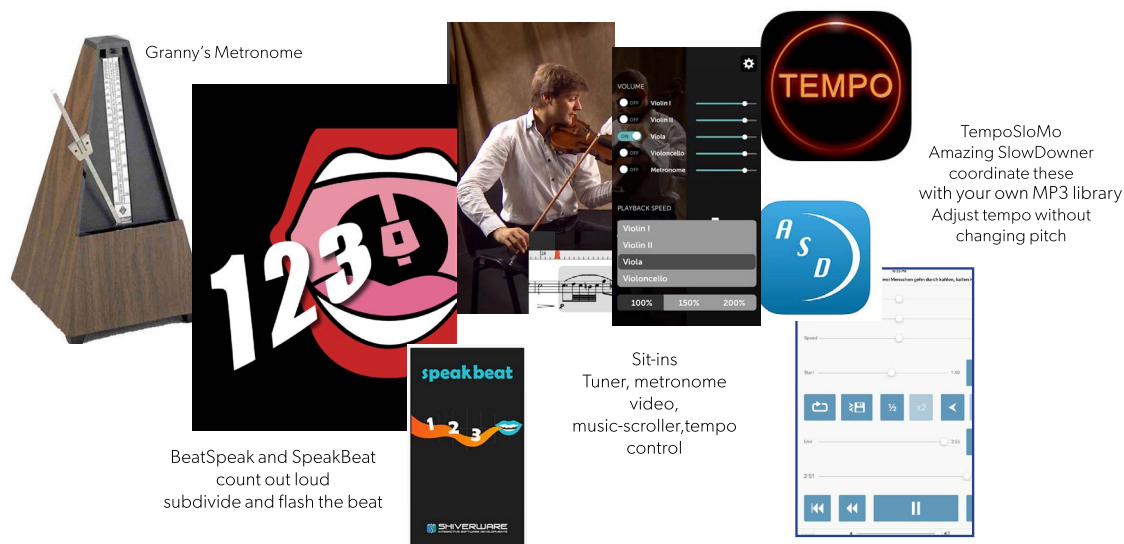


Associated
Chamber
Music
Players

Newsletter

Autumn 2015

It's Not Your Grandmother's Metronome!



It's certainly not your grandmother's metronome any more—the web now offers a huge choice of apps for your portable devices to help your practice sessions. Some are free, some have a modest cost. Many have in-app add-ons. Some tap, some pulse, some have flashing lights, some have voices counting in a choice of languages. Some don't count, but can be programmed from your own MP3 library, and then play back at whatever tempo you choose without altering the pitch. With these, you tune your instrument, set the tempo, and play along at your own speed, gradually increasing the tempo until you have mastered the *Presto*. Some can be programmed in loops so that you can repeat a tricky passage over and over until you have conquered it. And finally, there is one that not only scrolls the music along under the video on your computer screen as you play, but has a string quartet playing right along with you, at whatever speed you set.

ACMP has sampled many of these apps, and chosen a few of the best to review. We've omitted apps with confusing controls, ones that are too limited in features, or required purchases of too many additional in-app elements. Specialized apps, aimed at building gig repertoires, are beyond the scope of this brief review and were not included. Some marvellous (and as habit-forming as a video game) apps that build rhythm, theory and ear-training skills will be reviewed at a later date.

Counting Metronomes: BeatSpeak and SpeakBeat handily and loudly count out in a choice of voices. Both have simple and fairly intuitive controls. **BeatSpeak** http://apps.scruffmonkey.com/Scruff_Monkey_Software/BeatSpeak.html can subdivide beats into eighths, triplets or sixteenths as desired in meters from 2/4 to 12/8. As it counts, the beats roll across the screen, fading rather endearingly away when you tap the stop button. **SpeakBeat** <http://www.shiverware.ca/speakbeat/index.html> can be set for counts of up to 8 beats in taps or languages that include Turkish, German, French and Japanese. **SpeakBeat** was developed in New Zealand as you will hear if you choose a male voice. In both, the beats, volume, voice, and speed all have clear displays with easy dialing or tapping controls to set tempi, with plus or minus signs for smaller adjustments.

Tempo Control Apps: TempoSlowMo <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/tempo-slowmo-bpm-music-practice/id460008289?mt=8> and **Amazing Slow Downer** <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/amazing-slow-downer/id308998718?mt=8> can be co-ordinated with your own MP3 library and will slow down (or speed up) the recording and play along without changing the pitch.

