

# **GMTA TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2002**



## **BETTY NOLTING**

### **BIOGRAPHY**

The recipient of the 2002 GMTA Teacher of the Year Award is Betty Nolting. Betty is a graduate of Lawrence University and Eastman School of Music and has studied with renowned teachers Joseph Lhevinne, Adele Marcus, and John Elvin. Throughout her 63- year teaching career, she has exemplified the qualities of the ideal teacher: wisdom, patience, high professional standards for herself and her students, commitment to the growth and welfare of her students and fellow teachers, and a profound love of music.

Betty has had many winners in the GMTA auditions and MTNA competitions. Several of her former students currently have distinguished careers in music, including an accompanist with a major opera company, an orchestra conductor, the chair of a university music department, and the founder of a music school. The father of one of her current students writes, "In an age of MTV, email, and everything else, Betty Nolting has anchored our progeny to one of humanity's finest traditions, and so to a meaningful life. Her students grow up to be not just fine musicians, but happy musicians, and fine citizens as well."

For 30 years, her performance class has been a venue for other teachers to perform, learn and share their love of music with each other, and through these teachers she has had an influence on hundreds of students. She has presented sessions at many state conferences and local association meetings.

Betty has served as president of the Atlanta Music Teachers Association and the Metropolitan Atlanta Music Teachers Association. Additionally, she was GMTA president from 1978-1980. During that time, she was the primary force behind the Unified Arts Conference, the first state-wide joint meeting of Georgia organizations representing music, art, dance and drama. Betty has made an indelible imprint on the music community, the music teaching profession, and the lives of her students.

Congratulations to an exceptional teacher, Betty Nolting, GMTA's 2002 Teacher of the Year!

*Contributing to this article: Tommy Joe Anderson, Susan Andrews, Shepard Barbash, Sue Baughman, Janice Broadhurst, Aurelia Campbell, Wayne Gibson, Betty White.*

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## BETTY NOLTING'S TEACHING TIPS

### *TAKING THE TOUGH OUT OF "TOUGH" SPOTS*

Most teachers have tricks up their sleeves to help students manage the 'tough' spots in music. The following two methods can be used for any level of musical repertoire, from elementary to the most advanced.

#### **BUNCHIES**

Bunchies was developed by myself and a student, Boris Spektor, who graduated from Harvard Medical School with highest honors. In high school, he was playing *Chopin's Revolutionary Etude, Op. 10, No. 12*. He and I found that the passages that were difficult to finger could be mastered by clumping together finger groupings, as the following shows:

*Chopin, Etude Op. 10 No. 12*

(m. 9)

(mm. 17-18)

The fingerings indicated between the marked lines are to be played all together in one hand position, as blocked chords. Boris used this technique and was soon able to play the entire etude in bunchies. Using this practice skill, it became easier for him to play the left hand runs accurately when played as written. We used a tape of his performance to help him get into Harvard undergraduate school. Examples from technically easier music are as follows:

*Beethoven, German Dance in D Major, #2*

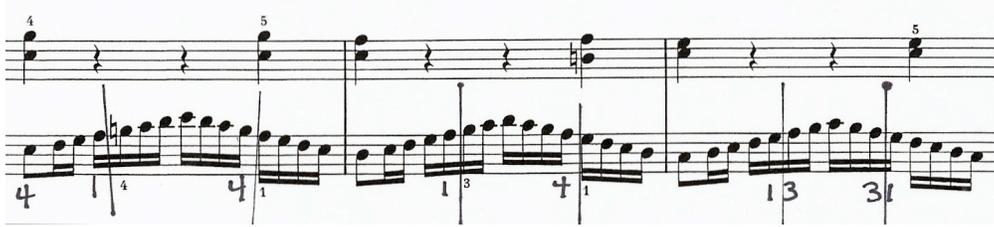
(mm. 1-4)

How to pick out Bunchies:

LEFT HAND RUNS:      up run notes = after the thumb  
                                 down run notes = before the thumb

RIGHT HAND RUNS:    up run notes = before the thumb  
                                 down run notes = after thumb

*Mozart, Sonata (K. 545, Allegro)*



*(mm. 50-53)*

### **“S” FOR STOP PLACES**

An “S” is written on top of a note/chord that has been consistently played incorrectly in the music. The “S place” in the music means to stop exactly on that incorrect note/chord. The stop is done on top of the key(s) without sounding the note/chord, but stopping rhythmically on time with the correct fingering on the correct note/chord. Start practicing 2-4 measures preceding the “S” place many times, first not playing the note, and then playing it.

This helps in many things: wrong notes, fingerings, delays between measures, incorrect shaping of chords, large skips, et cetera. You should begin using “S” places in the second year of study. It isn’t long before the student can pick out the places needing an “S” by him/herself. This trains the muscle, in addition to the brain and ear.

Both of these concepts, Bunchies and “S” places sound very technical, but they lead to the musical rendition of the mood of the music and the joy therein.

***Betty M. Nolting***

Private teaching studio  
Nationally certified, MTNA  
GMTA Teacher of the Year, 2002-2003