student Roger Price excelled not only as a pianist but also as a composer, and Burg encouraged and mentored his efforts in both disciplines. In 1977, near the end of Burg's long career, Price won the $500

composition prize given by the National Federation of Music Clubs for the best original composition by a college student in the United States. Price has gone on to follow in Burg's footsteps, with a multi-faceted musical career, as piano performer, composer, university professor, and professional leader.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to document the contributions of Clarence A. Burg to the field of piano pedagogy by investigating his life and his varied activities as a musician, teacher, professional leader in music, and music administrator. Burg's career as a musician and educator spanned most of the twentieth century, beginning around 1907 and continuing almost until his death in 1986. His numerous contributions to piano pedagogy, as seen by his varied activities and as reported by his former students, are summarized in this chapter, and some conclusions about those contributions are drawn. Areas where additional research might be done are also suggested.

Career Summary

Clarence Burg began teaching piano lessons at age twelve to some of his friends in Fort Smith, Arkansas. While he was in high school, he expanded his class to help pay for the higher-priced lessons from his new piano teacher. He had twenty students at the time of his high school graduation. By 1925 this number had grown and Burg established the

Clarence Burg School of Music, which employed several teachers in addition to Burg. The School had 250 students when Burg sold it in 1928 and moved to Oklahoma City.

Burg's careful money management enabled him to afford a year of study (1911-12) at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, where Ernest Hutcheson was his piano teacher. As an established businessman a few years later, Burg was able to get a loan from a Fort Smith bank to pay for another year of study (1915-16), this time in New York, at the Von Ende School of Music. There he studied piano with Sigismund Stojowski.

In 1920 Burg became acquainted with Rudolph Ganz at a master class Ganz presented in Kansas City, where Burg won the $100 Piano Interpretation Prize. Additional study with Ganz and others in the summers of 1921, 1928, and 1929 earned Burg a Bachelor of Music degree from the Chicago Musical College. In 1931, the College awarded him an honorary Master of Music degree.

Burg's skill as a businessman was evident as he sold six-week tours to Europe during the Depression, 1934-1937. He served as tour guide, including sites of musical interest on the itinerary; yet he also was able to arrange periods of time during those summer tours when he could get away to study with Tobias Matthay in England. Burg greatly admired Matthay's teachings, especially in the areas of technique and musical interpretation, and they had a strong influence on his playing and especially on his

teaching. He frequently referred to them throughout the remainder of his career.

Burg completed his formal education with a Master of Music Education degree from Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York, during the summers of 1941-44. His thesis, "Problems of the Private Piano Teacher," included a report of responses from his questionnaire survey of piano teachers. This national survey was the first known discussion of current practices in the field of private piano teaching.

Burg operated the Clarence Burg Music Camp near Sulphur Springs, Arkansas, from around 1925 through 1933. The students, mostly of high school age, spent six weeks in the summer, studying music and enjoying recreational activities in a beautiful Ozark mountain setting.

Another area of Burg's influence in Arkansas was the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association, in which he was an early member and served as secretary, then vice-president. Through the ASMTA, he was instrumental in establishing the first state accreditation for Arkansas music teachers, as well as the granting of high school credit for music study with private teachers.

Burg's support of music in community organizations in Fort Smith resulted in a significant contact through the Fort Smith Concert Club. A manager involved in the Club's concert series arranged for Burg to accompany Metropolitan Opera baritone Arthur Middleton on a concert

tour of the southwestern United States in 1927. When the tour took Burg to Oklahoma City, OCU trustee George Frederickson heard his playing and asked him to consider the position of Dean at OCU's College of Fine Arts. Returning a few months later to play a concerto with the Oklahoma City Symphony Orchestra, Burg was heard by a group of OCU trustees in the audience and was soon offered the Dean's position. He accepted and moved his family, a wife and two young daughters, to Oklahoma City. Thus began a fifty-four-year career as a teacher and administrator at OCU.

At the beginning of Burg's tenure at OCU, he was Dean of Fine Arts, a position responsible for administering the Art and Drama/Speech Departments, as well as the School of Music. Under his direction, the School of Music grew so much that by 1946, it became a separate entity and the sole occupant of the Fine Arts Building. The other two departments were assimilated into the College of Arts and Sciences. Burg's wise and creative leadership allowed the School of Music not only to survive but to thrive through the Depression and World War II. In 1944, through Burg's efforts, the National Association of Schools of Music granted associate membership to the School of Music, with full membership pending OCU's accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. At the same time, the School's Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts degree programs in applied music, music education, and church music received complete approval by NASM.

Burg never rested in his recruiting endeavors for OCU. He traveled extensively throughout Oklahoma as well as in other states, making contacts with prospective students through judging Piano Guild auditions and other contests, giving master classes and piano teacher workshops, and performing solo recitals and concertos with orchestras.

For a long time, Burg served OCU as a teacher, as well as an administrator, teaching most music class subjects--harmony, music history, music appreciation, forms and analysis, counterpoint, composition, and orchestration--along with applied piano and organ. He built OCU's Preparatory Department, in which he taught some of the pre-college students himself. This also provided piano majors an opportunity to gain experience in teaching elementary students. Burg taught some non-piano music majors and non-college advanced adult students, such as active piano teachers in the community. In addition, especially during his early years at OCU, he went to small towns throughout Oklahoma on weekends and taught piano lessons. He often arranged to teach the children of one family free, in exchange for the use of the family's living room and piano to give lessons to other local students. Burg also accepted an appointment during school year 1962-63 at Southwestern State College (now Southwestern Oklahoma State University) in Weatherford, where he taught piano majors, much as at OCU. This temporary, part-time appointment came about because of the sudden death of a piano faculty member at Southwestern. It

was quite easy for Burg to schedule some time to teach there because he had just retired from the Dean's position at OCU. As Dean Emeritus, Burg continued teaching piano another twenty years, until the age of eighty-nine. Even after that, he still taught a few long-time students in his home.