And one amazing site has it all! Sit-ins lets you "sit in" and rehearse with a professional quartet. Music, including parts and score, is downloaded to your laptop from their web site. Controls allow you to select your part (or the score) which will scroll under the video as you play. You can join the full ensemble, seeing and hearing all voices, mute yours, or just have yours alone, screening out the others from both the video and audio. Slow way down to study bowings and even fingerings without changing the pitch. Visit their web site for full details: <http://sit-ins.com/>.

With over 200 new members joining ACMP since the last *Newsletter* (June 2015), we encourage you to use your online directory where you will find the most up-to-date member information for reaching out to those in your geographic area or on your travels.

**We welcome new members
to the ACMP
Chamber Music Network**

**Recent new members hail from
11 countries:**

Belgium (4)
Brazil (1)
Canada (5)
Egypt (1)
England (1)
France (1)
Germany (8)
Italy (1)
Switzerland (4)
Turkey (1)

In the USA

181 new members span 31 states:

Arizona (6)
California (22)
Colorado (2)
Connecticut (3)
District of Columbia (2)
Florida (14)
Georgia (8)
Idaho (1)
Illinois (3)
Maine (2)
Maryland (1)
Massachusetts (17)
Michigan (4)
Minnesota (3)
Missouri (2)
New Jersey (4)
New Mexico (2)
Nevada (1)
New York (31)
North Carolina (1)
Ohio (6)
Oregon (5)
Pennsylvania (15)
Rhode Island (1)
Tennessee (1)
Texas (3)
Utah (2)
Vermont (4)
Virginia (8)
Washington (5)
Wisconsin (2)



Notes From The Executive Director

Welcome to the Autumn 2015 issue of the ACMP newsletter, your resource for helpful hints, academic insights, and worldwide happenings.

Today we may read our music off an iPad, live-stream a performance on YouTube, or play a fiberglass cello, yet the activity of chamber music remains personal, intimate, and timeless. In parallel experiences across centuries and oceans, we derive great satisfaction from reading our pieces, whether newly-written or old, attempting to achieve the composer's intent—with the help of our trusty metronomes, of course!

All the while, ACMP is here to enable the life-long joy of playing chamber music. Our mission resonates, amplified and transmitted as though through the tines of a tuning fork, in two focus areas:

- 1) The Chamber Music Network, connecting players of all skill levels through online resources and print publications, an interactive website, and opportunities to participate in a global community of music-making; and
- 2) Grant Programs, supporting chamber music education through home coaching sessions, chamber music workshops, music camp scholarships, and year-long community music initiatives.

We look forward, as always, to hearing your stories—of the people you've met, discoveries you've made, and lives that have been enriched through your musical adventures. (My discovery of the month was a fun read by my woodwind quintet of *Dance Suite* by English composer and clarinetist Norman Hallam, b. 1945.)

Thank you for joining with ACMP to spread the love of playing chamber music everywhere and for all time.

Rebecca A. Sayles

I Cambristi 15th Anniversary Celebration in Milan



The celebration, held in Milan, July 2015, included a concert, a tribute to the founder, Franz Marcus (Vc, former ACMP Board Member), and a Certificate of Recognition from ACMP Chair, Janet White.

Above: Franz Marcus (playing cello) at the concert

A Tribute to Franz Marcus, Founder

"I Cambristi was created 15 years ago in Brussels by someone who had a clear vision of chamber music.

He had a dream: to make a small group of musicians who loved playing chamber music for pleasure into a big circle of friends, not only in a single region, but in many countries.

Franz knows how to put people together to play chamber music; he knows how to stimulate practice to improve playing; and he enjoys preparing programmes to share with a small audience."

Thank you Franz.

As the evenings draw in for fall, it's good to look back over all the summer's music making as well as looking forward to a new season of musical activities. I am sure many of you have attended summer workshops and made new musical friends and been exposed to new works. My work has taken me back and forth between Seattle and San Diego so I've enjoyed playing chamber music with ACMP contacts and coworkers in both locations.

The Boards of ACMP and ACMP Foundation met at the end of September at the home of newsletter editor, Kitty Benton, on Cape Cod – thank you to Kitty for generously hosting the group. We are also delighted to announce that following a strategic review of grant-making led by Gwendoline Thornblade, we plan to reinstate Community Music Grants to our slate of grant-making programs.

