

# **Teachers' Workshop**

## **From Colony to Country: Understanding the American Revolution**

### **By creating your own Broadside Ballad**

#### **Contact**

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#### **Art Form**

Music

#### **Target Audience**

Students grade 3-5

#### **Activities**

- Creating **broadside ballads** as a means to understanding contemporary social change
- Looking at the **broadside ballad** as an indicator of the social and political climate of the American Revolution

#### **Workshop length**

2 ½ -3 hours (can be expanded to an all-day [6 hour] workshop—two 2 ½ -hour sessions with a 40 minute lunch and two ten-minute breaks).

#### **Approach**

The workshop leader will:

- Show how the changes in musical style from Colonial to Revolutionary times mirror the political changes;
- Engage teachers in creative activities designed to help students understand the nature and function of music in general and the topical ballad in particular;
- Share materials and resources that teachers can use to expand their knowledge of British Colonial and Federal American music;
- Help teachers consider adaptations of the learning activities to various classroom settings.

#### **Results for Teachers**

Teachers will:

- Appreciate that bringing history to life through music facilitates a deeper understanding of the personal nature of the political process;
- Be able to lead students through various creative activities that will teach the relationship of music and social change;
- Appreciate that music/creative writing activities can develop students' imagination, self-esteem and ability to work cooperatively.

#### **Rationale**

In teaching a multifaceted topic such as the American Revolution, it is often difficult to know how to coordinate contributing elements to enhance understanding without compromising the integrity

of any of the disciplines. In this workshop, the creative process of ballad writing is used as a bridge between those disciplines. While it is helpful if participating teachers have musical training, this workshop is designed for all classroom teachers regardless of their musical background. By asking students to compose their own song texts and to set them to familiar tunes, musical scores are unnecessary and public presentation of the finished product is uncomplicated and informal. The non-music teacher can use this process with a high comfort level to support the curriculum in the classroom. At the same time, music teachers can use these activities on a more technically demanding level in music classes.

## Description

Workshop activities will be chosen from the following:

- Either a live mini-concert and instrument lecture or a lecture with accompanying CD
- A mirror exercise designed to spotlight issues in the creative process--how to use repetition, variation and contrast
- The creation of a Revolutionary War time line
- A discussion of the nature and construction of a broadside ballad
- The selection of a *historical* event from the timeline and creation of a ballad based on a 'common tune' such as Yankee Doodle, using the model of the Star Spangled Banner (originally a drinking song).

**All workshops** will include a final workshop activity where small groups of participants choose an article about a *contemporary* event from the daily newspaper, set it to the common tune of their choice, and perform it together for the large group.

## Workshop Requirements: Limit—40 participants

CD player with extension cord (if live performers are not available)

Room large enough for teachers to break into groups, appropriate number of chairs in a semi-circle

Supplies: masking tape, flip chart and markers

7 copies of the local daily newspaper

## Musical References

**Early American Roots:** HESPERUS, Maggie's Music MMCD216/ Mel Bay publication of the same name.

**Colonial America:** HESPERUS, Maggie's Music MMCD 227

## Workshop Leader's Background

Tina Chancey is a performer, educator and scholar. A former chair of the Early Music America Education Committee, Dr. Chancey has been a presenter at Orff-Schulwerk, ASTA, MENC, and Chamber Music America national conferences. For the past two decades, she has given workshops and assemblies in the DC public schools through the Washington Performing Arts Society's "Concerts in Schools" program. A participant in the Kennedy Center Education Department's seminar, **Artists as Educators: Creating Teachers' Workshops**, Dr. Chancey recently presented a day-long teachers' workshop integrating music, literature and art on *Fame and Folly* with Rebecca Arkenberg at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She is presently developing workshops and accompanying resource materials to complement each of Hesperus' twelve recordings. In March, 2003 she was selected to represent the Smithsonian Institution in a week-long educational residency in Long Beach, CA.

A founding member and co-director of HESPERUS, an early/traditional music ensemble that tours nationally and internationally, she is also a former member of the Folger Consort and the Ensemble for Early Music. A multi-instrumentalist, she plays early and traditional bowed strings and has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts to support debut performances on the French baroque pardessus de viole at the Kennedy Center and Weil Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall.

Dr. Chancey has received Masters degrees from Queens College and New York University, and a PhD from the Union Institute. Her articles on early and traditional music appear in scholarly and popular publications, and she has recorded for a score of labels from Arabesque to Windham Hill. She also produces recordings for the Dorian Group. With her husband Scott Reiss, she has been the recipient of a two-year grant from Earthwatch for research on Irish music.