

Vaglio: A man of many talents

by Kelley Stone

Take a walk down the upstairs hall of Wainwright Music Building any weekday afternoon. You will find studios and practice rooms simultaneously vibrating with the sounds of piano, organ, and voice - sounds pleasantly familiar to a music major. But as one nears the recording studio, unusual and enticing beeps, whines, and other synthetic noises cause one to pause with wonder. The sound track to "Star Wars?"

Not quite. Likely to be in control of these extraordinary sounds is a student in the electronic music class taught by Dr. Anthony J. Vaglio, Assistant Professor of Music. Dr. Vaglio, who has been at Meredith for 3 years now, coordinates the electronic music program. The main laboratory in the recording studio and the smaller practice studio contain collectively such instruments as a synthesizer, a Polybox, and Theremin. Dr. Vaglio enthusiastically demonstrates their unique sounds, maintaining that knowledge in traditional musical notation is unnecessary to take a course in electronic music. He explains, "Every student composes pieces using their own unique notation. We're trying to introduce the music education students to electronic music so that they in turn can take it to the public schools."

Electronic music is only one facet of Dr. Vaglio's many pursuits. He received his Bachelor's degree in Music Education from Adelphi University in New York City, his Master's degrees in Theory and Composition from Butler University in In-

dianapolis, Indiana, and his Doctorate in Music Theory with minors in Music Education and Music Literature from Eastern School of Music in Rochester, New York. His Doctorate explored the compositional processes of Joseph Schillinger, the man under whom George Gershwin was studying when he wrote the well-known opera, "Porgy and Bess."

Dr. Vaglio's major instrument is the accordion. He began to perform at an early age, concertizing in state and national championships. He even performed with the Accordion Symphony Society of New York in Carnegie Hall. At Meredith, teaching and composing have taken priority over performance, but he hopes to "get back into practice someday."

The walls of Dr. Vaglio's studio are lined with shelves full of books on electronics, musical form, principles of harmony, and practically any freshman theory and the Music Education course, Music in the Elementary School. His teaching manifests his rigorously personal philosophy of education.

"I am concerned with giving every student the opportunity to do the best she can. Just as there are different rates of physical growth, there are different rates of mental growth. Therefore, rather than labeling a student with a letter grade, I encourage her to set her own standards and work at a concept until she understands it. Instead of tests, my students take diagnostics, which they can re-take if desired."

"I have faith in the honesty of my students and try to develop a personal, non-game relationship with each one. We are all learners. I only exist as a teacher in relationship to my students; I enjoy it when they challenge me in class. This allows me to examine myself, which is necessary for my own growth."

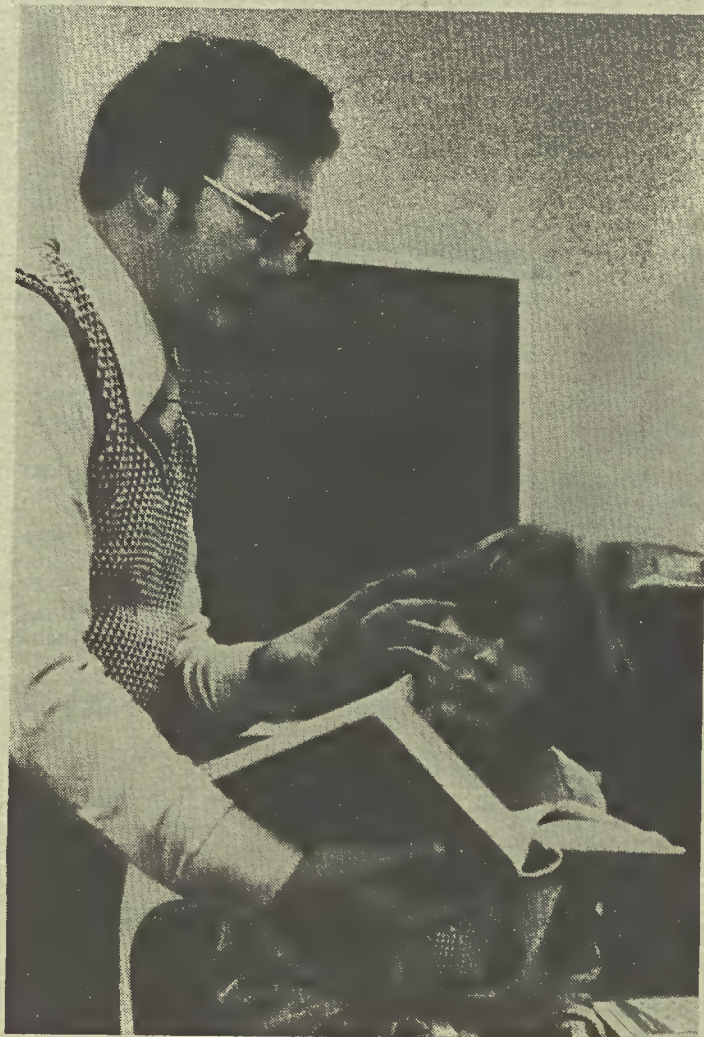
"At Meredith, we are small enough to maintain personal relationships. The fact that we're based on the Christian ethic -- and supposedly Christ was the ideal teacher -- lends support to this interpersonal relationship. I want to address this more and more in my teaching."

Unfinished manuscripts adorn Dr. Vaglio's piano, for aside from his teaching, he composes music. Last year he composed "...there was the Word..." which was commissioned by Meredith and performed here by the Chorale. He is currently composing songs specifically for the voice of Mary Nell Hight; these songs are based on the Spanish cycle of poems entitled "Where is the Boy?"

Dr. Vaglio has a deep interest in real estate, monetary systems, and the currency market, having once been a commodity salesman through Lloyd's Bank of London. At Meredith he serves on the Teacher Education Committee and the Executive Committee of the Music Department.

Dr. Vaglio's family is extremely important to him. His wife Agnes, a Meredith graduate whom he met while at Butler University, teaches at the Cary Elementary School. She is involved in continuing education at Meredith through the electronic music and sign language courses. Watching his 3-year-old son Andrew learn, grow, and enjoy his childhood is a source of real pleasure to Dr. Vaglio. His own parents, who now live in St. Croix in the Virgin Islands, are of Italian and Swedish background. He says, "When I was growing up, we frequently had Italian spaghetti with Swedish meatballs."

From electronic music to educational methods, Dr. Vaglio's students and advisees enthusiastically vouch for the success of his relationship to them as a teacher and friend. His love of life and people is reflected in his statement, "College is not an ivory tower; it is life itself. It's fallacious to think that the future out there will always be better. We need to grasp the moment."



Dr. Anthony Vaglio, a multi-talented professor here at Meredith, explains electronic music to Kelly Stone. (Photo by Paula Douglas)

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