The goal of much of Burg's professional life was quality training and education for piano teachers. Through the 1940s, Burg concluded--both from his experience with other teachers in the professional organizations he helped to shape and from his questionnaire survey of piano teachers done in connection with his master's degree--that few educational opportunities for piano teachers existed. Therefore, in 1954 he began a series of summer workshops for teachers in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, that continued annually through 1965. In 1966 Burg moved his popular workshops to OCU, where they were held through the summer of 1978. Attendees at both locations came from a number of communities in the state, surrounding states, and places as far away as Florida and Arizona. Those who came to the OCU workshops could also receive college credit for their participation. The groups typically numbered forty to fifty teachers, some of whom were asked to bring their students to play for Burg's teaching demonstrations. These demonstrations were an important part of each workshop, and the variety of new ideas and new repertoire that they provided were the reason teachers often returned year after year. Other workshop sessions, like panel discussions, involved teachers' input. Burg's lectures, complete with

numerous explanatory handouts and repertoire lists, covered a myriad of pedagogical topics and made up the remainder of the workshop agenda. The influence Burg had on the teachers attending his workshops and through them, on an estimated ten thousand students, is certainly one of his most significant contributions to piano pedagogy.

Burg extended his influence on piano education by offering "junior master classes" or one-day "clinics" to teachers throughout Oklahoma, beginning around 1950. Held in the teacher's studio, usually on a weekend, these classes gave the teacher a chance to watch and learn from Burg's teaching, while the students learned how to improve their pieces. In some teachers' studios, parents were also included, if they desired. These classes served the teachers and students, even as they promoted Burg and OCU.

In his workshops, Burg always promoted the activities of the National Guild of Piano Teachers and urged teachers to enter their students in the NGPT's annual auditions. He firmly believed that preparation for and participation in these auditions was one of the best motivators teachers could give their students. Burg knew the Guild's founder, Irl Allison, before he formed the NGPT. This life-long friendship resulted in Burg's establishing at OCU the first Guild audition site outside Texas and serving year after year as a highly respected judge at many other Guild audition locations. He also secured judging positions for a number of Oklahoma

teachers, many of whom had been his students, and always entered his own students in the auditions.

Burg was also a loyal disciple of Tobias Matthay, the British pedagogue with whom he had studied in the summers of 1934 through 1937. Using Matthay's principles in his own teaching, Burg promoted them in his teacher workshops and by his membership in the American Matthay Association. The organization's purpose is to spread Matthay's ideas and to foster support and communication among Americans who studied with him. Burg served the AMA as a vice-president from 1937 to 1939.

Burg's efforts to elevate the standards of music teaching also can be observed in his active participation in a number of other professional organizations, especially the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association. His work in the formative stages of a similar group in Arkansas helped him draft the constitution and by-laws for the OMTA, of which he became the first president. He remained a dynamic force in the organization throughout his life. As one teacher recalled in an additional comment on her questionnaire, "I remember when he was quite aged, we were at an OMTA Board meeting and the Board was stymied by a situation and Dr. Burg knew what to do. He was amazing to the end."[1]

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[1]Respondent [name withheld] to Former Student Questionnaire, "Additional comments."

Burg also worked to improve music teaching in Oklahoma beyond OCU, both in public education and in non-governmental organizations. He was a member, then secretary, and finally chairman of the state Music Examining Committee, appointed by the Oklahoma State Board of Education to evaluate music teachers. He served the Oklahoma Board of Regents as a member of the College Music Curriculum Committee. In the 1940s, he chaired the Education Committee of the Oklahoma Federation of Music Clubs.

At the local level, Burg promoted music and particularly keyboard music through community organizations in Oklahoma City. A long-time church organist himself, Burg was an active member of the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists and its second Dean, or president, from 1930 to 1936. He was a faithful member all his life in the Oklahoma City Pianists Club, performing at least once a year and sponsoring a number of his students and pianist colleagues for membership in the group. The Oklahoma City Piano Festival, an annual event similar to today's "monster concert," and the Piano Ensemble Club, a professional multiple-piano performing group, were both founded and conducted by Burg in the late 1930s. Around 1959, Burg arranged with the Civic Music Association (CMA) of Oklahoma City to hold its yearly concert series in OCU's Kirkpatrick Fine Arts Auditorium at no charge, in exchange for free admission to the concerts for OCU faculty and students; that arrangement still exists. About

that same time, Burg became a member of CMA's Board of Directors. Since then, the Dean of the School of Music and Performing Arts has been and still is an *ex officio* member of that Board, maintaining the close relationship between CMA and OCU. Even in his much-enjoyed Rotary Club membership, Burg did not miss the chance to promote music and OCU. The businessmen who made up the bulk of the Rotary membership often sent their children to study music at OCU; they were in a position to provide financial backing to the University as well. Jerald Walker, OCU's president since 1979, was introduced to membership in the local Rotary Club by Burg.

Burg's achievements were recognized during his lifetime on several occasions. He received two honorary degrees and five Who's Who and similar listings. He received awards for service to the arts, including one from Oklahoma's then-governor David Boren and another from Sigma Alpha Iota. In 1982, OCU renamed the Small Auditorium in the Kirkpatrick Fine Arts Building the Burg Auditorium. In 1986, the Clarence Burg Achievement Award was established by the OMTA for high school seniors who had participated for four years in its State Achievement Auditions.

