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## Dr. Stambaugh hits the right note with new book

September 2, 2022



Musicians don't just create music. They build a link between people's brains, establishing a connection that crosses borders and barriers. This relationship between the brain and music has long been established. However, Fred and Dinah Gretsch School of Music's Dr. Laura Stambaugh has taken it a step further with her new book, *Music and the Brain for Musicians*.

As a professor and the Head of Music Education, Dr. Stambaugh says she wanted to write this book to combine her areas of interest in vastly different academic disciplines after being a visiting instructor in the Music and Neuroscience Lab at Western University (Ontario).

"I had been trying to weave together my interests in music and biology since my undergraduate studies when I was told I had to choose one field of study or the other," explains Dr. Stambaugh. "Now, as an interdisciplinary researcher, I don't want other student or professional musicians to encounter the same barriers that I did. The purpose of this book is to invite musicians to learn about our musical brains and become part of this fascinating field of study."

Already it has received glowing reviews from colleagues and peers.

"So often, research on music and performance science is made unnecessarily complicated," said Jessica Nápoles, professor of choral music education at University of North Texas. "In *Music and the Brain for Musicians*, Stambaugh uses a user-friendly approach to understanding important topics related to perception and cognition, psychology of music, and the benefits of music study."

Published by Conway Publications in summer 2022, the book focuses on music from the perspective of cognition and neuroscience, including how music is perceived and understood through highlighting several key research findings in previous studies. It all culminates in a call for action so that musicians can make meaningful contributions to research surrounding music. Due to the overlapping topics, it's a perfect book for musicians, teachers, and college students in music and psychology.

"This book addresses the mysterious link between seemingly effortless technique and musical artistry," said Cecilia Kang, associate professor of clarinet at Louisiana State University. "Stambaugh illuminates just how elite the musician's brain is, while also providing connections to improve teaching, learning, and performance."

Dr. Stambaugh's research focuses on the development of automaticity in playing instruments, and she appears in *Journal of Research in Music Education*, *Psychology of Music*, *Psychomusicology*, *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, and *Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*. Her teaching articles are found in *Music Educators Journal* and *Teaching Music*.

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