Composing Educational Music for Strings in the Canadian Context: Composer Perspectives

Freeing the Voice Within through Guided Imagery and Music

The Downtown Vocal Music Academy of Toronto

Examining the Construction of Music Teacher Identity in Generalist Classroom Teachers
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Benjamin Bolden

400 South
(Summer Sunday Night)

Dancing!  \( \frac{m}{148} \)
(stagger breathing throughout)

Part 1
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(1) mi do mi do fa mi re
(2) (stagger breathing throughout)
(3) (clapping softly)

(1) mi do mi do fa mi re
(2) maj - or third

(1) mi do mi do fa mi re
(2) per - fect fourth

(1) mi do mi do fa mi re
(2) per - fect fifth

(1) mi do mi do fa mi re
(2) maj - or sixth

(1) mi do mi do fa mi re
(2) maj - or second
1. min-or sec-ond min-or third per-fect fourth per-fect fifth min-or sixth min-or sev-enth

2. do do ti la so fa

3. Perfect fourth...
Guide for Contributors

The Canadian Music Educator / Musicien éducateur au Canada publishes a broad spectrum of articles, research reports, successful teaching strategies, and general practices in music education. Authors wishing to contribute should keep the following in mind:

• articles should be pertinent to current or evolving music education practices or issues
• articles should be clearly and concisely written, directed towards one or more of the following: elementary or middle school music classroom teachers, general elementary or middle school classroom teachers, secondary music teachers, private studio music teachers, college and university instructors, parents of music students, musicians
• articles should not normally exceed 4000 words, and shorter articles or brief items are welcome
• illustrations, graphics, photos, if good quality, are welcome
• articles are welcome in either English or French
• manuscripts should be prepared in APA format
• all contributions must open with a 50-100 word abstract summarizing content

Articles are to be submitted by email, in MS Word, RTF or Simple Text attachments. Authors are to submit a current good quality photograph and a short biography. All articles are subject to editing. All articles received will by acknowledged. Peer review is available on request.* Regrettably, some articles may not be used for publication.

Submit articles by email to the editor - Dr. Benjamin Bolden: benbolden@gmail.com

*If you wish the article to be peer reviewed, please submit the article with that request to Dr. Lee Willingham: lwillingham@wlu.ca

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In order for submissions to be published in the Canadian Music Educator contributors must agree to the conditions outlined in the CME Copyright Transfer document and must return a signed copy of this completed document to the editor by fax, post, or email (PDF of scanned, signed document attached). For a copy of the CME Copyright Transfer document, please contact the editor.

Detailed Directions for Formatting Articles

1. All lower punctuation inside upper – e.g., “This is a quote.” or The trumpet went “dead,” but the conductor stayed “alive.”
2. Sequences of items should each have a comma (before the last “and”). E.g., “People joined in, sang heartily, and danced in the background.”
3. Only 1 space between sentences. Never use two or more.
4. Use no underlining.
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7. Use no running heads. You may suggest a running head at the beginning of the document.
8. Use endnotes (no footnotes.)
9. Use a line space between paragraphs; do not indent.
10. Do not double space text – single space body of text.
11. Internal referencing: standard APA
12. Make suggestions for highlighted text that can go in boxes (not more than about 15 words).
13. Reference lists may use author’s full name.

Single space as in the examples below:


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This has been an interesting summer and, as I write this, we are not even half way through. Shocking environmental and tragic news stories told of the incredible challenges for families and businesses in Calgary and Lac-Mégantic. Despite sunny days and blue skies, there continues to exist powerful reminders of loss and a look to rebuilding. With school being out for the summer, we don’t hear about how these significant events impact schools and the individuals that shape those educational communities. On behalf of the CMEA, I want to state how saddened we are by the loss of life and extreme hardship others, those fortunate to have survived, will face.

If you know of a music educator that needs our help or support, we await their call and remain poised and prepared to connect them with a nationwide network of teachers, industry partners, and supporters who want to see music bringing joy into schools when September returns.

The geographic breadth of our collegial and professional network is exemplified by the leadership team that now serves to support members and communities across Canada. With a succession of CMEA Presidents alternating from East and West (NL, AB, QC, BC), I am next in the line of individuals who have signed up to be your voice and hear your calls. It is my pleasure to congratulate Theodora Statopoulos (QC) on the completion of her term as President while welcoming Kirsten MacLaine (PE) as Vice-President, Rebecca Brown (MB) as Secretary, and Mark Della Torre (ON) to their roles on the Executive.

I won’t keep you any longer here (it is as if the bell has rung!) and will let you get into the heart of this Journal - the best summer reading you’ll do! I am putting out this challenge to CMEA members who make reading our Journal part of the restful, rejuvenating Summer plans: send me a photo of yourself reading this Journal so we can see the world into which you take these new knowledge, ideas, and creative insights. The brilliance of the Journal is not in its contents but in its inspiration for music educators to make a bigger and more meaningful impact in the lives of those we teach.

Send the photos, your thoughts, or anything you need us to hear at markreid@cmea.ca. Getting to know our membership is how we work better together. Together we are the CMEA.

Mark Reid
President, CMEA/ACME
Canadian Music Educators’ Association/
L’Association canadienne des musiciens éducateurs (CMEA/Acmé)
“Together We Are the CMEA/ACME
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a “toonful” perspective

Nadine Pickthall has taught instrumental, vocal and recorder music and homeroom subjects to intermediate, junior and primary classes in the York Region District School Board since 1993. She is a graduate of the University of Toronto and has a Specialist in music and a Specialist in Art. She plays the French horn and piano. Nadine has a strong interest in the arts. She has taken art courses through the University of Toronto, the “Portfolio for Animators” program at Sheridan College and cartooning at Seneca College. Nadine was a University of Toronto editorial cartoonist for two years and has also had work published in magazines and newspapers.
Silence, Ready-Mades, and Critical Thinking

Natalie Kuzmich

Abstract: Well-informed individuals are better able to assess current and diverse music making, and tend to be more receptive to varied musical complexities and oddities.

Listeners at a 1952 concert were about to experience something totally different. A performer on stage approached the piano, shut the lid of the instrument, sat at the closed keyboard for four minutes and thirty-three seconds, then rose, bowed, and left. An uproar ensued. Listeners expected to hear a work by John Cage. Instead, there was silence – or what they perceived to be silence.

Indeed, for the composer, John Cage, silence had become part of music making; but, all was not quiet during the time frame of 4’33”. Ambient sounds – coughing, feet shuffling, and so forth – were part of the work as heard on a taped recording. And, time limitations framed that work.

Is 4’33” a musical experience? Mark Campbell (1992) was not convinced. “There seems to be no clear organization of expressive intent, nor any significant form, or logical construction – a lack of wholeness, completeness, unity – no development, no unfolding, no variety, no sonorous elements of music;” it lacks complexity, content and process. How does silence help us “understand or derive meaning”? Rather than thinking about what music is, we are alerted to what it is not (p. 90-91).

Yet, Cage has been influential. In 2010, devotees celebrated 4’33” as part of “a loosely organized protest against music’s commodification...against Simon Cowell’s monstrous manipulation of pop culture” – or for that matter, anyone “that turns life’s great joys into a string of jingles” (Lebrecht, 2010, p. 2-3).

There is a printed score of 4’33”; that is, two sheets of stave-lined paper, titled but lacking notation. Further, there are 23 recordings including one by Frank Zappa; and, believe it or not, the BBC gave the work an orchestral showing that was nationally televised in January, 2005. 

In any event, a composition of diverse sounds and silence within a time frame can be very useful – a kind of inclusive way to creative music making in the classroom, or anywhere, by anyone. Individuals, then, can think of ways to vary texture, timbre, pitch, duration, intensity; they may imagine dramatic coherent statements that incorporate contrasts, silences, and shaping, and in so doing become more critically attuned to unusual sounds and music making – not your traditional music making but valuable in assessing the numerous ways sounds and tones can be used.

Cage and others who have dealt with found sounds have implied that anyone can be a composer if s/he has an idea or concept that can be put to use. Skill/craft need not be involved, and, indeed, may be abandoned.** The work, then, belongs to the viewer/listener who interprets what is at hand, and who may actually welcome experiencing: a nine minute film of Bruce Nauman playing one note on a violin while walking around his studio; hours of film featuring a dripping water tap; Tom Marioni’s composition titled the Act of drinking beer with one’s friends is the highest form of art.

A conceptual piece – a performance, an installation, a happening, a visual display, a sound composition, an idea – is art of the mind and not the senses. It’s meant to provoke thinking, questioning, interpreting. To illustrate: in 1962, George Brecht, a representative of Fluxus, employed professional musicians who did not play on their instruments but did perform. Selections were: a String Quartet “shaking hands”; a Flute Solo “disassembling, assembling”; and, a Solo for Violin, Viola, Cello, or Contrabass “polishing.” The performance of each was described in the score – musicians shaking hands, flautist taking a flute apart, string players polishing their instruments.

There were, also, verbal descriptions of activities or ideas treated as autonomous compositions: For a show in 1969, Bruce Nauman submitted a snippet giving instructions for a possible performance: “Drill a hole in a large tree and insert a microphone. Mount the amplifier and speaker in an empty room and adjust the volume to make audible any sound that might come from a tree,” but there was no tree, drill, or microphone (Boden, 2006, p. 9); Robert Barry’s entry, All the things I know but of which I am not at the moment thinking – 1:36 P.M., 15 June 1969, New York , a listing of unimportant things, was mounted on a gallery wall.

The cognitive significance of any of the preceding may be in question even if it does provoke discussion and argument. Indeed, a considerable number of attendees, artists, and critics found and continue to find most of twentieth century conceptual art trivial or boring.***

Was conceptual art an assault on artistic traditions and on trendy market demands? Very much so. To the concept artist, imagination and cognition mattered more than what was heard or seen. After all, a presentation was to provoke thinking; was to question the validity of more traditional views; was to reject complexity, beauty, skill, and insight – traits not so evident in works featuring ready-mades, bizarre occasions, random sounds, verbal descriptions, or thought experiments. Presentations, often, did not satisfy the viewer or listener who preferred to have some indication as to how sounds could be manipulated, shaped, and notated. How a work was to be interpreted was an individual decision.