Our Membership Committee, led by Tony Vine, is pursuing a number of approaches to grow and sustain ACMP membership which include reaching out to welcome new members; improving the membership renewal process; and adding new perks to our package of member benefits. Please give us your feedback on what would enhance the value of your ACMP membership.

We are also seeking additional "ambassadors of ACMP" to serve on our North American Outreach Council,

particularly in Pennsylvania, the Washington DC area, Florida and northern California. If you are interested in learning more please be sure to contact me at janetwhite99@hotmail.com.

Letter from the Chair



We have confirmed the dates for the next **Worldwide Play-In Weekend on March 5-6, 2016**. Please mark the dates in your calendar and start thinking about your plans for chamber music-making that weekend. It's never too early to reserve a venue, whether a church, a school, a retirement home, hospital or bookstore. We encourage everyone to think creatively about how you can participate – whether as a trio in your home, or inviting one new person from the ACMP directory to expand your regular ensemble for a day, and we love to hear about unusual venues.

Wishing you a very happy autumn of chamber music,

Janet White

Board and Staff News



Chair Janet White (on video screen at R), on assignment overseas, attended the board meeting via remote hookup.



Area members James Raftopoulos (Va), Plymouth, MA, and Evie Simmons (Va), Wareham, MA, join Board Members Dale Domian (Vc), Toronto, Laura Goldberg (Vn/Va), New York, NY, and Floryse Bel Bennet, (Vn), Tolothenaz, Switzerland for viola quintets after the day's meetings.

Martha Pressler reappointed to ACMP Board

We are delighted to announce that Martha Pressler was reappointed to the ACMP Board after a brief leave of absence. Her profile can be found on p5 of the *Autumn 2010 Newsletter* and on our website.

ACMP Welcomes New Staff Member

We are also pleased to welcome Emily Pantel to the ACMP staff in the newly-created role of Operations Manager.



With a degree in psychology from Vassar College, Emily previously worked with translators and proofreaders globally as a reviewer and editor in multiple languages for life sciences publications, and as bilingual coordinator for the Celebrate Mexico Now Festival in New York City.

Emily is an accomplished violinist and avid chamber music player, who was assistant concertmaster of the Vassar College Orchestra and the Hoff-Barthelson Music School Festival Orchestra, as well as concertmaster of the Westchester (NY) All-County Orchestra. At the age of 15, she performed throughout Sicily during a month-long orchestra tour. This past summer she attended the Conductors Institute at Bard College. She has participated in the Music at Port Milford Chamber Music Festival (Lake Ontario) and the Blue Mountain Chamber Music Festival (PA).

If you have any questions about your membership, need help navigating the website, or want advice on how to organize a play-in, please don't hesitate to call or e-mail Emily, and she will gladly assist you.

The Key's The Thing Wherein We'll Catch the Conscience...

by Anthony Vine

As chamber musicians it is both our duty and our goal to do justice to the composer's intent. We struggle to interpret phrasing, dynamics, and bowings, very often with tenuous and unclear editing. If you ever have perused an original Schubert manuscript, you will be challenged to decide whether he intended a "sf," a "sf-decrescendo," or a hairpin: his use of accents, decrescendos, and hairpins is testament to the ambiguity of his penmanship, which forces the interpretation of the phrase upon the player(s).

On the other hand, the key signature imposes an element of clarity (at least with non-twelve tone composers). Very often, it heralds the title of the piece or movement, as in "Quartet in F Major" or "Sonatina in D," and is among

the very first instructions and notations a chamber player must note in the upper left hand corner of the page, before he even plays a note. Commonly, the key signature defines the piece—the beginning and ending of its journey to and from "home," and in a more complex fashion, may even characterize the persona or personality of the music—its emotional attributes.

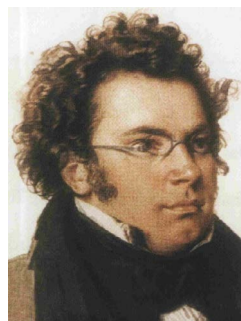
Beyond the obvious simplicity of the major-minor, happy-sad connections, it is well known that the human ear and psyche may perceive and process a wealth of emotions when hearing music in different keys. Even in the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries, treatises were written describing the association of key signatures with specific affectations, whether it be the triumphal, victorious D Major or the depressing, foreboding and ominous F minor. The most famous of these is Christian Schubart's *Ideen zu Weiner Aesthetic der Tonkunst* (1806), translated by Rita Steblin in *A History of Key Characteristics in the 18th and 19th Centuries* (UMI Research Press, 1983).