Seven years after his death, Burg was honored in 1993 for his contributions to piano teaching and performance at the Clarence Burg Centennial Celebration. Occurring on the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, the two-day event featured a "Monster Concert" and a solo piano

recital by former Burg student Roger Price. The large number of people who stood up at the Monster Concert when Burg's students, their students, and those students' students were recognized was striking evidence of Burg's continuing influence on the teaching of piano.

Questionnaire Summary

Eighty-one questionnaires were mailed to Burg's former piano and piano pedagogy students; sixty-seven, or 83 percent, responded. Twelve questions asked the fifty-six respondents who had studied piano with him for information about Burg's piano teaching. Fourteen questions requested information about his teaching of piano pedagogy from the forty-nine respondents who had taken a pedagogy class and/or workshop. Thirty-nine respondents had taken both piano lessons and a pedagogy class or workshop. Three additional questions, directed to all respondents, solicited recollections of skills and traits that set Burg apart from other teachers with whom the respondents had studied, as well as Burg's influence beyond the lesson or class and his effect on the respondents' current involvement in music.

On many topics, Burg's beliefs about piano teaching as stated in his master's thesis, "Problems of the Private Piano Teacher," were compared with the questionnaire responses of his former piano students. It appears he generally followed his own advice, with his stated principles and practices

usually matching the actual experiences his students said they had and what he taught his pedagogy students to do. He was positive, encouraging and supportive in the lesson, operating on his often-stated principle of "75 percent praise, 25 percent criticism." He was warm and friendly, showing interest in his students' lives and activities outside their lesson. He was energetic and optimistic, but also down to earth, giving specific, practical techniques for fixing problems, not just general advice. He was impersonal in pointing out the problems in a student's playing and created an atmosphere of working together with the student in solving those problems. A number of respondents remarked on Burg's usual habit of allowing a student to play through an entire piece without interruption before beginning to work on it. Burg had high expectations for his students, but exhibited patience if the expectations were not realized. He tailored his teaching methods and assignments to students' individual needs, abilities, and preparedness for the lesson. One example of this is that some students reported frequent playing demonstrations by Burg, while others remarked that he gave clear explanations and verbal directions but infrequent demonstration.

He was business-like and well organized, starting and ending lessons promptly. Most people said he used lesson and class time efficiently, without busy work. However, a few respondents commented that Burg might spend a whole lesson on one thing, or that he spent too much time

"performing" or telling stories. Some complained that there were frequent interruptions with phone calls or that Burg did paperwork during their lessons. As he grew older, he occasionally dozed or seemed inattentive.

A small number found him harsh and impatient or lacking in personal concern for them, and one said he could be overbearing. Some said Burg did not push them enough, especially with regard to technique, while others said the focus was too much on technique, at the expense of expressive playing. A few students mentioned particular areas of study in which they wished there had been greater emphasis. Some felt a lack of career advice from Burg.

Regarding technique and tone production, Burg espoused the following principles of his mentor, Tobias Matthay: forearm rotation; arm weight, playing into the key-bed, and relaxation; and finger mobility and lightness. He used a working model of a piano key to help students understand and experience a key's action and taught "partial key-release" for legato on repeated notes and trills. Big, deep tone and bringing out a melody line were emphasized. "Prepared attack" was used for the latter, while an "unprepared attack" was used for fast, light passages. Good tone production begins with following marked dynamics.

Former students said Burg taught that fundamentals like scales were essential for good technique. Careful attention to fingering should begin with the earliest lessons. Good fingering is necessary for smooth playing,

with runs specifically requiring preparation of the thumb. Since fingering should be tailored to the individual, students should learn to work out their own fingering, using standard scale fingerings whenever possible and finding logical, comfortable fingerings. Burg taught students to block patterns by finger groups. He said that printed fingerings should be changed to eliminate clumsy movements.

Some exercises for strengthening double-jointed fingers were mentioned by questionnaire respondents. Many said technical exercises were taken from difficult spots in their pieces, although some reported working on independent exercises like Hanon or Czerny. Burg reminded his piano students and workshop participants that technique is only the means for playing musically and must not become an end in itself. One respondent pointed out that, to Burg, technique and tone production were not two separate things, but the same thing.

In the area of practice, Burg stressed rhythmic accuracy and the importance of establishing good rhythmic habits in one's students from the beginning. To achieve these goals, he advocated use of the metronome; counting aloud, counting by the smallest note value, if necessary; clapping and tapping rhythms; playing while the teacher conducts; and saying words or patterns of words that have the same rhythm as a rhythm pattern in the piece. Rapid scale passages could be improved by repeating each note of the passage twice or three times. Scales and other exercises could be

strengthened by practicing them in various rhythms and by playing each hand in a different way, such as staccato in the right hand and legato in the left hand. Arpeggios become easier if learned and practiced as block chords. Articulation variations, such as practicing a legato passage staccato, help a student gain control; likewise, writing consecutive numbers in the score, from 1 at the beginning of a phrase to a larger number at its peak, help control dynamics and the shaping of a phrase. Slow practice; spot practice followed by straight-through, performance-like practice; silent practice and score study away from the piano; and practice without pedal were techniques that Burg taught for bringing polish to a piece. Daily practice was vital, Burg said, and he wanted students to record their practice times and keep practice journals to review their practice activities and accomplishments and evaluate them. Burg felt that students are more likely to practice if they are taught how to do it and if the teacher's expectations are clear.

