

# Love Songs & Pirate Songs:

## Charting the Seas of Trumpet Pedagogy

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### INTRODUCTION: CHARTING THE COURSE

This project examines different ways of teaching applied trumpet by observing how master teachers address the same skills in their own studios.

### ABSTRACT: THE VOYAGE

With support from a Career Enhancement Award, I observed 14 master trumpet teachers across the United States in lessons and masterclasses to understand **how and why** teachers approach the same skills differently. I found that effective teaching depended less on method and more on authenticity, musical intention, and clear communication. Across diverse styles, singing, imagery, gesture, and an air-first approach consistently improved results and have since shaped my own teaching.

### METHODOLOGY: NAVIGATION

- Observed 14 university trumpet teachers across the United States in on applied lessons and masterclasses
- Took detailed notes on teaching strategies and communication styles
- Reviewed notes to identify patterns, differences, and common themes

### IMPLICATIONS/IMPACT: TREASURES CARRIED ASHORE

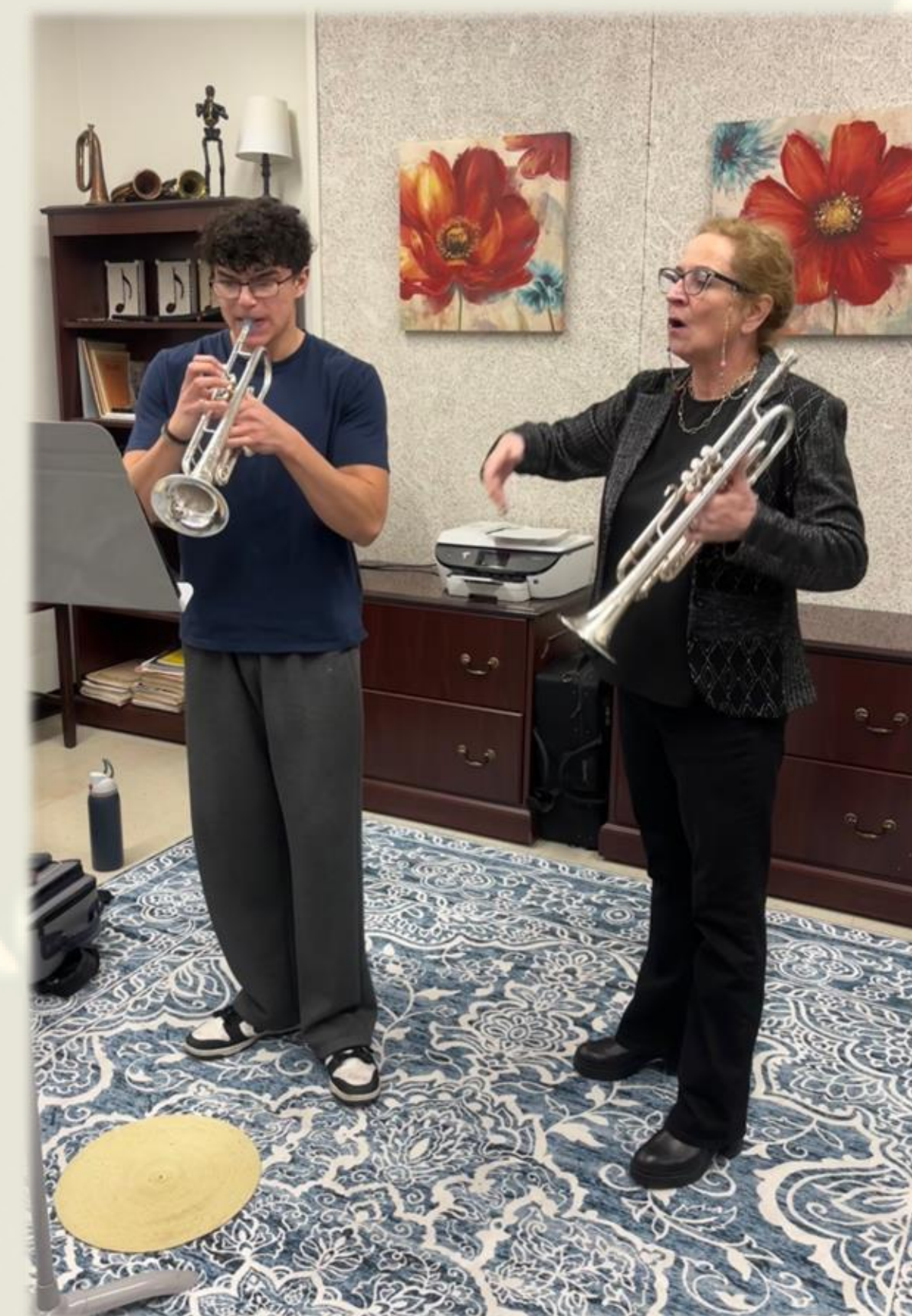


- I now teach primarily **standing**  
Both student and teacher are more engaged  
Posture and playing are better while standing
- I use **singing** more systematically to clarify phrasing and breathing.
- I rely more on **physical gesture and imagery** to shape phrasing, dynamics, and air flow.

- I incorporate **specific words-sounds**.  
Changing the word-sound in the mouth changes the tone color. Ex: the words 'go' and 'he' change the shape of the oral cavity thereby changing the tone.

- I prioritize **air flow and resonance** with a **music-first approach**. Prior to this research, my pedagogy was heavily rooted in fixing the Mechanics of playing the trumpet.

- Now, **imagery, story, and intention** come before mechanics.



### RESULTS/KEYFINDINGS: TREASURES FOUND

- **All teachers taught while standing.**
- **Teacher authenticity mattered most.**  
Style varied widely, but every teacher taught in a way that was genuinely "them."
- **Music-first framing improved results.** Several framed music broadly as either lyrical/connected *love songs*, or bold/rhythmic *pirate songs*
- **Singing and Gesture were a high-impact tool.**
- **Time was treated as physical.**
- **Simple fixes worked across all studios:** using a strait mute to improve tone, playing with an audible drone to help intonation, rest as much as you play, walk and sing the music for rhythmic feel, etc.

### THE CREW (n = 14)

- Dr. Anne McNamara, University of Illinois
- Dr. George Carpten, Pennsylvania State University
- Dr. Ryan Gardner, \University of Colorado Boulder
- Wiff Rudd, Baylor University
- Mark Schubert, Baylor University
- Dr. Julia Bell, Texas Tech University
- Dr. Jason Dovel, University of Kentucky
- Dr. Luke Spence, SUNY Potsdam
- Dr. Stephen Siegel, Kennesaw State University
- Dr. Aaron Jensen, Columbus State University
- Dr. Kyle Millsap, Texas A&M University–Kingsville
- Javier Salinas, Texas A&M University–Kingsville
- Dr. Oscar Passley, Dallas College
- Robbie Collins, North Greenville University