Composed in 1824, Schubert's *Rosamunde Quartet*

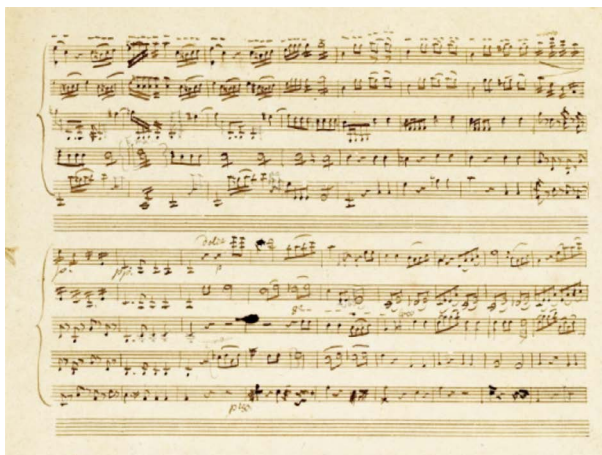
juxtaposes the first movement A minor with the familiar second movement andante in its relative key of C Major. The affective characteristics of A minor, depicted by Christian Schubart as "pious womanliness and tenderness of character,"[†] help modify the dark tensions of the exposition, contrasted with the tender, simple, song-like "Rosamunde" theme of the second movement, very aptly befitting Schubart's characterization of C Major: "Completely pure, ...innocence, simplicity, naivety, children's talk." This parallels Robert Schumann's feeling that C Major reflects the "simple and unadorned."

Quasi-orchestral in its scoring, Franz Schubert's C Major *Cello Quintet* indeed suggests the purity, simplicity, and joy that many associate with that key—especially the rous-

ing Scherzo—but by the time we arrive at the Trio, the composer abruptly transforms the moment and transports us to the dark world of B flat minor (with some glimmer of defeated hope in its relative key of D flat Major...). Written only two months prior to Schubert's untimely death (from syphilis), the *Cello Quintet*, played



Franz Schubert



Death and the Maiden String Quartet
from the Juilliard Library Digital Manuscript Collection

and published posthumously, reminds one of death, of departure from this earth. Perhaps Schubert's use of this D flat (B flat minor) key in the Trio precedes and foretells of the D flat appoggiatura of the final note of the piece, characterizing discontent, tearfulness, and possibly foreboding death.

As string players, we feel tension and fear at the mere appearance of 5 flats on the clef, and we may ask why a composer has chosen this medium of expression. As close as C is to D flat by being only a half step away, it could not be a farther distance on the circle of fifths, so that the migration to this realm, although seemingly adjacent, is in truth a very distant journey. It is easy to take

a step with one foot and go nowhere, yet simultaneously to have the mind or soul wander so far from the body, so as to allow this perception. In addition, technically speaking, keys such as this, with flattened notes, exude a sound that is both warm and subdued, since (on a stringed instrument) the notes are all stopped: the emanating sound lacks the overtones and harmonics of open strings that we associate with brighter keys, such as C Major (or D Major, A Major, etc.)

A relatively unknown and sparsely used key prior to Beethoven, C sharp minor (Scarlatti composed two piano sonatas in this key), suggested to Schubart “penitential lamentation, intimate conversation with God, and sighs of disappointed friendship and love.” I would venture to suggest that many composers seem to have felt a certain reverence for this key, especially subsequent to Beethoven’s use of this medium. Chopin (*Scherzo #3*—which he composed in an abandoned monastery), Mahler (*5th Symphony*, 1st mvmt.), Prokofiev (*7th Symphony*), and Rachmaninoff (*Piano Prelude in C Sharp Minor*) all wrote significant works in this unusual tonality (although Mahler also felt that a specific key signature describing the entire *5th Symphony* would be best left out). Strangely, Brahms initially composed his 3rd

Beyond the obvious simplicity of the major-minor, happy-sad connections, it is well known that the human ear and psyche may perceive and process a wealth of emotions when hearing music in different keys.

