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**Will Fedkenheuer**March 6 at 11:17 AM · 

In over 20 years, I've played over 1600 professional string quartet concerts for over 425 organizations in my career to date

Of those, only 30% had me back for a second time

Wait for it...

Only 9% of those had me back more than 5 times (~ 40 organizations)

AND. If I look really closely

There are twenty organizations that have made my career, my life, what it is

A full life.

20 years, 20 organizations

9%

And then I look at what music education is prepping us for. What stories is it telling us

or NOT telling us

What fantasies is it selling

and

WHAT are the REALITIES?

How antiquated IS our music education?

We're stuck in old patterns of soloist, orchestra, chamber musician, teacher AND we're still educating the way it was fundamentally setup between 1960-1980.

1960-1980. Either date you pick, that's 40 years ago.

I'm turning 45 in 3 days. So. This was the education that was happening when I was BORN.

And

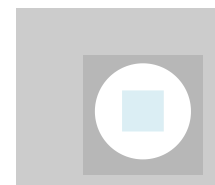
EVEN THEN the education wasn't completely relevant to what musicians went out and did to thrive.

Here's a secret not-so-secret

I HATE DOUBLE STOPS and STILL suck at them. Tenth's, forget it. You're never hearing a Paganini out of me ever again - I don't even like Paganini!

And let's not even get started talking about trills

AND HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I ACTUALLY PLAYED A CONCERTO OR PAGANINI IN MY CAREER?





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And yet, some institutions (my own included) REQUIRE Paganini to gain entrance into them to educate for a music degree

And all institutions are REQUIRING concerti

Here's what I see:

We live in an entrepreneurial economy

Musicians always have

We have portfolio careers - all of us

Musicians always have

TOP TO BOTTOM

We ALL do some or all of:

- Teaching

- Performing (Orchestra, Chamber Music, Solo)

- Building a business

- Marketing and Sales

- Negotiation

- Interpersonal Skills

- Fundraising

- Connecting

- The list goes on...

SO

IS OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM educating ONLY to play the instrument better

OR

Are we EDUCATING TO BUILD A CAREER AND A LIFE?

Is it educating us to FORM CONNECTIONS?

Be RELEVANT?

Fulfilled?

Balanced?

Financially SECURE?

Now that I'm 20 years in, I believe it should be the whole ball game.

I want a life and a career.

AND I want to play the instrument better.

AND I want it to connect with my inspiration, my why, my voice.

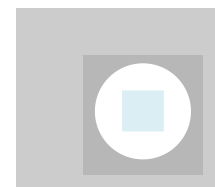
AND I want that out of my education, or the institution that I am paying to educate me.

AND I WANT THIS ALL FOR MY CLIENTS AND STUDENTS.

It's time to change up the contract and pivot. Innovate or die.

WHAT IF:

There was an institution that taught you how to elevate your playing for the long term





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AND

Helped you identify a unique career that combined your unique skills, experiences and voice

AND

Assessed the non-instrumental skill sets you already have

AND

the ones you most likely will NEED

AND

Then trained you in each of these

AND

Outfitted you with whatever additional skills you might need for this career ahead

AND

Built the skill of navigating change, pivoting, and changing direction

AND

GAVE YOU THE EXPERIENCE while in school to craft that career and start

What do you wish you learned in music school? Or wish you were learning now?



705

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