Outstanding works do engage the imagination, the intellect, and emotions, and “if a work is truly great its meaning cannot be exhausted by even the strongest of interpretations”

* * *

* * *
(Salem-Wiseman). As stated, time and time again, there are many layers of meaning to a masterpiece, and often it is the idea that drives the compositional process. An opinion based on a single viewing/listening, as is often the case in concept art, will hardly suffice when attending any work of substance.

Ideas/concepts have been around forever. In music making, they have generated: theme, motif, variation, ostinato, imitation, development as evident in many compositions featuring canon, fugue, the blues, jazz, symphonies, concerti, motets, song cycles, masses, operas, 12 tone works, and so forth. The manipulation of ideas in great works does require a great deal of thought and imagination, does involve the affections. But, a mind not attuned to what is happening in the music may be incapable of any meaningful response.

Being responsive to chord progressions and their manipulations will enhance connections to extraordinary works; knowing something about a tone row, and its variations, will aid in comprehending serial composition. Indeed, knowledge, aural awareness and sensitivity to varied procedures encourage an openness to the potential of music, and to experiences that cannot be expressed in words.

**Notes**

*Interesting to note that rapping, scratching, and sampling have enabled individuals, with no formal musical training, to make music with available means at hand. Rapping, scratching, and sampling, however, have become commodifiable.*

**Cage seems to have been influenced by Marcel Duchamp with his ready-mades; that is, any object is a work of art if so designated by the artist as was his upside down urinal on a stand called *Fountain* that caused such a furor in 1917; however, *Fountain*, along with Duchamp’s other ready-mades, were reissued in 1950 in a New York gallery, and, apparently, rekindled an interest in idea/concept based art. Indeed conceptual art was to generate spectators’ thinking. As participators, their thoughts, criticisms, and interpretations were deemed paramount. Nor did they, like many concept composers, painters, and media makers, have arts’ experiences.

**Appropriately, “post modern sensibility says there is no such thing as good and bad…” that wisdom, skill, talent, and judgment don’t matter.” so, when in need of a life-saving operation, anyone will do. No need for skills or learning (Swafford, 2011, p. 4).**

**References**


Lebrecht, Norman. (2010). We’re pitching the silence of John Cage against the noise of Simon Cowell. www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/turner-prize/1-4


**ANNOUNCING THE 2013 PAT SHAND NATIONAL ESSAY COMPETITION**

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L’Association canadienne des musiciens éducateurs

Long time educator, researcher, and advocate for Canadian Music in Education, Dr. Patricia Shand, has graciously agreed to sponsor a NEW national essay competition. This competition is aimed at practitioners in the field, college and university professors, and researchers.

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**Topic:** Essays may be on any aspect of Canadian music in education.

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**Eligibility:** This essay competition is open to teachers at all levels—elementary, secondary, higher education—and researchers. Submissions must not have been previously published. Entrants may submit only one essay.

**Jury:** Essays will be assessed by nationally recognized scholars in the field of music education who will be selected after the entries have been received to avoid conflicts. Jurors will be announced with the results of the competition.

**Submissions:** Submissions must be postmarked on or before December 31, 2013. Late submissions will not be accepted. In order to facilitate a blind review process, contestants are required to include two components in one electronic submission (rich text format).

A separate cover sheet including the name of the author, institutional affiliation, permanent home address, and email address. A file containing a 100-150 word abstract and the Essay.

No identifying content within the body of the text is allowed with respect to either author of institution. Winning essays may be published in *The Canadian Music Educator*. First prize winner will receive a cash award.

**Send submissions to:**

Dr. Mary Kennedy

Faculty of Education, University of Victoria

PO Box 3010 STN CSC, Victoria, BC V8W 3N4

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Composing Educational Music for Strings in the Canadian Context: Composer Perspectives
Bernard W. Andrews

I am pleased to present the winning essay in the inaugural year of the Pat Shand Canadian Music Essay Contest. Dr. Bernie Andrews, Professor at the University of Ottawa, was the 2012 winner. Dr. Shand has agreed to continue the contest for 2013 and teachers at all levels—elementary to higher education—are invited to submit their essays on any topic related to Canadian music in education to me by December 31st, 2013. Please see ad in this issue. — Mary Kennedy, column editor

Abstract: This essay explores issues surrounding the composition of educational music with a particular focus on composers’ perspectives on creating new string compositions for young musicians within the New Sounds of Learning Project. The findings raise awareness of the complexities of balancing artistic vision with students’ technical limitations in the creation of new music for school and private studio instruction, and they will be of interest to those members of the music profession interested in the dissemination of new music within educational settings.

Exposition
Composing educational music
Music for young musicians enrolled in school music programs and private studio instruction represents a significant amount of musical repertoire world-wide. Because of the mass-production of educational music by large multi-national publishing companies, much of this music is viewed by many members of the music profession as unsuitable for local contexts, of questionable educational value, and of lower quality than music composed for performances by professional musicians. There is, however, very limited knowledge about the conceptualization, composing and refining of music for educational use. This essay explores the context and literature on composing for young musicians, and it highlights a study which investigated how the compositional training and musical experiences of professional composers can inform the conceptualization of educational music within the Canadian context. The findings will be useful to those composers, educators and publishers interested in the composition, teaching, and learning of new music within school classrooms and private studios.

Historically, music for young musicians has been created for pedagogical purposes rather than for financial compensation, such as Johann Sebastian’s Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier, Claude Debussy’s Children’s Corner, and Bela Bartok’s Mikrokosmos. In North America, several accomplished music teachers have composed pieces to meet the specific learning needs of their students and challenge them to improve their skills. Their works often became the starting point for undertaking a successful career in composition. For example, Morley Calvert composed his earliest pieces for his instrumental students in Montreal, Quebec and then later at North Barrie Collegiate in Barrie, Ontario; Jack Stamp initially composed for the marching band, jazz ensembles and concert bands at John T. Hoggard High School in Wilmington, North Carolina; Ann Southam composed for her piano students at the Royal Conservatory in Toronto; and Jared Spears composed for a wide variety of vocal, instrumental and chamber ensembles at West Maine High School in Plaines, Illinois. Composers have also become politically involved in education to improve school music programs. For example, Paul Hindemith (1983) of the United States organized and developed a music education system for Turkey. Carl Orff (1963) of Germany and Zoltan Kodaly (1967) of Hungary created systematic methods for teaching classroom instrumental and vocal music for their respective countries. Alternate instructional models were developed by John Paynter (1982) in England and Murray Schafer (1977) in Canada. These models focused on musical creativity and environmental sounds, respectively. Paynter’s work has had a positive impact on the national curriculum of the UK. In contrast, Schafer’s work did not receive wide-spread acceptance by the music teaching profession in Canada (Carruthers, 2001). However, his work impacted on music education in Australia (Southcott & Burke, 2012) and influenced Spanish-speaking music educators through its translation into Spanish by Ricordi Americana (Rusinek, 2007).

Commissioning Context
Commissions for the composition of new music for professional ensembles are primarily funded by the Canada Council for the Arts and provincial arts councils. Unfortunately, funds are limited and those for educational music even more so (Carruthers, 2000; Van Eyk, 2011). In contrast, local school districts in the United States regularly commission new music for special events for a wide variety of ensembles, such as marching bands, concert bands, orchestras, choirs, jazz ensembles, and chamber ensembles (Camphouse, 2002, 2004, 2007). The USA has a history of supporting music for young musicians commencing with the Contemporary Music Project (CMP) under the direction of the composer Norman Dello Joio in the late 1950’s (outlined in Dello Joio, 1984). The Ford Foundation undertook an examination of the status of the arts in the nation’s schools in 1957, and Dello Joio recommended that the organization allocate funds to commission young composers to write new music for the increasingly proficient performing ensembles in American schools. The first grant for an educational commission occurred
The composition of high calibre works for education requires the active engagement of composers with students in classrooms, studios, and rehearsal halls.

two years later in 1959. The CMP was subsequently administered in 1963 by the Music Educators National Conference (MENC). The American Composers Forum, a professional organization offering many programs and services to the field, is known for composer residencies in schools and communities, and it also commissions new music for young musicians. In 1999 the organization initiated BandQuest, a commissioning program to create new music for middle schools, and it also published the compositions. Hal Leonard Corporation, its distributor, released these new pieces to the education community in 2002. This program commissioned such well-known composers as Michael Colgrass (Canada) and Gunther Schuller (USA), both Pulitzer prize-winners, to compose educational music. In 2010, the American Composers Forum initiated ChoralQuest to promote the composition of vocal music and published its first two choral compositions in 2011. Subsequently, these pieces were also distributed by the Hal Leonard Corporation (refer to www.composersforum.org).

In Canada, most of the educational commissions are small-scale projects as a result of efforts by the Canadian Music Centre (CMC). The organization’s educational programs, such as Composer in the Classroom (CMC, 1992) initiated by composers Louis Applebaum and John Weinzweig, Composers in Electronic Residence (Barwin, 1998), and the John Adaskin Project (Shand, 1985), promoted the analysis, performance and creation of new educational works in collaboration with teachers and students. In 2000, the Canada Council, in collaboration with provincial arts councils, funded the New Music for Young Musicians Project which commissioned ninety-eight composers across the country to compose educational music (Andrews, 2003). Subsequently, the Norman Burgess Memorial Fund of the Ontario Region of the CMC undertook the commissioning of a new string work on a yearly basis (CMC, 2004). This program was expanded with the commissioning of several new works by the CMC (Palmer, 2009; Van Eyk, 2010) in a research partnership with the New Sounds of Learning Project at the University of Ottawa (Andrews, 2012a).

Related Literature
Composers in colleges, universities and conservatories learn highly developed compositional techniques which result in complex music playable only by professional musicians and listened to by specialized audiences. Consequently, most contemporary music is unplayable by young musicians enrolled in school music programs and private studio instruction, and it does not impact on their musical education (Ross, 1998, Hattrik; 2002). As Michael Colgrass noted: “I could write complex, highly demanding pieces, but I simply didn’t know how to write interestingly for amateur musicians, let along 12-year-olds” (2004, p. 19). Furthermore, educational music is perceived as of lesser value than music composed for professional musicians. Colgrass explained: “Most composers aren’t interested in writing for kids. We think it doesn’t look good on our CV” (2009, p. 15).