The mind must be active in practicing and in memorizing, Burg believed. Analysis is an essential part of both and should already be started with children of intermediate age. Although visual, aural, and tactile, or "kinesthetic," aspects of memory are all necessary, Burg believed the analytical type was most reliable, yet most often neglected. So he made many suggestions in his workshops for applying this type of memory, such as the following: analyze the form, learn to start at the beginning of sections

throughout the piece, look for patterns. He also recommended a number of tests of the memory. Some of these are playing the piece mentally, away from the piano; playing with eyes closed or in a dark room; playing alternate phrases, with the first phrase played audibly, the next one silently; playing one hand audibly, the other silently; playing aloud, then continuing to play mentally when the teacher lifts one or both hands, and then playing aloud again when hands are lowered. All the tests are designed to insure that the memorization of the piece is secure and that the player can meet the ultimate performance goal, to continue playing to the end of the piece without stopping. Several advanced students said they always played their whole lesson from memory.

Burg's two basic ideas with regard to musical interpretation were that the performer should strive to be true to the composer's intentions, but that there may be more than one valid interpretation of a piece. Knowledge of the characteristics of a composer's style and of historical periods in music was essential to the first idea; for the second idea, the student performer must have reasons to justify interpretive choices. Ahead of his time, Burg urged wariness about overly edited scores. Some students said Burg encouraged listening to live and recorded performances for ideas on interpretation. Some said he demonstrated how the piece should be played; one student felt Burg demonstrated too much. Listening to oneself is

needed for evaluation of one's interpretation and whether the desired result has been achieved. Images and stories also aid in interpretation.

Teaching interpretation begins with fundamental concepts, such as staccato, legato, tempo and dynamic change. Burg believed students should learn to play with a wide range of dynamic contrasts. To do this, they must listen carefully, at first exaggerating the differences in dynamic levels. A given tempo or dynamic level can be related to a number scale as a fairly concrete standard of measurement. Proper use of dynamics and rhythm results in well-shaped phrases; numbers or arrows marked in the score help to make the phrase shape and direction clear. Burg advised teachers to help students shape phrases by playing legato and articulating at the beginning and end of each phrase. He compared musical phrasing to speech and related phrasing and breathing, urging students to think and breathe like a singer when they played. Students can learn beautiful phrasing by listening to live and recorded examples of it, Burg said. Counting measures instead of beats can be used to promote musicality and flowing phrases, even for elementary students. For Burg, musicality was the ultimate goal of performance, and this idea was his most significant influence on many students. He was a proponent of Tobias Matthay's teachings on rubato, referring participants to the chapter on rubato in Matthay's book, *Musical Interpretation,* and using Matthay's symbols for marking rubato in the score. A number of respondents appreciated the fact that Burg spent significant

time in lessons and workshops discussing and demonstrating how to use rubato. He stressed that rubato should not be attempted until a student can play with a steady beat.

Another area of emphasis in musical interpretation was pedal. He believed that the pedal was important in playing expressively, but that practicing without pedal at first helps to acquire clean playing. Slow practice is important when learning to coordinate hand and foot. The acoustics of the room, the resonance of the piano, and other factors determine how much pedal to use, with careful listening again required. As with fingering, students should be taught to work out their own pedaling, marking it in the score and then listening to the result. Burg devised marks to indicate the various types of pedaling he taught: pedal crescendo, half-pedaling and flutter pedaling, pedal vibrato, and shadow pedaling. He recommended various exercises in the use of the damper pedal; two examples are playing the left hand alone, plus pedal, and playing a scale with one finger only, lifting the pedal as each note is played and depressing the pedal just after each note is played. Burg felt the soft pedal should be used sparingly and that students should develop sufficient control to play very softly without it.

Burg believed students become better sightreaders by doing lots of sightreading, preferably daily. For this reason, he encouraged his students to play duets and to seek opportunities to accompany, including church work. Sightreading, like other basic skills, must begin early. Burg told his

pedagogy students that helping students become good sightreaders is one of the most important things the teacher can do. Sightreading materials should be easier than the pieces a student is working on by at least one grade level. For children who memorize quickly, assigning a large number of easy pieces, too many to memorize, may force them to learn to sightread. Students must learn to keep their eyes on the music and to feel their way on the keyboard; if necessary, their hands should be covered. They also must learn to read ahead. An exercise to help this is to cover the notes with a three-by-five card and move the card forward, always a few notes ahead of the notes being played. Missed notes are tolerated in the interests of keeping a steady beat, with the music always going forward without stopping. Reading newly assigned pieces at the lesson, at a reduced tempo, reinforces sightreading skills. Listening to lots of music; learning about theory, including chords; improvising; looking at the music and imagining how it will sound--all these things will improve a student's sightreading. Several students said they experienced improvement in sightreading and accompanying skills while studying with Burg, and that this was his most important influence on them. Burg also stressed the importance of ear training, although most students said that they had little trouble with it. One respondent said Burg believed the most valuable ear training was to listen carefully to one's own playing.

Motivation of teenagers is especially important. The teacher's high expectations can motivate them, as well as other students. Contests and festivals also can be good motivators for teenagers, as well as for older children. However, students must be assisted in developing the right attitude about contests: they are a learning experience and students should not feel defeated if they do not win. The Guild auditions, of which Burg was an enthusiastic proponent, might be preferred to contests because they are non-competitive. Parents who are included in the teacher's planning can serve as motivators. A number of smaller ideas for motivation, such as stars or stickers and achievement charts, were also presented by Burg. Further motivators used and advocated by Burg were giving encouragement and generous praise when deserved and showing interest in the student. He believed that helping students to set and achieve goals and realize their own strengths gives them a sense of accomplishment that motivates them to work toward further accomplishment. He chose interesting repertoire with just the right amount of challenge and provided frequent opportunities for performance. Although many of Burg's students were piano majors or piano teachers who were self-motivated, Burg's reputation as a teacher and the fact that he continued actively performing were sources of motivation for many.

