

Music Education Guest Reflection

Dr. Jacobo Nitzsch

I was thoroughly impressed with Dr. Jacobo Nitzsch. On top of being an engaging and polished speaker, he was a well-accomplished musician and is involved with various humanitarian projects.

Dr. Nitzsch mentioned that he was granted money from the government to enrich music programs in Guatemala. I love that he used his passion for music to help underprivileged areas. He set up programs for youth in jail and for youth who could not afford to take lessons. It was really heart warming to see the video performance of his students. They all seemed genuinely happy. I also loved that his projects were sustainable. With the money he was granted, he purchased materials to make instruments. Then all of the instruments were made locally in Guatemala and were played by youth in these areas as well. Dr. Nitzsch used his passion to help the economy of an entire community.

Another concept Dr. Nitzsch touched on was the difference between an artist and a musician. His belief was that a musician is someone who is an excellent worker. They can spend hours in a practice room and overtime, become a master at their instrument. Whereas, an artist is someone that challenges the status quo and are creative. They look at ways to express more than what is written on the page. He related this to a classroom and how important it is for a teacher to foster and promote this type of creativity. He used the term “divergent thinking” which I had not heard of. After the lecture, I looked up this term and it is defined as “a thought process or method used to generate creative ideas by exploring many possible solutions”. Hopefully when I teach I can use my divergent thinking skills to generate creative ideas amongst my students.

Overall, I felt that Dr. Nitzsch was very inspiring and motivating. He encouraged us to think deeply in a different way than Dr. Elizabeth Gould did. He got us to reflect on how to promote creativity in a classroom. Now that I am aware of this idea, I will look at ways my teachers promote creativity in their classrooms.