There are significant challenges for contemporary Canadian composers writing new music for young musicians. Within a given music class or ensemble, music students demonstrate a broad range of technical abilities and different ways of interpreting sounds (Green, 2006). Textbooks, score study and listening activities are traditional approaches to music instruction in post-secondary institutions and are based on the Western-European classical tradition (White & Lake, 2002; Rogers, 2004). However, these approaches do not instruct beginning composers on how to create music that is appropriate and challenging for young musicians. The composition of high calibre works for education requires the active engagement of composers with students in classrooms, studios, and rehearsal halls. In this way, the creative process is grounded in practice and the resulting compositions are more likely to be appropriate for young people’s musical development (Campouse, 2002, 2004, 2007; Andrews, 2006a; Colgrass, 2009).

Aside from Bela Bartok, Paul Hindemith, Carl Orff, and Zoltan Kodaly, major twentieth-century composers have not generally composed musical works specifically for young musicians, and very limited research has been undertaken on its parameters. Researchers have undertaken analyses of the music of Bartok (Gillies, 1990) and Hindemith (Kim, 1995) to obtain insights into their success composing educational music. Their studies provide useful information on the nature of the musical works such as the sequencing of rhythmic patterns. However, we do not learn the details of how these composers created music for young musicians. In a research study with twenty-four Canadian composers involved in the Canadian Music Centre’s New Music for Young Musicians Project, this writer found that composers employ specific compositional techniques to reinforce different types of music learning, and prior experiences teaching young people are important for creating educational music appropriate for them (Andrews, 2004a). The adoption of a flexible form allows a composer to adapt more easily to students’ needs, and blending atonal and tonal idioms challenges students and retains their attention (Andrews, 2007). Rehearsing new works on-site in classrooms and studios enables composers to effectively assess students’ technical proficiency and ensure an appropriate interpretation of a new work (Andrews, 2006a). Compositional techniques, such as short pulsating rhythms to refine motor responses and equality of parts to maintain interest, can impact positively on students’ musical skill development (Andrews, 2009).

Development
Research Process
New Sounds of Learning: Composing for Young Musicians (a.k.a. the New Sounds of Learning Project) is a multi-year, multi-site research/creation project that examined the parame-
ters of educational music with professional composers who collaborated with teachers in schools and private studios. The project was undertaken in partnership with the Ontario Region of the Canadian Music Centre (CMC) and the Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB), and it commissioned and examined sixteen instrumental compositions for young composers. Eight string works were commissioned and administered by the CMC with funds provided by the Arts Education Foundation (findings reported herein); and eight wind works were commissioned and administered by the University of Ottawa with funds provided by the Ottawa Catholic School Board (findings reported elsewhere). The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) provided the monies for the research component of the project in each partner’s commissioning program.

Integrated Inquiry was employed throughout New Sounds of Learning Project: it is an approach to research that solicits multiple perspectives through data collected from different research protocols, or alternately, the same protocol from different time periods (Andrews, 2008). The four dimensions of creativity, that is place, process, person, and product, served as the theoretical framework for the investigation (Woodman & Schoenfeldt, 1989; Amabile & Tighe, 1993), and a different protocol implemented for each dimension – questionnaire, reflective journal, interview, and compositional analysis, respectively. More specifically for music composition, these dimensions have been described as pre-requisites for composing (training and experience of the composer, context of the composition), compositional process (techniques and strategies implemented by the composers, sequencing of musical material), person (characteristics, pre-dispositions and motivation of the composer), and the musical piece (features, style, and impact of a composition on musical development) (Andrews, 2004b, c).

Although compositional training and experience are important aspects of a composer’s career, how they influence the composition of a new educational work has not been determined. For this reason, the initial phase of the New Sounds of Learning Project was exploratory and focused on the pre-requisites of music composition. The key question of this phase of the study was:

How do compositional training and experience inform the conceptualization of new music for young musicians?

To respond to the key question, an in-depth questionnaire was developed which focused on the composers’ backgrounds and views on educational music, the nature of their compositional training and professional experiences, their interest and key factors in creating new music for young musicians, the reasons for pursuing an educational commission rather than a professional one, and how their training and experience assisted them to compose an educational work (refer to Table 1). The questions were selected from those emerging from prior studies on composing educational music by this writer (Andrews, 2007, 2009), and they were refined in collaboration with composers, music educators, and music industry representatives who were members of the Ontario Regional Council of the CMC.

**Analysis**

The composers selected by the CMC jury had substantive composing experience with numerous composition prizes and professional performances of their works. Together they expressed concern about the lack of contemporary Canadian music in school music programs. They noted that there is much more commercially available for concert band and jazz ensemble music than music for string orchestras and chamber ensembles. They also commented on the predominant use of arrangements of television, film, and popular music and transcriptions of European standards in school music programs, the lack of modern compositional techniques in these selections, and most importantly the lack of sequential skill development in educational music overall. As one composer noted:

As a teacher, I want access to contemporary works that have a strong pedagogical aspect. It is hard to find both because there is not much out there, and whatever is out there is not always easy to access.

Five of the eight composers participating in this study had achieved a doctoral degree in composition prior to the project at highly reputable music institutions, and two more completed their doctoral theses during throughout the period of the study. None of them, however, had any training in composing educational music or the encouragement in their composition programs to write for young musicians. Indeed, such compositions were viewed as music of lesser quality and “naive by modern composition professors.” In their musical careers, seven of the eight composers were commissioned to compose for young musicians and/or amateurs. Most of the pieces resulted as a consequence of their association with studio instructors, classroom teachers, or community ensembles, and/or teaching their own music students. Overall, it was quite a challenge for composers to write for musicians with less technical ability. As one of them commented: “I sat through four months of rehearsals to get my latest piece ‘performance ready’ and felt guilty with each struggle.” The composers indicated that the primary reason for their interest in composing educational music was the lack of Canadian repertoire for strings in their role as teachers and conductors. Composing new music for young musicians enabled them to address the need for quality music for young people and overcome the perception by many composers and educators that ed-
ucational music is of inferior quality. They wanted to create contemporary music that is localized and uniquely Canadian. Finally, they were stimulated by the challenge to broaden their compositional skills; that is, to express musical ideas using contemporary compositional techniques “in a simple and clear manner suitable for performance by young musicians.”

The two groups of composers identified three key factors in composing educational music for strings; that is, student ability, pedagogy, and musical quality. The first of these could be addressed by accurately assessing the students’ technical proficiency; the second by composing challenging and interesting music which develops musical skills; and the third by using compositional techniques, both traditional and contemporary, that demonstrate artistic integrity. In and of itself, this is not an easy task. As one composer commented:

It is hard to write effective music that is easy to play. It is a whole different way of thinking about composition, and it takes time and careful consideration to do a good job.

The composers identified two major reasons for pursuing an educational commission: the possibility of raising students’ awareness of contemporary music; and the opportunity to compose new music for instruments with limited contemporary repertoire such as the viola and acoustic guitar. They mentioned that their personal expertise in strings (four of the eight composers are string performers) and a guaranteed premiere at the annual Norman Burgess Memorial Fund concert in Toronto were additional factors. The composers agreed that the most significant aspect of composing new works for young musicians when compared to writing for professionals is the assessment of the students’ technical proficiency. In their view, it is essential to challenge the students and develop their musical skills without frustrating them. This requires that a composer shift his or her mindset so “that the focus turns to the experience of the performer rather than the expression of the composer.” Compositional training and experience assisted them to undertake this transition. They were able to balance their artistic vision with the limited abilities of the students through their knowledge of and skill with a variety of compositional techniques, both traditional and contemporary. One of the composers explained this process succinctly: “Extensive experience in working with professional musicians gives me an insight into the working mind of a performer that I will be able to apply to this work.”

Table 1: New Sounds of Learning Questionnaire

**This questionnaire focuses on your perspectives on composing educational music and your musical background. Please feel free to make reference to your own works, and if available, you may include copies of scores with the submission of the questionnaire.**

1. Describe your compositional career to date. List your compositions, recordings, and/or publications, and also awards and commissions. Please include a short Bio.

2. What is your view of music currently available for young musicians (i.e., educational music)? Please elaborate.

3. How extensive was your compositional training? Describe fully.

4. Did your training include composing for young musicians and/or amateurs? Check one or more: young musicians [ ] amateurs [ ] not addressed [ ] If so, please elaborate.

5. Have you composed previously for young musicians and/or amateurs? Check one or more: young musicians [ ] amateurs [ ] not at all [ ] If so, please provide details. If you responded ‘not at all,’” please proceed to question 8.

6. What life experiences stimulated your interest in composing music for young musicians and/or amateurs?

7. What were key factors that you had to consider when composing music for them? Describe fully.

8. What prompted you to pursue/accept this particular commission to compose a new work for strings specifically for young musicians?

9. In your view, how is composing string ensemble music for young musicians different than writing for professional musicians? Explain.

10. How will your compositional training and experience assist you to write a new string work for young musicians?
Recapitulation

Discussion

The media is a powerful influence in disseminating and shaping the popular music that young people hear throughout the airwaves. This music is characterized by brevity, strong dance rhythms, traditional tonality, electronic processing, and a lack of musical development because of the three-minute time-frame (Levitin, 2007). Canadian compositions that involve the development of musical ideas and that employ contemporary compositional techniques, such as serialism and atonality, seldom receive a hearing in the modern media (Lake, 2009). Often, these works are not well-received by the public because of their complexity (Terauds, 2011; Reid & Clark, 2001). Moreover, they may receive premiers in concert halls but they are seldom published and receive additional performances (Maloney, 2001; Marsella, 2008). This situation is referred to as the “première-dernière” syndrome (Reid & Clark, 2001). Consequently, young people seldom hear new works by contemporary composers on a regular basis, including those compositions by participants in this study. This is unfortunate because Canadian composers have become more eclectic, and many of them employ electro-acoustic and environmental techniques, jazz and popular idioms, multi-media installations, and computer-generated approaches in their composing for professionals and young musicians alike (Carruthers, 2001; Van Eyck, 2011).