Piano Quartet in C sharp minor, but felt the need to revise it to C minor. A late work of Schubert, the *Piano Sonata C sharp minor* (D655) is unfinished and fragmentary, consisting of only a single movement... Perhaps the true “owner” of this key is Beethoven, to whom the above composers pay

homage, even though he fashioned but two works in C sharp minor; the “Moonlight” *Piano Sonata*, and one of the late Quartets, *Op. 131*. The latter, monumental and cathedral-like in structure and meaning,

opens with an adagio introduzione that establishes all of the thematic material to be presented in the subsequent 6 movements. The opening statement by the first violin starts a slow fugue—of course, hearkening back to Bach, in both form and piety—in which the painful spirituality and tension overwhelm. It is no wonder that to Richard Wagner this theme “revealed the most melancholy sentiment [ever] expressed in music.”

†(ref-Berger, Melvin (2001). *Guide to Chamber Music*, p. 67, Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.

Anthony Vine (Vn) New York, NY, is a laparoscopic general surgeon at Mt. Sinai hospital in New York City, the principal of AV Fine Musical Instruments, Inc., and the Vice-Chair of ACMP.

Cadences

We are saddened to learn of the deaths of the following members.

Kenneth Milford

(Fl/Recs), New York, NY

Jane Hollander Wakefield

(Hn), New York, NY

Support ACMP

Your generous contributions will help us continue providing member services, grants, and opportunities that foster the playing of chamber music for pleasure, as well as nurturing the next generation of chamber music players.

We are grateful to all those who support our work. If you wish to make a charitable contribution, memorial gift, or bequest, please visit our website, www.acmp.net, or contact ACMP at 212-645-7424.

News from The Chamber Music Network

Spotlighting Cellos, Bassoons, Flutes

Cello Scene - Troy, New York

by Neil Stannard

Twenty-two avid adult amateur cellists bent on exploring the depths of Bach's masterwork gathered at Russell Sage College in the charmingly resurgent town of Troy, New York, for **The Bach Cello Suites Workshop**. The workshop offered six well-designed days of close encounters with four distinguished cellists; Melissa Kraut, Phoebe Carrai, Robert Battey and Zuill Bailey. Divided into groups of more or less



matching abilities, the cellists spent one day with each of the four teachers. Mornings consisted of a half-hour private lesson followed by individual practice time. After lunch, came a group encounter with the teacher, during which time any number of activities could be explored, depending on the consensus of the group. There might be ensembles, master classes, a practicum on a particular issue such as bowing or general questions. After that presentations by the teachers were offered to the entire group. Evenings were free for ad hoc ensemble reading, with the exception of Wednesday, which was set aside for a guest speaker.

On the last evening came the Big Bach Bash. Each of the four teachers played movements from the suites, then duets and then a quartet version of *Kol Nidre* with Bailey playing the solo part. I have to say, hearts were broken. Then came the cello choir, all twenty-two of us, making joyful sounds that I'm sure echo still.

I have devoted my professional life to music. The piano has always been the primary source of my expressive power, not to mention my bread and butter. But, that said, I can't imagine life without string instruments, which have always been a part of my life, too. Although I came to the cello later in life, I played double bass quite seriously as a young man and also viola. So, I came to the workshop as an experienced musician, if not a professional cellist. I point this out because I want to make it clear that the workshop can be whatever you want it to be. I hesitated to attend at first, thinking that I could solve my own problems. But I finally realized, why reinvent the wheel if someone could show me the way, which is exactly what happened. The overarching message of the program is that there are many ways to interpret these suites; we have no autograph score from Bach himself. This I knew. So, instead of focusing on interpretive issues, I came armed with technical questions that had been nagging at me, and behold, truths were revealed. I'm glad I went.

*In addition to his current status as amateur cellist, Neil Stannard (Vc/Pf) Los Angeles, CA, (2nd from L in front row) is a semi-retired professional pianist and author of **Piano Technique Demystified**, who thinks that, unlike life, playing the piano and the cello are easy and shouldn't hurt.*

Bassoon Scene - The Netherlands



A Bassoonist Gets Wide Press Coverage!

Above: photo and excerpt from the *Independent*, a UK Publication:

"A virtuoso bassoonist has warned that the divisive woodwind instrument 'could be as endangered as the panda' and is calling for more people to pick one up.

The emphatically-titled 'Save the Bassoon' campaign kicked off in Amsterdam in June, and is led by **Bram van Sambeek**, who can be seen shredding a bassoon on a rock at sunset."

