

There have been quite a few weeks where I don't comprehend the work I did until I wrote my journal on Fridays. That has been a ritual I have come to appreciate greatly over the past 7 weeks. I am a sucker for routine and organization, which has been uncomfortable for me to say in the past. Most likely because I've been told it's unnatural to appreciate such things (especially at my age). And even in the moments where I've embraced my appreciation of organization, I'm somewhat inconsistent. Which is where I think I am at right now.

Halfway along establishing a steady routine feels very weird. In some of the subjects I've been studying, like French, I've had much more success. I meet with my mentor, Scott, twice a week. To prepare for these meetings, I always do a few things. I write emails in French, which can be about really any old thing. I usually write about orchestra or flute or classical music in general. This is one of the places where the different segments of my project collide beautifully. Scott seems to have some familiarity with classical music, which makes speaking about composers like Debussy or Chausson even more invigorating. Beyond writing emails, I read (and try my best to understand) lots of literature. Right now, I am working through the *Little Prince* by Saint-Exupery and reading some poems, my favorite probably being *Le Pont Mirabeau*, which was the first one I read. For documentation, I usually translate them. Sometimes with Scott, sometimes on my own.

Through translation, I think I've started to understand the beauty of other languages. Something that I've always been aware of is how some words simply don't have perfect parallels in other languages. When you read a French poem, you unlock all of the meaning that you can't find anywhere else, unless you know (some) French. It feels like a superpower, and I absolutely adore it.

There has been a lot of routine in French. To have a bit of contrast, I am going to write about flute now. I've tried ten times harder to settle into a routine for flute, but prioritizing music over work that feels more tangible like crafting an agenda for SSJ or having a meeting with someone to answer some questions is very hard for me. My justification for this is I am transitioning from flute being a hobby over to being a part of my school work. It doesn't feel like school work, which makes it hard to prioritize. Then again, that doesn't really make sense because I nearly always do the things that bring me pleasure before I bother myself with things that bother me. I am sort of thinking this out on paper here.

We have spent a lot of time in seminar talking about deadline vs. commitment goals. I am definitely a deadline oriented person, and playing the flute doesn't really have deadlines. It's about continuous improvement. I guess there are some deadlines; like concerts and auditions and competitions. However they are very big picture, long term deadlines. I don't have a solution to this issue just yet, but I have found some specificity in my issues writing it out on paper. Just need some time to think about it.

A major setback I experienced the past two weeks was I've missed 6 days in the past two weeks. For fun things and unfun things. I went to a concert, I got covid, I cut the tip of my finger off (kind of). Honestly, I think that being at home has been good for my productivity, but I have had to cancel a ton of meetings with people, which is really frustrating. My project has relied heavily on human resources to function and move forward, and although it's been okay for a time, I am very ready to be back.

I'd like to go into more detail about my finger, it's messed with a lot of things. It's pretty hard to write by hand. I much prefer to write by hand, enjoyment-wise. I love the tactile feeling of paper, I love all of the different things I can write with, and I love having pages upon pages of work I can physically flip through. There's a lot less pressure in writing by hand. I remember Chris saying something along the

lines of: “It’s hard not to judge your work when it looks like it’s published”. And he’s right. This format, with margins and neat lines of text, etc, everyone looks like a published author. That is a very uncomfortable feeling when you are just trying to write your thoughts out.

And I can’t play the flute. Right now, the bandage and the stitches make my finger very unwieldy. It’s just not agile enough to perform the fine movement necessary for flute. When I first cut my finger, I felt pretty ready for a forced mini-hiatus from playing. It’s kind of driving me crazy now. I miss playing, but it's more like I want something I can’t have. And I’m missing out on playing in a great concert tomorrow.