The view of the composer participants that educational music from the major publishers is generally of a lesser quality than music composed for professional musicians is a common theme among music educators (Andrews & Carruthers, 2004; Andrews, 2005) and composers (Camphouse, 2002, 2004, 2007; Colgrass, 2009). Due to the haste with which many new educational compositions are produced with the same roster of staff composers each year, the pieces tend to sound alike (Darling, 2007; Gersham, 2007). Predictable melodies, conventional harmonies and thick orchestrations result in poor quality music (Fullmer, 2003; Colgrass, 2004; Myers, 2005). Mass-produced educational music socializes students into the large ensemble traditions of Western Europe (i.e., concert band, orchestra, and choir) which do not accurately reflect popular culture and the diversity of music world-wide (Roberts, 2004). Moreover, because of the centralized system of creation using staff composers adopted by the multi-national publishing houses, this music is seldom congruent with the curricular requirements of provincial education ministries (Canada), state departments of education (USA), or the national curriculum (UK), and such standard-setting organizations for private studio instruction as the Royal Conservatory, New England Conservatory, or the London School of Music (Ross, 1998; Myers, 2005).

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Graduates of college, conservatory and university music composition programs are trained in complexity; that is, in mastering the composition of large-scale architeconic forms, such as the symphony, concerto and opera, and the use of modern compositional techniques, such as atonality and serialism (Hattrik, 2002). They are socialized into the identity of “composer” in the Western-European tradition (Roberts, 2000). Often their music is labelled elitist and does not resonate with young people, most of whom seldom hear their compositions. Writers on educational music have been critical about overly-complex writing (Colgrass, 2009; Myers, 2005), the continual use of traditional European musical forms (Drummond, 2010), and the exclusion of alternate musical formats (Countryman & Rose, 2009). Although seven of the eight composer participants had completed doctorates in composition at the conclusion of this study, they were very much aware of the danger of complexity from previous experiences with young people and/or amateurs. These individuals ensured that their compositions were playable by young students by working closely with the teachers assigned to them and remaining open to pedagogical input. Unfortunately, most professional composers do not have the expertise to compose using musical language and compositional techniques that are suitable for young performers (Colgrass, 2004; Hattrik, 2002; Myers, 2005). In a survey of the twenty-four university music programs in Ontario, Canada’s largest province, this writer and a colleague found that the study and performance of Canadian music was very limited, and none of the programs addressed the issue of composing educational music (Andrews & Carruthers, 2004).

Creating new music for amateurs and students represents an opportunity for composers to develop their compositional craft. In addition to this practice, Canadian composers have also involved young people interactively in music composition through the CMC’s education programs, such as Composers in Electronic Residence (Barwin, 1998), New Music for Young Musicians (Andrews, 2003), and commissions from the Norman Burgess Memorial Fund (CMC, 2004). The New Music Project also included a research component which was the forerunner of the current study (Andrews, 2004a, 2006a, 2007). Such interactive educational programs in which students become familiar with current compositional practices are important for developing an understanding of contemporary music in the Western tradition (Myers, 2005; Colgrass, 2009). They also challenge composers to broaden their skills and address the need for quality new music in schools and private studios that is appropriate for the Canadian context.

The identification of student ability, pedagogy, and musical quality by the study participants as the key factors in composing string music for young musicians is an important insight. Educational music is a relatively new topic of research with few studies extent in the literature: most articles focus on its weaknesses
Overall, it was quite a challenge for composers to write for musicians with less technical ability. As one of them commented: “I sat through four months of rehearsals to get my latest piece ‘performance ready’ and felt guilty with each struggle.”

rather than providing solutions. Much contemporary music composed for young musicians is unsuitable because of the lack of understanding of the range of music students’ abilities (Colgrass, 2004; Hattrik, 2002). Often, the pedagogical dimension is not addressed, and the quality is compromised by market demands (Darling, 2007; Gersham, 2007). Moreover, Canadian contemporary music is not readily accessible to young people in the media (Beckwith, 1997; Marsella, 2008) or public venues (Van Eyk, 2011), and it is seldom studied and performed in publically-funded schools (Bartel, Dolloff & Shand, 1999), universities (Andrews & Carruthers, 2004), and by community ensembles (Varahidis, 2012). This situation has exacerbated the dissemination of contemporary Canadian music by music educators to their students. New compositions created by composers directly involved in classrooms and studios are important vehicles for introducing students to contemporary practices and to creating new repertoire that develops their musical skills (Campouse, 2002, 2004, 2007; Andrews, 2006a; Colgrass, 2004).

When composing for professionals, the length of a composition is a major concern because of the costs involved in renting facilities, paying the salaries of musicians and technicians, undertaking rehearsals, and premiering the new work. In contrast, accurate assessment of students’ technical proficiency is the primary concern when writing educational music as many successful composers of educational music have noted (Campouse 2002, 2004, 2007; Colgrass, 2009). 

Composition study provided the composers in this study with the knowledge and skills to use a repertoire of compositional techniques to balance the artistic and the technical aspects of composing. Despite the challenges of creating pieces within technical limitations, these composers worked closely with teachers on-site in classrooms and successfully created pieces appropriate for young musicians that are of educative value.

Implications
Composers must recognize that, although their training and experience may provide them with the requisite compositional techniques and skills, composing music for young musicians requires a different way of thinking about creating than composing for professional musicians. Accurately assessing students’ technical proficiency through direct contact with teachers and their students, addressing the pedagogical aspects of learning, and integrating proven traditional and contemporary techniques to ensure musical quality are required. To promote the creation and study of new Canadian music for young musicians, post-secondary music programs must include the teaching of composition for educational purposes within their programs, provincial ministries of education must develop policies that promote Canadian music, and professional music teacher organizations must advocate for the teaching of new Canadian works and music creation within the school curriculum. Most importantly, school boards, arts organizations, corporations, and arts councils must become active in commissioning new music for young musicians. Only through broad systemic changes will new works for educational purposes be created and quality contemporary music prevail in the curriculum rather than transcriptions of Western-European classical works or arrangements of television, film and popular music.

The findings of this exploratory study outlined in this essay are based on a small sample of eight composers participating in the New Sounds of Learning Project. The findings are strengthened by the involvement of participants who were specifically commissioned through a juried process to create new string compositions for young musicians and by their involvement in two different groups (4+4) widely-dispersed across Ontario, and in two different intact time periods (2007-2008 and 2009-2010). Additional research is required to validate the efficacy of educational music within the school curriculum, especially on the relationship of music composition to skill development, and the role of teachers and students in providing input into the compositional process.

Coda
To summarize, the composers participating in the New Sounds of Learning Project viewed educational music as often lacking a pedagogical purpose. Composing for young musicians was not addressed in their training; however, composing for amateurs and/or students made them aware of the challenges of composing for musicians with less technical ability. Their primary interest in composing educational music was to address the lack of contemporary Canadian music for students. The commissions enabled them to create new music that was suitable for the Canadian context and broaden their compositional skills. For them, the key factors in composing for strings are the students’ abilities, the pedagogical dimension, and musical quality. They pursued an educational commission to raise students’ awareness of contemporary music and create new music for instruments with limited repertoire. Their compositional training and experience enabled them to work within technical limitations and create music appropriate to the students’ abilities that developed their musical skills and challenged them artistically.

The findings of this study raise awareness of important issues surrounding the creation of educational music for students enrolled in school music programs and private studio instruction. They provide guidance to composers conceptualizing new music for young musicians and to professors interested in developing music composition courses for educational purposes. They are also helpful to elementary and secondary teachers who evaluate and purchase music for their students and to publishers who assign levels of difficulty to new compositions and market them to the education community.


creative ideas for the music classroom

Slow Down!
Douglas Friesen

I am currently teaching an Additional Qualifications summer course. Last week we were very lucky to have composer Gayle Young work with us for part of the day. Gayle reminded me how having guests in our classrooms can provide an often beneficial change of pace. In my experience, music teachers are not often known to slow down: eating lunch while rehearsing, running to a gig after the school day, gathering sheet music, reeds, permission forms, or just trying to get through as much material/curriculum as possible in each class. It is difficult for us to have the time to reflect on whether we are always making the best choices, let alone if we are fully present during some or any of the teaching day. Gayle’s calm and quiet guidance through experiences and discussions around listening and composing were a revelation to me. Slow it down, Doug. What is the most important part of this course? What are we actually hoping to experience or accomplish? Are we really listening to each other and taking moments to process new learning?

While Gayle was speaking I kept thinking that I should be covering other material or helping direct the discussion towards something more “academic” or theoretical. Sometimes our rushing through skill building or curriculum can lead us to forget about the actual experience of learning.

For this entry I would like to list three experiences that have helped my class and I slow down and take time to be present and process our learning (two of these Gayle led us through last week).

A Soundwalk
A soundwalk is an exploration of the soundscape of a given area using a score as a guide. The score consists of a map, drawing the listener’s attention to unusual sound and ambiances heard along the way. (Schafer, 1977).

As described by Gayle, Murray’s version of a soundwalk involves moving in pairs where one person is blindfolded and the other acts as a guide to rid the listener of any fear of hitting objects or tripping. This allows for a relaxed state of listening, which can bring about diverse and surprising results.

A New Sound Meditation (1989)
Listen
During Any Breath
Make a sound
Breathe
Listen outwardly for a sound
Breathe
Make exactly the sound that someone else has made
Breathe
Listen inwardly
Breathe
Make a new sound that no one else has made
Breathe
Continue this cycle until there are no more new sounds
( Oliveros, 2005)

My students and I have used this piece to focus, connect or help us feel comfortable in a space. One of my students even led a version of this piece during his valedictorian speech at commencement. This is a variation of another piece by Oliveros entitled Teach Yourself To Fly (which is the version Gayle led us through).

Composing for the Soundscape
Although not a short exercise I want to briefly describe a unit from my composition class that can fit here. I have asked students to compose quartets (using varying instrumentation) for nearby locations and soundscapes. Students research by sitting, listening, journaling, and reflecting on the sounds of that location. They then reflect and compose a piece for performance on site. The audience is the rest of the class, and whoever else might be passing by and want to listen. These compositions and performances have often been a lesson for me in slowing down and fully experiencing my surroundings.

As a conclusion, here is an entry from my journal after one particular culminating day:

During a few performances most of the audience looked towards the park and let the sounds effect how they viewed trees and their leaves, other humans at play, and the still city skyline. I felt my breathing slow, my perception deepen, and I acknowledged to myself and the students how lucky I felt to be able to experience this type of education. I hope everyone can feel as lucky.

