

# **Ruth Kasckow's Flute Teaching Method**

**Ruth Kasckow's unique teaching method integrates traditional music training with Body Mapping for fluid, effortless and expressive playing.**

Most of us are familiar with what is known as traditional music training. Traditional music training is the practice of technique, breath control, tone production, music theory and musical interpretation. In the early stages of learning flute, one learns the basics of the instrument: how to read notes and rhythms, how to produce a tone, scales, basic music theory and musical phrasing. Through continued study, the student learns how to play more notes, more complicated rhythm patterns, varied and expressive tones, different kinds of scales, more advanced theory and more sophisticated and nuanced musical phrasing.

## **Body Mapping and Flute Playing**

Body Mapping is the conscious correcting and refining of one's body map. The body map is our representation in our brain of how are bodies are put together. The accuracy of our body map greatly affects how we use our bodies while playing flute; the more accurate and finely attuned we are, the more fluid, efficient and free we become in our playing.

Learning all aspects of traditional music training with the practice of Body Mapping produces notable differences in breathing, phrasing, technique, expressivity, ensemble playing, intonation and blending. Playing an instrument becomes easier and more relaxed because movement, balance and awareness are greatly improved. Good use of fine and gross motor movements reduces the tension, stiffness and injury sometimes associated with playing an instrument.

Ruth's study of Body Mapping has had a huge effect on her own flute playing in reducing tension, understanding the body and allowing a much larger expressive musical palette available to her. Flute playing is simply more relaxed and enjoyable because of it. She has seen and heard the difference it makes with her students and other flutists.

## **Ruth's Teaching Experience**

Ruth has been teaching privately for over twenty five years. She has taught in Baltimore City, Mexico City, Pasadena Conservatory of Music and Old Town Music Co. She presently maintains a private studio in La Canada in the Los Angeles area. She has also worked extensively with coaching flute ensembles and sectionals. Ruth as a member of Music Teachers Association of California, provides her students with the opportunity to participate in the Certificate of Merit program. Ruth has had training in the Suzuki Method for Flute. She is currently an Andover Educators trainee and is working toward completing her certification in Body Mapping training. Please see separate PDF entitled **Body Mapping for Flutists** on her website for further information.

## **Ruth's Duet Books**

Ruth has developed a series of books called The Flute Duet Practice Books. The books have been written to expose, teach and review flute technique for students, making learning a very enjoyable and positive experience. Flute choirs, bands and flute players of all levels have found the duets to be beneficial to their flute playing. The first two books cover scales, arpeggios and thirds in major keys and minor keys. The third book covers an array of duets highlighting chromatic scales, whole tone scales, double tonguing, triple tonguing, meter changes and more. We use the books in the lessons.

## **Materials**

Some examples of what Ruth uses are the *Suzuki Flute Books 1* and *2* for beginning students and various band methods for sightreading and basic technique. For intermediate students, the student uses *24 Short Concert Pieces*, *Suzuki Flute Books 3-5* and individual repertoire such as *Gaubert Madrigal* or *Mozart Andante in C*. In addition to her duet books students will start using *Trevor Wye Practice Books* for scales and technique. For advanced students, a huge array of repertoire is available to work on such as *Faure Fantasy*, *Poulenc Sonata*, *Hindemith Sonata*, *Bach Sonatas*, *Muczinski Sonata* and the list goes on. The *Trevor Wye* or *Taffanel-Gaubert* for technique books are used and a host of flute etudes and orchestral excerpts.