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/the-bassoon-is-facing-extinction-10434345.html>

<http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/aug/01/save-the-bassoon-campaign-endangered-instrument>

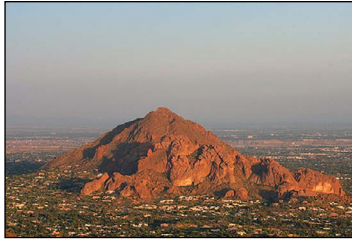
Flute Scene - Washington DC



Unlike their cousins, the bassoonists, flutists are a thriving breed, as evidenced by the presence of more than 3,000 flute lovers from 29 countries and 49 states who gathered at the National Flute Association convention this past June in Washington, D.C.

"Organizations like ACMP ... help fulfill the needs of adults to continue growing and performing."

Katherine Shields, Director,
Chamber Music Workshop,
Chaparral Arts, Prescott, AZ



Camelback Mountain, Phoenix AZ

"... It was also absolutely spellbinding to have Ida (Kavafian) and Peter (Wiley) [of the Hausmann Quartet] as coaches. They disarmed everyone and engaged the students with such affections and openness."

Mary, participant
Mainly Mozart Chamber Music
Seminar, San Diego, CA

"We witnessed new friendships forming, old friendships growing, and a general sense of camaraderie."

Lee A. Chivers, DMA,
Musical Director, Arizona
Chamber Music Experience,
Phoenix, AZ

Spotlight on Grantees

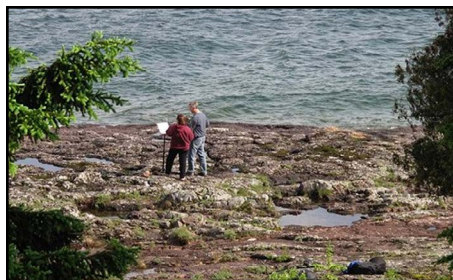
Last year, ACMP awarded 53 grants to chamber music workshops across 4 countries and 20 states.

Read enthusiastic praise from organizers and participants alike.

"I am so pleased that I attended this workshop – I nearly didn't because it had been so long since I played ...

But it inspired me to rejoin ACMP and work on other pieces ... Tomorrow I am going to play at a retirement home in a newly formed chamber group..."

Pamela, participant
University of Florida ChamberFest,
Gainesville, FL



Two WCMW French Horn participants
enjoy a lakeside rehearsal

"The ACMP Foundation's grant to the WCMW is both an honor and encouraging catalyst for future Workshops."

Josh Aerie,
Director and Founder,
Woodland Chamber Music
Workshop, South Bend, IN



"25 participants from Italy, England, Germany, Israel, Switzerland and the USA— ...most of them returning for their fifth or sixth (or even twelfth!) time..."

Aldo de Vero,
Executive Director,
Ischia Chamber Music Festival,
Pozzuoli, Italy

(Above: participants are pictured after their concert in the cathedral)

Home Coaching

Apply to the ACMP Home Coaching Program—it's there for you!

Here's How:

- Form your group (all group members must be ACMP members)
- Choose your repertoire
- Choose your coach
- Choose your time and place
- Download your application and submit it

ACMP will match 50% of the coaching fee

Home Coaching is popular with participants and coaches alike:

"Working with Kate makes us feel that we can take music to a magical level that didn't seem possible before."

Home Coaching Participant

"We've coached amateurs for over 30 years, and they are incredible people. Thank you for offering these opportunities."

Tom and Cynthia Stauffer, Coaches



1133 Broadway, Room 810
New York, NY 10010-8046

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Volume 2015 #3 Autumn

The *Newsletter* is a publication of:
Associated Chamber Music Players, Inc.
1133 Broadway, Suite 810
New York, NY 10010-8046 USA
Tel: 212-645-7424



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Anthony Vine,
Vice Chair, Board of Directors
Rebecca A. Sayles, Executive Director
Emily Pantel, Operations Manager
Kitty Benton, News Editor
kbenton@acmp.net

A copy of ACMP's last annual report may be
obtained from the Office of the Attorney
General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New
York, NY 10271



ACMP **Worldwide Play-In Weekend** **March 5-6, 2016**

Start Making Plans Now!

Look online for new members in your area

Call the office for help and ideas

Go online to download a copy of

The ACMP Guide

to

Arranging a Successful Play-In

www.acmp.net/wpiw

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