As always, please send your own ideas to doug.friesen@gmail.com and, with your permission, I will put them up here: www.creative-ed.ca. You can also go there for information on ESME (expanding success in music education): a group of Ontario music educators from various public boards and universities that are involved and interested in promoting and facilitating Music In Education that is in addition to traditional ensemble/performance classes.

References

1 Gayle came to our class through the Canadian Music Centre. I would encourage you to connect with your regional branch and look at some of the amazing opportunities they are providing for music classrooms. www.musicecentre.ca
Freeing the Voice Within through Guided Imagery and Music
Amy Clements-Cortés

Peer Review Corner features articles that have been submitted for review by a panel of music educators. The jury completes a “blind” review of manuscripts, offers suggestions for revision, and the revised article is either accepted or rejected based upon consultation with the journal editor and others on the editorial board. If you wish to submit an article for review, please send it to Dr. Lee Willingham (lwillingham@wlu.ca).

Abstract: This paper presents the case study of a 38-year-old female, “Joy,” and her Guided Imagery and Music (GIM) process. Joy was born in Hong Kong and immigrated to Canada in 2008 to pursue further studies along with her husband. Joy is a music educator who was drawn to GIM to explore issues with her parents, husband, anxiety and stress in order to lead her to improved well-being and healing. This paper presents the relevant background information on GIM, and several important topics in Joy’s therapeutic process, including: gender issues being raised in Hong Kong, effects of parental gambling on child development, identity development, and performance anxiety. Joy desired focus and longed for her inner voice to be freed. Joy also wanted to feel strong enough to assert her wishes as an Asian female in order to present herself authentically. GIM sessions provided Joy with the space to identify and explore her concerns, which led her to improved well-being and healing. GIM is a music psychotherapy intervention that is particularly well suited to work with music educators and musicians, due to their experience and connections to music.

The following is a case study of Joy, a 38-year-old female musician and music educator and her Guided Imagery and Music (GIM) process covering five sessions that spanned the period of three months. Background information is provided on Guided Imagery, how and why case study methodology is commonly used for psychotherapeutic and GIM sessions and studies, and relevance of the GIM method in work with music educators. A literature review focusing on Joy’s issues that were addressed in her sessions is presented to provide context for the therapeutic process and case study.

Background Information
Guided Imagery and Music (GIM)
Guided Imagery and Music (GIM) is a therapeutic process using music and a trained facilitator to create an environment to facilitate personal insight that provides answers and guidance for significant life issues. The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (BMGIM) is the “use of specially sequenced western classical music designed to stimulate and sustain a dynamic unfolding of imagery experiences” (Mardis & Clark, 2008, ¶ 2). GIM supporters believe: imagery and music are therapeutic agents; transpersonal and psychodynamic aspects are part of therapeutic process; and expanded awareness results in major therapeutic benefits (Burns & Woolrich, 2004).

GIM is based upon humanistic and transpersonal theories that emphasize the attentiveness of the individual and the influence of music on ego development. The classical music programs in the BMGIM provide structure and direction for the experience (Bonne & Pahnke, 1972). In this process, music is the impetus that releases unconscious material such as feelings, images, and memories for use in therapy and music is prescribed to enable the imagery process. The creator of the method, Helen Bonny, produced numerous music programs including: Caring, Peak Experiences, Imagery, Grieving, Relationships, Mostly Bach, and several others (Bonne, 1978).

BMGIM Session Structure
The BMGIM session format commonly unfolds through four different phases (Bonne, 1978). Phase One: Opening conversation, in which client and therapist find a therapeutic focus for the session. Phase Two: A relaxation induction, where the therapist guides the client through a short relaxation experience. Phase Three: The music-imagery experience (involves the therapist playing a specifically designed program of classical music and the client imaging to the music). During the music listening, the therapist dialogues with the client, supporting and encouraging the client’s spontaneous imaging to the music. This process continues until the music program ends, usually around 30 to 40 minutes. Phase Four: Return and post-talk (the therapist helps the client bring closure to the imagery experience, and return to an alert state of consciousness).

Guided Imagery for Music Educators
Music educators face unique challenges in the workplace that may lead to work stress or burnout. Hamann, Daugherty, and Mills (1987) studied music educator burnout and found factors that contributed to burnout included: work load and time to complete work, desire to change professional careers, contentment with job, unclear goals from administration, lack of personal goals in career plans, lack of recognition by students, and lack of cooperation among teachers in the district outside the area of music. McLain (2005) found that a lack of environmental support, diminished program offerings, and reform in curriculum can lead to diminished professional esteem for music educators, which may cause emotional challenges and burnout.

Music therapy has been proven to be an effective treatment method for burnout in a variety of work settings, with the majority of studies focusing on long-term care or healthcare workers (Bittman, Bruhn, Stevens, Westengard, & Umbach, 2003, Hilliard, 2006, Brandes et al., 2009). Studies focusing on music therapy to treat teacher burnout, and music educator burnout specifically have not been common areas of investigation up to this point. Cheek, Bradley, Parr, and Lan (2003) studied music therapy techniques in conjunction with cognitive behavioural interventions and found that teachers reported lower levels of burnout symptoms when the interventions were combined than
the control group of teachers who received cognitive behavioural interventions with no music therapy aspect, providing a premise and evidence towards using music therapy or music supported counselling/psychotherapy techniques to treat burnout and stress among teachers. The specific case study below is not about burnout and was selected to demonstrate the power of the GIM method to address other issues which affect music educators but also a broader group of individuals.

Case Study
Formally defined by Yin 1981 (cited in Yin 1989) “a case study is an empirical inquiry that: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context;” (p. 23).

Case study methodology allows investigators to retain holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2008) while being suited to research questions that require detailed understanding of social or organizational processes, varying in the level of analysis from policies to individual psychotherapy (Hartley, 2004). Further, Yin (2011) explains characteristics of case studies as being associated with process evaluations, analyzing outcomes of interventions, and involving field-based data. Gillham (2000) describes that a case study involves a naturalistic observer who subjectively interprets the observations of the client, and that a case study researcher can use a variety of methods to gain information, including documents, records, interviews, detached observations, participant observation, and physical artifacts.

Case Studies in Music Therapy
Smeijsters and Aasgaard (2005) assert that case histories, case vignettes, or case examples (which at times are referred to as case studies) have been customary ways of portraying music therapy practice. They state, “The case is almost always a single client or client group, and the study is an account of music therapy sessions in which the therapeutic process, including problems, goals, interventions, and outcomes, is described” (Smeijsters & Aasgaard, p. 441).

A music therapy case study generally begins by presenting the client history, followed by a description of the music therapy assessment including the treatment goals. Details of the music therapy sessions and the course of treatment which includes subjective information received from the client, and a description of the interventions that were used at the various stages, goes in the next section. This is often followed by a section which presents the therapist’s objective assessment, analysis, and discussion of the music therapy treatment. Case studies are typically informed by the therapist’s written assessment, session and chart notes, transcriptions where possible and video or audio recordings of sessions.

Literature Review
Several issues that were central to Joy’s therapeutic process included gender issues being raised in Hong Kong, effects of parental gambling on child development, identity development and performance anxiety. Current literature on these issues and the effect they have on a client’s psychological and emotional well-being will be discussed in relation to how they are important in understanding Joy’s therapeutic GIM process.

Hong Kong and Gender Identity Issues
According to Lee (1998) in Hong Kong there has been substantial change in women’s status within the family in the last few decades. Further, she acknowledges that since the 1970s there has been a decrease in the birth rate and persons are marrying at later ages, which are signs pointing to a shift from traditional patriarchal families. However, patriarchal institutions continue to exist (Ng, 1994). Lee’s (1998) comparative ethnographic study of women who work in factories in Hong Kong and Shenzhen affirms the importance placed on family roles in shaping women’s identities, with prominence given to familial and gender interests rooted in social networks as opposed to autonomous, sexual selves. The results of a large territory-wide survey in Hong Kong on gender equality revealed substantial differences still exist in households with respect to the division of labour, employment and participation in community and politics (Equal Opportunities Commission, 1997).

In Joy’s process, this information is important to consider and understand as it greatly influenced the values and beliefs of her parents and husband, and affected the voice that Joy had trapped within herself regarding her true desires and pursuits.

Gambling
Research into the effects of gambling have focused on the gambler’s immediate family and have shown the extensive damage caused ranging from severe financial problems, emotional and relationship problems, to physical and psychological abuse (Gaudia, 1987; Heineman, 1994; Jacobs et al., 1989; Ladouceur et al., 1994; Lesieur & Rosenthal, 1991; Orford, 1994; Volberg, 1994). In particular, gambling problems can have strong negative effects if the gambler is a female partner (Franklin & Thomas, 1989; Lesieur & Rosenthal, 1991; Lesieur, 1989; Mark & Lesieur, 1992). According to Abbott, Cramer, and Sherrets (1995), “A compulsive gambler can devastate the family system adversely affecting the marriage, parent-child relationships and the psychological development of children” (Abbott, Cramer, & Sherrets, 1995, p.260–261). Lesieur (1989) maintains that due to chaotic and unpredictable behaviour of the affected parent, children may experience severe global psychosocial disruption.

With respect to high-school aged children whose parents had serious gambling problems, Jacobs (1989) and Jacobs et al. (1989) found similar ranges of problems. Jacobs (1989) further identified that these adolescents suffered from poor stress management skills, impoverished interpersonal relations, weakened coping abilities and that they were at greater risk of developing behaviours that negatively affect their health. Research suggests the effects do not end in adolescence and that serious problems may be experienced in later adolescence and adult life, and that the affected child will be more likely to gamble (Browne & Brown, 1993; Fisher, 1993; Griffiths, 1995; Ladouceur et al., 1994; Lesieur & Klein, 1987; Moody, 1989).

Joy’s mother had a gambling problem that greatly disrupted the family structure. The situation caused strain and forced Joy to work to help pay the family’s way out of debt. She was teaching music full time in an elementary school and also waitressing at night and giving private music lessons to help pay the bills. Similar to what Jacobs (1989) describes, Joy suffered from poor stress management skills, behaviours that contributed negatively towards healthy living, and had trouble in her relationships expressing her true feelings, wishes and desires.

