

It's a Miracle! Written July 29, 1992 by Pam Bridgehouse in Scotts Mills, Oregon

Making music is a miracle. Making music with other people is a miracle multiplied.

I'm a lyric coloratura who by some twist of fate teaches 5th-8th grade band at tiny schools and loves it. Needing some freshness in my professional life, I learned to play the trombone this past summer in order to participate in the Concert and Stage Band Literature Workshop at Lewis and Clark College. As the reading sessions progressed and I was nurtured and carried along by the accomplished and experienced players around me, I was reminded of how easy it is to forget the miracle.

In the business of choosing scores, planning performances, scheduling classes, and juggling budgets, a band director/teacher might easily forget:

- The naive thrill that gushes through the young player who is "getting it right" for the first time;
- The bittersweet, frustrated satisfaction that grinds and stretches inside a young player who is bonding with the instrument, coming to an intimate knowledge of it; developing the ability to compensate for weaknesses, build on strengths, and eventually to produce what is expected of them both;
- The beginning player's gradual discovery of identity and purpose in the weaving of the music into a broad intangible sash that encircles the ensemble and binds it together.

These are the reasons for making music and for making music together. May they never become so ordinary or so distant in our own experience that the sense of the miracle is lost.

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Scotts Mills Elementary (K-8, 150 students)
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