I don’t have a smooth way to transition to my final topic. Social justice. I think I did the most learning in this realm of my Pilot project. I facilitated meetings, which is always something I’ve been rather anxious about. Because despite my avid fight to get teachers to stop dismissing microaggressions, and their ability to de-escalate conflict in a good way, I personally am rather shit at it. Which is scary, because who wants to spend time with a hypocrite? Anyways I am learning how to do this. It’s unclear how happy I make my subjects (which is the funny thing I call SSJ members in my head to make myself less nervous). I want to make sure their needs are met and they feel like they are doing good. It would kind of suck if the social justice club was operating under one person’s initiatives. I’m so anxious about that because there is no question that I am leading. I send out emails and coordinate with the adults, and I am the only one who does this. I accept or reject opportunities usually without talking to the group first, and usually only receive their input once we have a place to share our ideas. There is a power dynamic in our club, and it’s important to acknowledge it, maybe even dismantle it. Those are my big scary facilitation anxieties.

There are 2 major events lined up for SSJ in November. We are presenting at a GSA conference in Randolph, and holding our own conference at school on the 15th. I have done a lot of work to set these up, and now SSJ is at the point where I let people design what they want to do to teach other people how to be leaders. I really, really hope we have some members stand up and knock this work out of the park. Because we are finally at the point where many people being committed is very necessary to success. We had a big cohort of our greatest contributors graduate last year. SSJ is depending on other people to step up who haven’t in the past.

And... I made a zine. I think the greatest surprise I’ve had in my Pilot project is I’ve done a decent amount of graphic design. Wasn’t expecting that. I’ve designed two posters and I made this zine, which was so much fun. It was the perfect mix of satisfying my crafty side and talking about what I care so much about. I want to make more.

To get into the process of making the zine, as someone who doesn’t really know what they are doing (but art can be anything, so sort of whatever), I started with drafting on paper. Which was a chicken scratch list of what I wanted to talk about for each edition. And then I did some research. On equity and all of the other topics that I wanted to cover. The research became a document that specified how I wanted to say everything. I developed a specific tone for the writing, which was sort of educational but also casual and fun. I hope it doesn’t sound too patronizing. Then I started just clipping and coloring and lettering and looking at Pinterest until 4 pages later I had a draft. The biggest piece of advice I received was that it didn’t read very well. The eye didn’t have a clear path along the page. And I’ll admit, I’m not too psyched to change this draft, but I’ll certainly change my style for the next one, keeping that in the forefront of my mind.

Somehow, I MANAGED TO LOSE A PAGE. I am really unsure how that happened. Really contradicts my obsession with staying organized, but so be it. I am still on the hunt for it. I do intend on making it again if I am unable to find it, because I really hope they publish my zine in the Chronicle. I want it to get out to people, and I hope to teach someone something. That would make me so excited if I could teach someone something with my art. And that they are better for it.

So I think I am figuring this whole Pilot thing out. I want to have more routine, and be more productive, more organized, and set more realistic goals. But I am confident that I am on my way, and that I've learned some things along the way.

I know that I can usually do 3 things every (school) day. That is the right amount. I know that it's hard to do Pilot at home when I have homework. I need to learn how to get around that. A goal for the future, I suppose. For now, I am really excited to show people what has happened so far.

Works Cited:

French

Apollinaire, Guillaume. *Sous le pont Mirabeau*.

This is one of the poems I read and translated.

De Saint-Exupery, Antoine. *Le Petit Prince*. Wordsworth Editions, 1943.

I have been reading this book to get better at reading and understanding french in a novel format.

Prèvert, Jaques. *Le Cancre*.

A poem I read for French, about the class dunce. I also translated it into English

Thompson, Scott. Personal interview with the author.

This seemed like the best way to cite my mentor. I have been talking to him in French twice a week for over a month now. He has been the main source of my French learning thus far.

Social Justice

Allison, Meg. Personal interview with the author.

I meet with Meg usually once a week to talk about SSJ, and we plan agendas and stuff.

But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Author(s): Gloria

Ladson-Billings Reviewed work(s): Source: Theory into Practice, Vol. 34, No. 3, Culturally Relevant Teaching (Summer, 1995), pp. 159-165 Published by: Taylor & Francis, Ltd. URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1476635> .