Because he was such a firm believer in teaching the art of teaching, Burg often worked on a particular skill or concept with a student, then

discussed how that student might teach the skill or concept to his or her own student. In addition to this, Burg's students learned in their lessons many techniques for playing and performing that they were able to pass on to their own students, and Burg modeled in lessons the attitudes and behavior he believed teachers should display. Burg's attention to detail, from basic notes and rhythms to interpretation, was often noted. He was always willing to consult with his student on a teaching problem or piece or to hear a student's pupil play and then make suggestions.

Students learned from Burg's extensive knowledge and experience in the area of grading, selecting, and presenting new repertoire. His highly organized system of grading and filing music was most frequently mentioned, and several teachers said they still use it. The system is thoroughly discussed and Burg's workshop handouts are presented in chapter 4. Burg's studio organization was a model for students as well.

Regarding the teaching of students of different ages and stages of development, Burg advocated selecting varied and balanced repertoire that met the student's technical and other needs and that the student would enjoy. He evaluated various method books as to their appropriateness for different types of students. He provided graded, classified lists of repertoire, and much literature that was appropriate for contests and auditions was discussed and performed. Workshop participants became acquainted with additional repertoire, sometimes by composers that they had not known

before, from Burg's lectures and his teaching demonstrations. These teaching demonstrations illustrated techniques to use with students in various categories. By his enthusiasm as he presented new pieces to students, Burg exemplified this important teaching trait.

Even in the early stages, students can have a satisfying musical experience and play expressively. They should be helped to develop good habits, such as keeping their eyes on the music when reading and counting carefully to have good rhythm. Burg stressed a solid foundation in "the basics," his pedagogy students reported. Analysis, memorization, and technique should be started with children when they reach intermediate-level study and should be continued with advanced students, who should also be taught a wide variety of styles and composers. Choosing enjoyable repertoire and encouraging whatever amount of talent the student has are important factors in teaching the adult hobby student. Burg wanted to provide his students with practical experience in teaching, so pedagogy students were assigned to teach one another in front of the class. Some students had the opportunity to teach in OCU's Preparatory Department.

Questionnaire respondents gave their opinions as to Burg's strengths as a piano teacher and as a pedagogy teacher, and they related ways he had influenced their playing and teaching, as well as their lives beyond the lesson or class. These included nearly every skill, personal characteristic, and attitude previously mentioned. Topping the list were his positive,

supportive attitude; his sense of humor; his lack of prejudice; his versatility; and his practicality. Burg's influence on some respondents was to stimulate them to a heightened interest and desire to learn. Others who had studied with Burg as teenagers gave him credit for keeping them interested and continuing in music study. He was dedicated to OCU and recruited enthusiastically for OCU. Frequently named as important influences were Burg's ability to perform many pieces by memory and the fact that he continued to perform in public until quite an advanced age. Respondents were impressed that Burg was always interested in continuing his own personal growth. He was eager to pass on the heritage from his teachers and other useful information from the past.

Many of the practice techniques named before were cited as most influential. Burg's ideas on analysis, memorizing, and how to test memory were often mentioned. These improved mental processes and increased technical ability helped students to grow and mature as musicians and gain confidence in themselves as pianists, as did the frequent performance opportunities Burg provided for them to try out these skills. He clearly distinguished between practicing and playing, and he emphasized the difference between "spot practice" and practicing for performance, with no stopping allowed.

Burg had some thoughts on combatting stage fright, including the importance of thorough preparation; use of his memory techniques as

discussed previously; performance practice, preferably in the room where the performance will take place; and playing often before different groups and on different pianos. Physical preparation on performance day involved relaxation through deep breathing and massaging the hands, keeping the hands warm, and flexing the fingers and hands. Burg urged mental preparation as well: thinking through a piece, phrase by phrase, and then "playing" it in the air.

Students in Burg's summer workshops observed his strong points and reported a number of ways in which he influenced their teaching. His skill as a teacher could be observed in his teaching demonstrations. He could articulate his detailed knowledge to make it understood. Respondents said Burg was extremely good at finding a problem and knowing what to do to correct it. He could quickly determine a student's level and then help the student move forward from there. He showed his love of teaching and of his students, with concern and respect for each individual. He gave value to everyone's ideas and encouraged student interaction so they might learn from one another. He was very knowledgeable about teaching and the teaching literature, and was eager to share this knowledge. Burg promoted the Guild auditions and assisted some advanced students to become Guild judges; this was a major influence for many of Burg's pedagogy students, as well as for the entire state of Oklahoma.

A number of respondents made education and career choices with his assistance, some attributing to him their current involvement in music. For many, it was his influence that made them go into teaching. They credited Burg with stimulating them to their best efforts and helping them grow and gain confidence in themselves as teachers. Through Burg's urging and example, new and experienced teachers alike became involved in professional organizations. Burg gave workshop participants an outline for a pedagogy notebook in which they were to take notes and add their own materials from year to year. This notebook outline was the model for the notebook now required by OMTA for non-degreed teachers who seek OMTA certification. The notebook is just one example of how practical Burg's workshops were, respondents said. A number of his students said Burg's teaching was forward-looking, well ahead of his time.

Many were inspired by seeing Burg as a warm, caring, patient person who was interested in his students' lives as a whole, in their families and in their students. Some respondents said he gave students personal attention and support in all their musical endeavors, not only in piano; for example, several had success as composers, receiving advice and encouragement from Burg in their work in this area. Others said his optimism, high standards of conduct, and Christian faith had a strong impact on them. Many former students said Burg also exemplified the lover of music who actively supports musical endeavors in the community.