In this process, music is the impetus that releases unconscious material such as feelings, images, and memories for use in therapy.
Identity Development
Joy demonstrated multiple issues with identity development. Growing up in Hong Kong, Joy grappled with gender identity issues, and struggled to find a place where she felt she belonged compared to where society was telling her she belonged. Joy was also forced to work for her family, and she appeared to struggle with her social identity, as she was playing a role in her family that may not have felt normal to her or those around her. Côté (2006) states that many youth are required to postpone aspects of their identity formation, and that society may be presenting a diminishing normative structure to govern the transition to adulthood. Joy faced the issue of attempting to form her identity in two cultures, and this may not have been helped by Western society’s prolongation of identity formation. Archer (1989) affirmed that when females were compared to males in adolescence, females were more likely to be delayed with regard to affirmed that when females were compared to males in adolescence, females were more likely to be delayed with regard to family roles, and had a greater complexity of identity tasks as they confront intrapersonal and interpersonal goals simultaneously. This is true in the case of Joy, as she struggled to achieve her inner educational and professional goals while balancing the identity demands of her family and husband.

Performance Anxiety
Anxiety is comprised of both a physiological and a psychological aspect, and the psychological aspect affects the way we interpret sensations (Clarke, Davidson, Windsor, & Pitts, 2000). Salmon (1990) defines performance anxiety as “the experience of persisting, distressful apprehension and/or actual impairment of performance skills in a public context, to a degree unwarranted given the individual’s musical aptitude, training, and level of preparation” (Salmon, 1990, p. 3). Performance anxiety appears to affect more females than males (Deutsch, 1999).

Joy’s performance anxiety seemed to stem from desiring support and approval from her teacher, as she craved support so greatly from her parents and impacted her work as a music educator.

Case Study of Joy
Joy is a 38-year-old female born in Hong Kong who immigrated to Canada with her husband of ten years, Henry, so that both partners could complete undergraduate studies. Joy and Henry did not have any children and only one family member living in Canada, Joy’s aunt. Joy’s family had never been supportive of her passion for study and education and she felt no support from them. Her family feels strongly that she should finish her studies, begin working again and start a family; and Joy senses stress to return to Hong Kong. Joy worked as a music teacher before she immigrated to Canada. She knows she can return to this job but wanted to be teaching students at a more advanced level and therefore required further education. She and Henry are not interested in being parents but feel pressure from their families to have children. Joy is driven to complete Master’s and PhD degrees and feels pressure to do as much as she can because she believes that time is running out.

Current Situation
• Husband. Joy’s relationship with Henry was strained. The couple was struggling with money as both were full time students and Joy was currently living apart from Henry for 4 months while she continued studies in another city in Canada as part of her undergraduate degree. Joy wanted to pursue graduate studies, and if she does in the future, the couple will live apart as her husband will finish his schooling in the city where they currently live, and Joy will need to move to pursue graduate study. Her husband does not encourage her studies and offers little comment, support or an ear to listen to her concerns.
• Mental space. Joy holds considerable guilt and anxiety inside. She pressures herself to do many things such as study and earn excellent grades, but she also feels pressure from others to pursue work and children rather than education. Joy craves approval and support, which subsequently drives her into a cycle where she feels she must work harder to finish her studies faster. She feels anxious and tense, and says there are not enough hours in the day for her to do all the jobs.
• Music. Joy is a musician and music teacher/educator who plays several instruments and enjoys a variety of styles of music, including classical. She has both a positive and negative relationship with the piano. Joy enjoys playing but feels considerable pressure to play at a consistently advanced level, and if she does not attain that level she is exceedingly disappointed and hard on herself. She suffers from performance anxiety.

Assessment and Goals
Joy came to therapy with an idea of what she wanted to explore and work on and she shared those issues during the assessment.

Joy’s goals.
• To find the next pathway in her life. (Should she continue school or restart her career?)
• To explore the relationship with her parents
• To explore the relationship with her husband
• To reduce performance anxiety
• To reduce her overall stress level

Further identified goals in discussion with Joy.
• To begin to accept and acknowledge her high skill level as a musician and clinician
• To work through her family issues in order to pursue the career, education and family path that she desires
• To explore her issues of guilt and anxiety which potentially stems from her parents
• To recognize her accomplishments, celebrate her strengths and not diminish them

Sessions and Therapeutic Process
Session 1: “Darkness”
Joy had her first GIM session one year prior to our sessions with another GIM facilitator. On the day of our session Joy said she felt tense and wanted to release this tension. She was pleased with her progress in her studies but felt discouraged by her parents’ lack of support. She was feeling pressure and was emotionally hurt. Joy desired the will to do as she pleased and to not feel stifled by other’s wishes or demands.

As the “Imagery” music program started, Joy’s journey began with her sitting on a bench in a park with a fountain. A ball of light was used as part of the induction for the session, and the light brought fresh air and freedom. Joy began with this issue that were central to Joy’s therapeutic process included gender issues being raised in Hong Kong, effects of parental gambling on child development, identity development and performance anxiety.
image but it quickly shifted to a black dot that she was chasing far away. Everything was black. There were periods of light shining and the colour pink appeared alongside trees that were blocking out the blackness. For the majority of the music portion of the GIM session, Joy’s imagery shifted from a black dot to glimpses of light shining. In the last music track of the program the light returned and was making patterns, however the patterns were not intelligible.

**Key images:** black dot, shining light, pink colour, black clouds.

**Post-talk.** Joy was surprised by the black dot and said she wanted it to go away but acknowledged the black dot was similar to her life. Specifically, the dot was her block and that is why it was so prominent in the session. The light represented her inner drive. She alluded to this but did not say so explicitly. Joy was motivated to continue to explore her dot and what it meant in future sessions.

**Session 2: “Weaving a Web”**

Joy came to the session asking to breathe as she felt something was blocking her ability to do so. She desired increased energy and inner support for her concerns regarding relationships and education. Joy reported a recent conversation with her parents where her father was crying and told her how much he missed her. She imparted that she had a strained relationship with her mother due to her mother’s gambling problem that had placed their family in emotional and financial jeopardy. Joy talked more about her marriage today explaining that her husband hated school and did not understand her drive to continue studies after achieving her undergraduate degree. He felt she should be “happy in her place” in society. She felt neither her husband nor her parents understood her drive to study. This contributed to her feelings of an inability to breathe.

For this session I selected the “Relationships” music program, and as the music began Joy was sustained by a pink star that brought energy and support as she waited for someone to join her. Joy began in a concert hall with no audience. She imagined herself standing in front of the stage but could not bring herself to stand on it. Joy went to a room with synthesizers and lessons taking place. A fellow student was playing a flute but Joy could not hear the music. She noticed gum that was left behind and she wanted to taste the gum even though it was dirty. Joy’s imagery then shifted back where she started and she was now sitting in the audience on a comfortable seat. The seat was an important image and she liked its maroon colour and comfort. As the third piece of music in the program began a spider web surfaced. It did not scare her but she could not find the spider. The web prohibited her from focusing.

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Joy came to the session having reflected on her past two sessions and decided that she wanted to continue to pursue her education regardless of the lack of support from others. She stated that her husband had become slightly more supportive and she felt she could proceed with her desire to pursue a Master’s degree. Today, she wanted to gain insight into her future desires to study and to try to resolve some of the issues with her parents and their lack of support. She wanted to grow stronger in order to stand up for herself and what she truly wants.

As the “Caring” music program started, Joy began her journey in a park resting comfortably against a tall tree. The tree was significant because she stated that it had deep roots and was nurtured by the water as it had grown very tall and strong. She imagined a long river that held many life sources such as plants and fish. Water was important as it sustained life and Joy decided to go and drink from the river. She was unsure at first but the music supported her to drink. She became refreshed with this water and described feeling light and nourished by the water she drank. Joy picked up a fish that began speaking to her. This fish was significant as it told her that she was a strong woman in control of her destiny. Joy seemed to drink in the words from the fish and repeated them several times in her imagery report. For example, “Joy continue to study”; “Joy pursue your dreams”; “Joy do not worry about what others think.” After hearing these words, Joy decided to rest on a rock and stayed there for a while. She said the rock was giving her stability and she wanted to rest there a while longer, looking around and enjoying the beauty in the park.

**Session 3: “Nurturing Water”**

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**As the third piece of music in the program began a spider web surfaced. It did not scare her but she could not find the spider. The web prohibited her from focusing.**
firmed she was okay with whatever fallout might transpire as a result of that discussion. She recognized the importance of the fish and understood the fish was really her inner self.

Session 4: “Motherhood”
From the time we last met, Joy had a chance to speak to her parents and her husband about her plan to study. She said her husband was supportive on her moving and their subsequent separation while she studied. Her parents were less supportive. Her father cried and her mother said she should start a family and return home with her husband when he finished his degree. Her mother did not feel it was Joy’s place to study further and that she should be a “wife” and attend to her family and her husband’s needs and not put her needs or desires at the forefront. Joy said she stood up for herself and explained that children were not part of her and her husband’s plans. She felt sad about the lack of support from her parents but proud of herself for standing up to them and making a decision. She was excited about future study and encouraged by her husband’s support. Joy said she did miss her parents and felt some disconnection with them and those relationships as she had not seen them in over two years. She indicated her desire to go to Hong Kong to see them but more so she expressed her feelings of loss and sadness over their lack of support for her career and study. She wanted to explore the loss of not feeling supported as a child or adult, or not being loved for being the strong independent woman she had become.

As the “Grieving” music program began, Joy started her journey by walking along a path that was barren. She stayed on this barren path for a while stating that it was dark and she had trouble finding a way out. Then she imaged a mother holding a small child and as she got closer to the image she realized it was her and her mother. Her mother was rocking and singing to her and telling her that she wanted to go to school but was forced to marry and raise a family. This made her mother upset and she was drawn to gamble and resent her children. Her mother felt that Joy should also follow this path but when Joy began crying her mother embraced her and wiped her tears away and the journey ended with Joy as an adult.

Key images: Barren path, mother, child, rocking, singing.

Post-talk. Joy reported that although this was a hard journey, it was important, as she realized why her mother was resistant to her desire to study. She felt some relief over the explanation about her mother’s gambling problem and expressed empathy and love for the sacrifices her mother took in order to raise her family. She said she could finally let go of her feelings of resentment for having to work to help support her family and get her family out of financial difficulty due to her mother’s gambling problem.