Taught me about culturally relevant pedagogy, which is incorporated into my zine.

Erdman, Nikki. "Defining: Equity, Equality and Justice." 27 May 2021,

achievethecore.org/2021/05/defining-equity-equality-and-justice/. Accessed 23 Oct. 2023.

This source helped me craft my own definition for the difference between equity and justice.

Maurice, Mercedes, et al. "Outright Weekly Meetings." Zoom (online). Lecture.

Weekly meetings with Outright are a part of me learning how to be a good youth organizer.

Polgreen, Lydia, and Masha Gessen, hosts. "We Need Better Narratives about Gender." *The Ezra Klein*

Show, produced by Ezra Klein, Ezra Klein, 10 Oct. 2023. *New York Times*,

www.nytimes.com/2023/10/10/opinion/ezra-klein-podcast-masha-gessen-oct-2023.html.

Accessed 23 Oct. 2023.

I read the annotation of this podcast, and it beautifully describes the separation between cis het adults and queer kids, as well as getting a perspective from older queers.

Queers in Classical Music

Bello, Pablo, and David Garcia. "Cultural Divergence in popular music: the increasing diversity of music consumption on Spotify across countries." *Nature*,

www.nature.com/articles/s41599-021-00855-1. Accessed 23 Oct. 2023. Abstract.

When doing some research on how more genres of music are accessible because of the recording industry, and how taste has diverged, I came across this. My studies don't particularly relate to this idea anymore.

Buechner, Sara Davis. "An Evolving Country Begins to Accept Sara, Once David." *The New York Times*, 4 Feb. 2013,

www.nytimes.com/2013/02/04/booming/growing-acceptance-for-the-transgendered.html.

Accessed 24 Sept. 2023.

After coming out as trans, Sara lost jobs. This story talks about how there is growing acceptance for trans instrumentalists.

Cooper, Michael. "Transgender Opera Singers Find Their Voices." *The New York Times*, 11 July 2019,

www.nytimes.com/2019/07/11/arts/music/transgender-opera-singers.html? Accessed 2 Oct. 2023.

More examples of all the ways trans people can participate in opera. It really opened my eyes up about how flexible being a trans singer can be.

Dillard, Chuck, and Holden Magadame, hosts. "Queer Opera Conversations - with Holden Madagame."

Queer Opera, 9 June 2020. *YouTube*, www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0XXwVRKILk. Accessed 2 Oct. 2023.

Goes into specifics on Holden's transition and how he learned to sing again with altered vocal chords.

Harpstead, Ella. "Transgender Classical Musicians Beat the Odds to Take Center Stage." *CPR Classical*

[Denver], 9 June 2021. *CPR Classical*,

www.cpr.org/2021/06/09/transgender-classical-musicians-beat-the-odds-to-take-center-stage/.

Accessed 24 Sept. 2023.

One of Holden Magadame's more recent projects is a modern opera about a trans person (in the 1800s) on the day people found out he was trans.

Magadame, Holden. "Holden Madagame: The Trans Opera Singer Who Went from Mezzo Soprano to

Tenor." *Independent* [UK], 4 Dec. 2017. *Independent*,

www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/holden-madagame-glyndebourne-academy-transgender-opera-a8090386.html. Accessed 2 Oct. 2023.

One of the first examples of a trans masc person still being able to sing after transition through testosterone.

Publius, Xavia A. *Suggestions for Transgender Inclusion in Classical Music: A Mini-Cycle*. 2015. U of Northern Iowa, MA thesis. *UCLA Library*, UCLA, guides.library.ucla.edu/underrepresented. Accessed 18 Sept. 2023.

I was reading this to learn more about trans people in opera specifically. Not super relevant now, but it also taught me how thesis work, etc shouldn't be written with inaccessible flighty academic language. And how it doesn't have to be boring. Finally, this thesis talks about the mechanics of transitioning voices. Like the science.