A few students said Burg had influenced them only in the area of their study or had had no special influence on them; a few had some negative comments. In the college pedagogy class, two former students said they did not learn *how* to teach and were not encouraged to use their own imagination and creativity. Some said they had had to spend too much time taking notes on Burg's master's thesis, and one commented that the class notebook the students kept seemed to be overly important to Burg in determining the students' grades. In the summer pedagogy workshops, some said Burg sometimes moved too fast, then was impatient when people did not understand. One respondent felt Burg may have embarrassed some teenagers who played in the workshops by keeping them at the piano too long while making a point for the teachers. As he got older, Burg was sometimes forgetful. Some things in the workshops were repeated year after year. One student felt Burg's strong personality might discourage students from examining and evaluating for themselves the opinions he presented. Many former students believed Burg had no weaknesses as a piano or piano pedagogy teacher.

On the subject of group piano teaching, Burg's master's thesis advocates the private teacher's use of the class setting for teaching theory and as a good way to start young students in piano instruction. Pointing out the problems of group instruction, he states his belief that the public school is better equipped than the private studio to offer class piano for beginners.

In his pedagogy workshops, Burg recommended, as he did in his thesis, that group teaching be used to teach beginners and to provide ensemble and performance opportunities for all other students, in combination with private lessons.

Burg was practical regarding the organizational and business aspects of independent piano teaching. His thesis detailed many vocational problems and business methods, and these were the subject of panel discussions by experienced teachers and of question-and-answer sessions in his workshops. Burg stressed the importance of having a studio policy statement with such topics as lesson fees and payment and makeup policies clearly spelled out. Accurate records must be kept, files must be organized, and the teacher and all materials must be presented in a professional manner. Involvement in the Guild auditions and in local and state teachers' organizations is part of being professional. Burg further recommended that teachers keep up their own playing by maintaining contact with other players with high musical standards.

Conclusions

There is no question that the School of Music and Performing Arts at OCU is, in many respects, as strong and as well-reputed as it is today because of the efforts of Clarence Burg as Dean, first of Fine Arts and then of the School of Music. Especially in the early years of his service to OCU, he

significantly influenced the direction, outreach, and even the survival of the entire University. Burg's contacts through the Rotary Club, of which he was an enthusiastic member for seventy-five years, were valuable to him personally as a source of students and to OCU for support from local business people. Through his active role in community musical organizations, such as Civic Music Association, the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists, and the Pianists Club, Burg also helped to shape the musical scene in Oklahoma City. Furthermore, Burg influenced the face of music education, especially in piano, across the entire state of Oklahoma through his work in OMTA. His summer piano teachers' workshops, along with his multi-faceted involvement in the NGPT, also had an impact on piano teaching in Oklahoma, but the effects of these activities were felt outside the state as well.

Some of Burg's leadership success must be attributed to his being in the right place at the right time. In the early decades of the twentieth century, music instruction, particularly in piano, was being sought and supported in both the public school and the private setting. That growing interest in music learning created a need for more teachers and put OCU in an excellent position to meet that need. To do this, however, OCU needed a strong Dean to lead in expanding and improving the School of Music. The early twentieth century likewise saw an increasing recognition of the importance of teacher education in all disciplines, and music was no

exception. This situation set the stage for teachers to seek opportunities for personal growth, such as teachers' workshops. It also gave rise to a professional consciousness that in turn led to the formation and growth of professional music teachers' organizations, where energetic, dedicated teachers like Burg could provide leadership. All of these conditions provided the perfect atmosphere, especially in the young state of Oklahoma, for a Renaissance man like Burg to use his creativity, energy, and enthusiasm to promote piano and music education to the fullest.

The overwhelming majority of Burg's piano students and workshop participants whose questionnaire responses are reported in this dissertation found their studies with Burg valuable. Many new ideas for playing and teaching were gleaned from working with him, respondents reported. To present-day teachers, a number of the concepts and teaching strategies Burg taught sound ordinary and are widely accepted as common practice. However, at the time Burg presented them, they were new and forward-looking.

Apparently, Burg practiced what he preached. A comparison of the philosophies and teaching strategies stated in his master's thesis with information provided by questionnaire respondents reveals he used in his own teaching those ideas and techniques he advocated.

Virtually all his former students attested to Burg's personal characteristics of warmth, kindness, good humor, and concern for each

individual student. So the picture of Clarence Burg that emerges from this study is that he was an admirable human being, as well as an effective, pioneering teacher of piano and piano pedagogy.

Recommendations for Further Study

This dissertation has focused on Clarence Burg and his contributions to piano pedagogy through teaching, workshops, and organizations in which he worked. Based on materials from this research, the following topics are recommended for further study:

1. The history of the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association has not been documented, and studies of the contributions of other OMTA leaders besides Burg would be useful. Although a master's thesis on the history of the Arkansas State Music Teachers' Association has been written, the MTNA-affiliated organizations of other states also deserve to be examined.

2. The history and development of the School of Music at Oklahoma City University are worthy of investigation.

3. The evolution of the National Guild of Piano Teachers, under founder Irl Allison, has been traced through 1963 in Sarah J. Hatch's dissertation.[2] Examination of the numerous changes in the NGPT since 1963 is suggested.

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[2]Sarah Hatch, "The Governance Style of Irl Allison, Sr."

4. Another valuable topic for research would be the impact of the Guild's annual auditions on piano teaching in the United States. A comparison of the Guild auditions with Canadian examination systems could serve as a link between piano study in the two countries.

5. The history and activities of the American Matthay Association merit examination. Numerous American artist-teachers have been involved in this organization.

6. A study of the history and growth of piano teachers' workshops in America is needed. This should include those sponsored by professional organizations, colleges, universities, and music publishers.