Session 5: “The Voice Within”
Joy came to the session speaking of her recent piano master class experience and her anxiety. She said that she practiced for many hours to prepare but when she had to play she froze. Joy was frustrated by her inability to perform in front of others and specifically her piano teacher. She was highly upset with her piano teacher’s comments towards her and that seemed to be contributing to her anxiety to perform. Joy felt discouraged by her piano skills and said at times she hated the piano. She felt trapped by the piano and hated the anxiety and stress about performing when she often received little support from her teacher. Joy said that she did feel supported by the other students and reported that they too felt similar anxiety performing for this teacher. Joy was feeling insecure and inferior to her teacher’s expectations of her and her playing. At one time she loved playing the piano and desired to have that feeling return as opposed to always feeling anxious when preparing to perform. We spoke briefly about performance anxiety and I described some techniques that might be helpful and Joy was receptive to implementing.

As the “Emotional Expression 1” music program started, Joy began her journey in a rain storm where the wind was pushing her towards a dark hole. She hesitated to go towards the hole but was drawn to it and the wind pushed her to walk towards it. She said the rain was refreshing and cool, and it was helping her feel covered. When she got to the hole she heard a voice saying “Do not be afraid.” She entered the hole to find a piano and a large stage where she decided to sit and play the piano. She loved the feeling of being on the stage and said the piano was helping her play all the right notes. She played for a long time and suddenly an audience began to gather. She continued to play and she received a standing ovation for her playing. The imagery changed suddenly and it began to rain and she felt cool comfort from the water.

Key images: Wind, rain, voice, piano, stage, audience, standing ovation.

Post-talk. We discussed the mandala Joy drew which consisted of her playing the piano soaked in the rain. I held it up to her and she said she was refreshed and that she could begin to love the piano again. She felt surprised by the standing ovation and loved the feeling that came along with receiving it. She felt that she was overwhelmed by her piano teacher for many years and that she could now try and break out of that cycle. She currently understood that she needed to play for pleasure more often and not always focus on the demands of her teacher.

Summary of the Sessions and Next Steps
Goal Summary
The following was accomplished in sessions:

• Asserting her desire to continue music studies at the Masters level
• Exploring the relationship with her parents, primarily her mother and grieving the loss of her lack of support and resentment over working to support her family due to her mother’s gambling problem.
  • Exploring the relationship with her husband and realizing his support to continue studies
  • Beginning to assess her performance anxiety and her relationship with the piano.
  • Sessions facilitated her beginning to recognize her skill and value as a musician and music educator

Continued Work and Next Steps
Referring to goals initially established, these goals still remain for Joy to accomplish:

1) To recognize her accomplishments, celebrate her strengths and not diminish them
2) To work towards developing a healthier relationship with the piano
3) To reduce her overall stress level
Therapeutic Analysis and Interpretations

Most Important Key Images
Black dot, hole and clouds; water, supportive voice, piano and stage.

The amount of blackness, the dot, and hole represent the block and void in Joy’s life, the lack of support she feels and the loss of the relationship with her mother. It is a black hole; a void, a loss. Water in several forms was nourishing to her and provided her with refreshment, repose and the ability to move forward and make her own decisions. It strengthened her. The supportive voice was there to help Joy move forward. I believe it was her inner voice and also the voice she wished to hear from her mother and husband.

The piano and stage were present as I believe Joy was beginning to work towards her anxiety with respect to performance, and performing up to the standards of her teacher.

Conclusion
This paper provided the relevant background information on GIM, case study methodology, relevancy of GIM for music educators and several important topics to Joy’s therapeutic process, including: gender issues being raised in Hong Kong, effects of parental gambling on child development, identity development, and performance anxiety. Through Guided Imagery and Music (GIM), Joy was able to address many issues that were causing emotional and psychological pain. Joy’s issues of gender and identity, interpersonal relationships, and performance anxiety were addressed and worked through during GIM sessions. Important images in Joy’s GIM sessions represented support, nourishment, focus, and letting go, all which were important in Joy’s journey of healing. Joy desired focus and longed for her inner voice to be free and for her to feel strong enough to assert her wishes as an Asian female in order to present her- self authentically. GIM sessions provided Joy with the space to identify and explore her concerns, which led to improved well-being and healing. After the GIM process was complete, Joy was able to be confident in her role in the world and have focused, valuable, and positive feelings towards her future.

GIM is a music psychotherapy technique that is highly applicable to musicians, music teachers, music educators, music therapists and all persons with strong musical connections. It is a method that deeply and quickly activates the unconscious while music provides support for the exploration of issues in a contained environment.

References


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Success through Singing:
The Downtown Vocal Music Academy of Toronto
Marlys Neufeldt

Abstract: This article describes the first year of the Toronto District School Board’s Vocal Music Academy, which provides singing-infused public education to approximately 55 grades four through six students.

The Downtown Vocal Music Academy of Toronto (VMA) has just finished its inaugural year, providing singing-infused public education to approximately 55 grades four through six students. This fall it opens to grade seven, and the next fall it will graduate its first grade eight class. It is one of the nine new elementary “academies” launched by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) in September 2012, each one with a distinct focus such as vocal music, health/sports and wellness, all-girls leadership and all-boys leadership. Our school is open to any student with a love of singing, and no audition is required, thus leveling the playing field for those students who may not have had extracurricular musical involvement in their lives.

Indeed, some of our students came to the school without a strong singing voice, let alone an extracurricular singing background. Some have a love for popular music, and they’re able to sing “con belto” very well. Some students have had fine choral educators train their young voices in school and community choirs before coming to the VMA. We have a huge diversity of students from various backgrounds, some living close to our downtown location (by Kensington Market, near Spadina and Dundas) where we share a building with Ryerson Community School and others who come from further away. Quite a few students came with some significant academic and social learning challenges. The vocal music focus is envisioned to be the route to engagement, that through the social bonds, discipline and fun of music-making and by tapping into students’ musical intelligence through the whole-brain, physical activity of choral singing, they would be more successful in their academic career.

Have they been more successful?
Well, they had quite an amazing year.

For the 2012-13 school year, every day began with a community-building morning ritual wherein the school gathered in a circle, took attendance, talked about the schedule for the day, celebrated birthdays, sang rounds together, and reminded all of our wish to be “well, happy and peaceful”, as individuals, a school, and broader community, rippling out to our place in the universe. After the lunch break, we gathered our focus again and began the afternoon with all-school choir, four days out of five. We three teachers taught music together, sometimes dividing the school into groups of students for sectionals or individual work. We shared in the lesson-planning, assessment, conducting and accompanying of choir music. Working together as a team, we strove to shape the vocal ability of individuals, and to transform this group of diverse individuals into a harmonious, unified choir, producing beautiful music. We explored music from different cultures, styles and genres, and music-recording software technology was often employed to enhance learning. This format provided the structured yet flexible backbone for the creative learning and music-making that took place.

In other subjects, music was also integrated, from learning math measurement, patterning and fractions through rhythms, composing songs about non-renewable resources or planets, and studying language arts through opera, to remembering French vocabulary through rap and crafting writing assignments about famous jazz singers. We ended the year with a multi-disciplinary integrated unit on the Toronto Music Garden, as inspired by Bach’s Cello Suites and envisioned by Yo-Yo Ma and landscape designer Julie Moir Messervy. Our students planned, designed and promoted their own music gardens based on Bach’s Bist du bei mir, a song we had sung earlier in the year. The unit encompassed math, problem solving, writing, media literacy, French, music and visual arts. At the end of the unit the students presented detailed plans in English and French, and commercials for their music gardens. To top off the unit, we all visited the Toronto Music Garden for a celebratory field trip. This cross-curricular integration of music with other subjects was key to connecting with students’ musical interests and creativity.

We performed frequently throughout the year, despite some cancellations due to the Ontario teachers’ pause on extra activities. We kicked off the fall by performing ten songs, in at least five different languages, two with drumming, dance and choreography, for our Inaugural Concert and Gala Opening Celebration in November. Throughout the year, special guests led us in workshops and enriched the students’ musical learning, often culminating in a shared performance. The students performed at the Kiwanis Music Festival of Greater Toronto and received the constructive adjudication of other professional educators. There were several opportunities for sharing the stage with Ryerson Community School’s music program, such as Friday Foyer Concerts, open to any student or small ensemble who was ready to perform a pre-auditioned musical or dance item for the school and parent community in the open foyer of the school. The VMA parents
also ran a café at the time of these early-morning concerts, with fresh coffee and home baking to raise money for School Council projects to benefit the school. Ryerson’s band and choir program also joined forces with the VMA choir in singing at the Art Gallery of Ontario, just a few blocks from our school, on Music Monday, at the same time as thousands of other students across Canada sang the Music Monday song. Our students had the honour of singing at a Canadian Citizenship Ceremony, and reflecting on what it means to choose to become a Canadian. A performance highlight of the year was definitely being invited to sing at the TDSB Spring Festival Concert at Massey Hall, an unbroken tradition of 127 years. There we shared the stage with about 1100 other elementary students, both vocalists and instrumentalists, who performed school by school as well as in emotionally moving, choreographed massed choir pieces.

It was a great first year for the Downtown Vocal Music Academy of Toronto. Back in August, 2012, we teachers and administrators came together for a visioning retreat. There we built on the ideas which Mark Bell, our Vice-Principal, had proposed to the TDSB years earlier, when he called for a public choir-based school, open to girls and boys, without auditions. Together we created a mission statement (below) which was the theoretical foundation for our new school, with some points being put into practice more than others, certainly.

Were we successful in implementing the mission statement? Was the vision of a singing-based public school responding to the needs of Toronto students and families? Were we successful in guiding our students to achieve greater academic success and engagement in their learning?

I believe the answer is a resounding “yes”. More quantitative study with a measure of success would certainly be illuminating as we head into the new year and beyond. But even without empirical study, we know that we had students wanting to come to school, where previously some had difficulties in maintaining their attendance. There were students with identified learning needs who excelled in a structured, music-based environment. We had students who struggled with self-esteem become willing to sing a solo in front of the whole school, with a smile on their face. Really, what more do you need as a measure of success? The bar was set high in terms of academic and musical standards, and the students worked hard and achieved their goals, for the most part. Admittedly, some students were looking for something different in this new school experience, and there were a few who left to go back to their former schools. There were also several students who came to the VMA mid-year, looking for a different structure for their learning. These were some of the challenges of beginning a new school, articulating our vision and identity, and fleshing that out on a daily basis, developing as we went along. Musically, the students came a long way in terms of their individual and corporate singing throughout the year. They developed a beautiful choral sound, communicating through their music and connecting deeply to their learning, thereby connecting deeply with all the others in the learning community and in their audiences.