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APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FORMER STUDENTS OF CLARENCE BURG

COVER LETTER FOR FORMER STUDENTS OF CLARENCE BURG

2505 N. Warren Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73107
November 18, 1994

<Name>
<Street Address>
<City, State, Zip>

Dear _____:

I am writing to you as a former student of Clarence Burg, whose career and contributions to piano teaching are the subject of my doctoral dissertation. This dissertation is a requirement for my Ph.D. in music education, with emphasis in piano pedagogy, at the University of Oklahoma. A large portion of my research will deal with Dr. Burg's effectiveness and influence as a teacher of piano and piano pedagogy.

Because of your association with Dr. Burg, you are in a position to provide important information for this research. The enclosed questionnaire is designed to solicit your recollections and opinions about your study with Dr. Burg. Your input is of great value to me and will be crucial in my presenting a complete and accurate picture of Clarence Burg, the teacher.

I would be most grateful if you would answer the questions as honestly and completely as possible, adding any remarks or details you think would be helpful in explaining or clarifying your response. Feel free to use the back of the question sheets or additional paper, if necessary.

I would prefer to quote you by name. However, I will certainly honor your wish for anonymity, if you will simply leave the signature line blank at the end of the form.

Because my deadlines are approaching rapidly, please return your completed questionnaire to me in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope by December 2. Please call me, collect, at 405-943-5992, if you have any questions.

Your assistance in this research is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Linda Owen

FORMER STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What were your areas of study with Dr. Burg? (Check all that apply.)

   _____Private piano lessons (college credit)

   _____Private piano lessons (non-credit)

   _____Pedagogy class (college credit)

   _____Pedagogy workshop (non-credit)

   _____Other (name and describe)

2. What were the dates of your study with Dr. Burg?

3. Did you study with Dr. Burg as a child?____Yes ____No As a teenager? _____Yes _____No

4. Did you study with Dr. Burg while working toward a college degree?
   ____Yes _____No

   If yes, at what college or university?

5. If you completed a degree while studying with him, give the degree(s) and date(s).

6. What is your current involvement in music?

If you took **only** private piano lessons from Dr. Burg, please answer questions 7 through 18, then skip to question 33.

If you studied with Dr. Burg in a pedagogy class or workshop **only**, please skip to question 19.

If you took **both** private piano lessons **and** a pedagogy class or workshop, please answer all questions. If more room is needed, continue on back of page.

7. Describe the style and content of a typical piano lesson with Dr. Burg.

8. In your lessons with Dr. Burg, which of his teaching techniques influenced you the most?

9. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about piano technique and tone production?

10. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about musical interpretation?

11. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about memorization?

12. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about sightreading and/or ear training?

13. What guidelines for practice did you learn from Dr. Burg?

14. How did Dr. Burg motivate you?

15. How did your study with Dr. Burg change your playing?

16. What did you learn about piano teaching in your piano lessons with Dr. Burg?

17. In your opinion, what were Dr. Burg's strengths as a piano teacher?

18. In your opinion, what were Dr. Burg's weaknesses as a piano teacher?

Questions 19-32 deal with Dr. Burg's pedagogy teaching. If you did not take a pedagogy class or workshop from Dr. Burg, please skip to question 33.

19. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about differences in teaching students in each of the following categories:

    a) young children

    b) older children

    c) teenagers

    d) advanced students, including college students

    e) adult hobby students

20. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about teaching fundamentals of music (note-reading, counting, other theoretical concepts)?

21. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about the teaching of piano technique and tone production?

22. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about teaching each of the following:

a) fingering

b) rhythm

c) dynamics

d) phrasing

e) pedaling

f) musical interpretation

23. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about teaching memorization?

24. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about teaching sightreading and/or ear training?

25. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about preparing students for contests or auditions?

26. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about motivating students?

27. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about grading, selecting, and presenting new repertoire?

28. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about group piano teaching?

29. What did you learn from Dr. Burg about organizational and business aspects of independent piano teaching?

30. How did your pedagogy studies with Dr. Burg influence your teaching?

31. In your opinion, what were Dr. Burg's strengths as a pedagogy teacher?

32. In your opinion, what were Dr. Burg's weaknesses as a pedagogy teacher?

33. What skills and traits set Dr. Burg apart from other teachers with whom you have studied?

34. How did Dr. Burg influence your life beyond the lesson or class?

35. How did your studies with Dr. Burg affect your current involvement in music?

36. Additional comments:

If I may use your name in connection with your remarks, please sign here. If you wish to remain anonymous, do not sign.

Please return by December 2, 1994, to:

Linda Owen
2505 N. Warren
Oklahoma City, OK 73107

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER FOR

PILOT-TEST OF FORMER STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

COVER LETTER FOR PILOT-TEST OF FORMER STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

2505 N. Warren
Oklahoma City, OK 73107
September 1, 1994

<Name>
OU School of Music

Dear _____:

I am researching the career and contributions to piano pedagogy of Clarence Burg, one of Oklahoma's leading piano pedagogues from 1928 to 1983. This research is the subject of my dissertation for the Ph.D. degree in piano pedagogy at the University of Oklahoma. For a portion of my project, I will be gathering information from a number of Burg's former piano and piano pedagogy students. Each will receive a copy of the enclosed questionnaire.

To determine whether the questions are ambiguous, redundant, or too long, the questionnaire must be pilot-tested in advance of administration. I am asking ten graduate piano majors and three piano faculty members from the OU School of Music to complete the pilot-test evaluation.

I would be most grateful if you would read the questionnaire, substituting the name of a faculty member you have known in the place of Burg's name, thereby making the questions more relevant to your own situation. Please indicate in the space beneath each question your impressions about clarity, redundancy, available space for answers, given the open-ended nature of the questions, as well as reasonableness of length of the questions and the questionnaire. Your suggestions will be used in refining the questionnaire before mailing it to Burg's former students.

Because my deadlines are approaching rapidly, please return your response to me in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope by September 16.

Your generosity in assisting me in this research is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Linda Owen

APPENDIX C

PIANO COMPOSITIONS BY CLARENCE BURG

PIANO COMPOSITIONS BY CLARENCE BURG

The Arkansas Traveler (Old Country Dance), Carl Fischer, Inc., 1923.

Etude Syncopation on the French Augmented Sixth, publisher unknown, 1982.

Etude Symmetrique, publisher unknown, 1982.

Three American Dances, arranged by Clarence Burg, Art Publication Society, 1935.

I. Turkey in the Straw (Old Zip Coon)

II. Eighth of January

III. Pig Town Fling (Stony Point)

Two Descriptive Pieces, G. Schirmer, Inc., 1925.

The Sandman's Song

Race for Life

APPENDIX D

PLAQUE INSCRIPTION ON

CLARENCE BURG ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

PLAQUE INSCRIPTION ON CLARENCE BURG ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

CLARENCE BURG ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Four Consecutive Years
Performances
OMTA State Achievement Auditions

This award is given in memory of Dr. Clarence Burg (1893-1986), piano teacher, pianist, composer, and Dean Emeritus of the Oklahoma City University School of Music and Performing Arts.

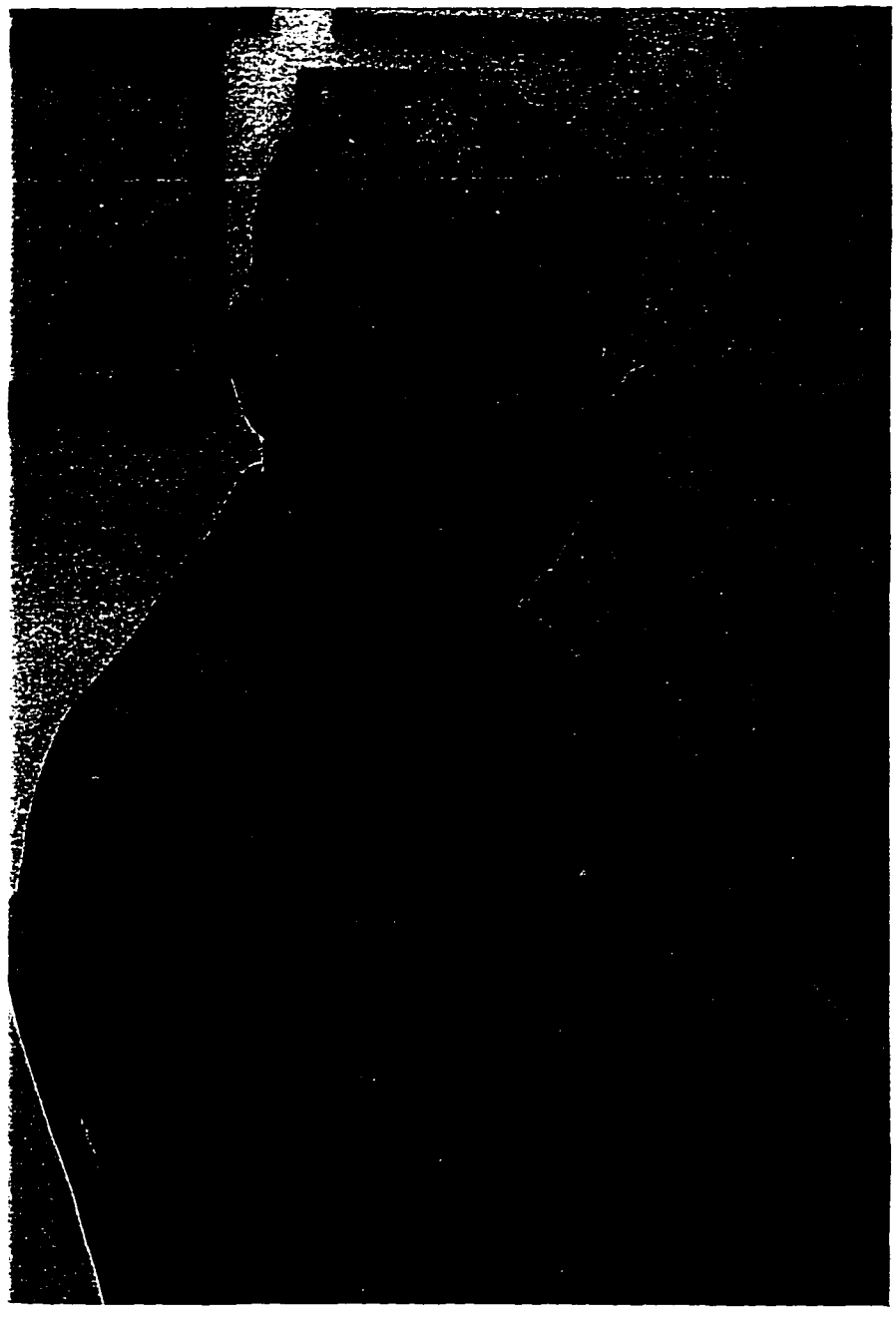
Music was the focus of Dr. Burg's life since his childhood. He was instrumental in the founding of the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association in 1929 and was its first state president.

Dr. Burg believed that there was a place for every music student on the ladder of success. He felt that his greatest legacy was the influence on an estimated 10,000 students whom he reached through his teaching. As his students become teachers of future teachers, the chain of his influence continues to grow.

Plaque text was written by Marilyn Witcher.

APPENDIX E

PHOTOGRAPHS OF CLARENCE BURG



Clarence Burg in 1952, age 59



Clarence Burg in 1976, age 83



Clarence Burg in 1982, age 89

Small Auditorium renamed Clarence Burg Auditorium
Oklahoma City University, Kirkpatrick Fine Arts Building