It was definitely a successful first year for the Downtown Vocal Music Academy of Toronto. Many more to come!

Mission Statement

The Downtown Vocal Music Academy of Toronto (VMA), together with our families and our community strives to provide a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment that empowers and challenges our diverse school population to reach its full academic, social and musical potential. Every VMA student is valued, respected, and has opportunities to succeed and become a responsible, contributing member of our society.

Our Guiding Principles:

- The Story of the Universe
- Wonder & Awe
- Beauty
- Silence
- Connecting to Earth (outdoor education)
- Child-centred
- Community/Inclusion
- Circle (gathering in circle)
principal themes

Let There Be Music: Making a Case for Using Music in Schools to Enhance Relationships and Readiness for Learning

Irene G. Wilkinson

Abstract: It is widely believed that listening to certain types of music can reduce stress, depression and anxiety (factors often associated with poverty), improve mood and enhance empathy and compassion (elements necessary for creating an optimal learning environment). Despite evidence to suggest that music can accelerate learning, increase self-esteem and enhance empathy in children, background music or music for listening is not widely used in public schools in Canada. This paper looks at some of the research that has been conducted and makes a case for much more extensive use of music in schools to invigorate the learning experience and ameliorate relationships and readiness for learning.

Introduction

The benefits of exposure to certain types of music, whether used as background music or for active listening, are wide and varied. Music is used in sports to enhance athletic performance (Copeland & Frank, 1991; Edworthy & Waring, 2006; Simpson & Karageorghis, 2006) and improve body coordination (Bernatzky, Bernatzky, Hesse, Staffen & Ladurner, 2004). In the world of business, background music is used to enhance productivity (Fox & Embry, 1972) and to entice and motivate consumers (Guegan, Jacob, Lourel & Le Guellec, 2007).

We have all experienced the profound effects of music on mood, whether at a symphony concert or in the theatre. It can heighten our excitement, suspense and anticipation, even instill fear, and deepen our empathy and compassion, propelling us to the depths of sadness and feelings of hopelessness.

The potential benefits of the use of ‘the right kind of music’ in education shows a great deal of promise. Some researchers have shown certain types of music to have a positive effect on cognition (Mammarella, Fairfield & Cornoldi, 2007; Schellenberg & Hallam, 2005). Music has also been shown to enhance learning, reading and literacy skills (Register, 2001), especially in children with learning disabilities. Despite strong evidence from a number of researchers and educators, there are still those who challenge their claims.

Perhaps even more compelling, is the evidence for the successful use of music in the field of medicine and many of the benefits of music therapy in medicine have been proven beyond reasonable doubt. Music is used in medicine for its ability to aid in pain management (Risch, Scherg & Verres, 2001; Nilsson, Unosson & Rawal, 2005; Siedlecki & Good, 2006), its positive effect on the heart (Bernardi, Porta & Sleight, 2006; Teng, Wong & Zhang, 2007), healing and recovery (Sarkamo et al., 2008), boosting immune system response (Kuhn, 2002), reducing depression (Maratos, Gold, Wang & Crawford, 2007), treating stress (Khalfa, Bella, Roy, Peretz & Lupien, 2003; Labbe, Schmidt, Babin & Pharr, 2007) and improving sleep patterns (Lai & Good, 2005; Harmat, Takacs & Bodizs, 2008).

Music in medicine is believed to exert direct physiological effects, in both adults and children, through the autonomic nervous system (Kemper & Danhauer, 2005). It has also been shown to have markedly positive psychological effects.

Few researchers in this field would argue that, amongst other things, the ‘right kind of music’ has the potential to reduce stress, depression and anxiety (factors often associated with poverty), improve mood and enhance a sense of comfort and relaxation, all the elements necessary for creating an optimal learning environment. Music has also been shown to increase empathy and compassion (Hietolahti-Ansten &
There needs to be music playing in the halls of schools, periodically during the day but most especially in the early morning when students enter, immediately before afternoon classes begin and at the end of the day when they leave.

Kalliopuska, 1991; Cross, Lawrence & Rabinowitch, 2012) from which it might be extrapolated that it also has the potential to improve relationships. Why, then, is music not used more extensively in schools?

Let There Be Music

There exists a serious lack of understanding, in education, of the importance of music in neurological and emotional development and learning. As a result, funding for music and the arts in general continues to diminish. The arts are frequently the first to take a hit whenever there is mention of reducing funding in education.

Student populations are mutable. Schools need to constantly recreate themselves in order to accommodate the myriad needs of children, particularly those who come to school from traumatic environments (Wilkinson, 2013), in order to secure a peaceful and optimal learning environment for all.

There needs to be music playing in the halls of schools, periodically during the day but most especially in the early morning when students enter, immediately before afternoon classes begin and at the end of the day when they leave. There needs to be music in classrooms during silent reading and quiet study times!

Music in the workplace has been shown to raise performance and productivity by reducing stress (Seattle Muzac Corporation, 1991). Music encourages feelings of trust. It soothes the soul and increases alertness and efficiency (Lanza, 1994). Certain types of music have been shown not only to augment learning but also communication and social skills as well as physical and emotional health (Cutietta, Brotons & Miller-Walker, 1995). Music has also been shown to have a positive effect on motivation, attitudes (Hood, 1973) and behaviour (Fried & Berkowitz, 1979).

As Jessica Duchen reported in her article in “The Independent” newspaper (March 26, 2008), in the United Kingdom, an experiment was conducted in which, for 6 months, classical music was played on the speakers in the London subway. The study found that in some of the more dangerous neighbourhoods, robberies decreased by 33%, assaults decreased by 25%, and vandalism decreased by 37% – all believed to be a direct result of the classical music played.

A supermarket tried a similar experiment outside the store and found that the music led to less vandalism and fewer youths loitering (some, possibly, because they couldn’t stand the sound of classical music).

Music can be used to calm, instill excitement and motivation, to promote the ordered relief of stress and anxiety and to reinforce subject matter. Rhythms associated with music regulate heartbeat as well as the ‘pulse’ of our emotions – it can lift our moods from out of the depths of anger and depression. Music affects the rhythm and mode of our walk, the way we spend our money, the rate at which we digest our food and the length of time it takes us to heal (Kahn, 2009).

Rhythm has a positive effect on memory. Children learn rhymes more easily than prose because of their rhythmic pattern. This is often put to use for teaching the alphabet and rules for grammar (‘when two vowels go walking, the first one does the talking’) as well as for spelling and math. Rhythm was once used to teach multiplication tables until, more recently, a sagacious educator had a ‘better’ idea.

As a math tutor, I sometimes use simple rhymes to teach ‘hard-to-stick’ math facts to cognitively-impaired children who find retaining facts difficult. However they have no problem retaining the rhyme: ‘8 x 8 knocked at the door, looked up at the number 64’. It is unclear why they don’t say ‘44’ or ‘54’ at the end of this rhyme – but they simply do not!

Classical music has not only been shown to improve reading and other areas of the school curriculum, but also to have a positive effect on standardized test scores (Johnson & Memmott, 2006).

Music played to ‘at risk’ children during art class encouraged creative and unbridled expression (Staum & Brotons, 1992). Children who previously held their emotions inside (even in art class), those who had previously been reluctant to express their feelings verbally, began to release their feelings and emotions on paper when music was played as they worked. Feelings of anger, sadness, fear, frustration, despair and hurt, were expressed freely through their art. But the expression was non-aggressive. Music seemed to allow a gentle, ordered release of tension.

In 1991, I ran a dance class for students in a depressed area of the city in which I worked. There were 57 students in the class, 18 of whom were designated ‘at risk’ (disruptive, attention-seeking behaviour and conduct disorder, fetal alcohol syndrome and ADHD) children. Some were ‘chair-throwers’. Although I often needed to be a ‘dragon’ to keep order, attendance remained high. I sometimes wondered why so many students turned up every week, but they did!

I reserved time for meditation at the end of each session (since many of the students were somewhat wound up after an hour of dance and their teachers would have had a few words to say about noon hour dance classes if students had returned to classes in the afternoon in a state of over-arousal). This time for meditation and relaxation became a favourite part of the dance session for most students. Even though they loved to dance, they would often ask, “Is it time for meditation yet?”

After each dance session, students would lie quietly on the gym floor, eyes closed, apart from each other (to eliminate the distraction of physical contact), in a relaxed, sometimes exhausted, state, with Samuel Barber’s haunting Adagio playing...
in the background. I walked between them, using the time to calm them, instill a sense of teamwork and real worth in each student. As they listened to the music, I talked about equality, how valued each of them was as part of the dance team. I praised them for their acceptance of one another (because many of these children, due to their aberrant behaviours, did not get along with others either in the classroom context or on the playground). I spoke of the important connections we were making with each other and the nature of our interdependence (how, if someone was missing, the performance would not be as good as it was when we were all together). I told them how, together, as a team, because of their best work, we were going to put on spectacular performances for the entire school and community to watch. Students left the gym in a state of relaxation and calm, ready to face their afternoon classes.

Many classroom teachers reported back to me. They spoke of a positive change in attitudes and even academic achievement in many of the children.

Howard Gardner (1983), author of Frames of Mind, introduced the notion that, amongst the multiple intelligences, we all possess musical intelligence. Infants are both comforted and stimulated by the pitch, volume and melodic contours of their mothers’ voices. Music provides warmth and comfort and a positive and relaxing atmosphere allowing for the sensory integration necessary for long term memory. Indeed music is used to treat children with sensory integrative dysfunction, common in autism spectrum disorder (Berger, 2002). Certain types of music have been shown not only to calm but also to enhance creativity (Gardiner, 1996). Many researchers have found that music alters perceptual motor skill development and improves psychomotor and spatial skill development (Campbell, 2006).

Bulgarian educator and psychiatrist, Dr. George Lozanov, popularized the concept of accelerated learning in which classical music (from the late baroque period) played a very important role (Campbell, 1997). Music stimulates both the right and left sides of the brain as well as the limbic system, which aids in musical and emotional responses. Since the limbic system is responsible for long-term memory, Dr. Lozanov believed that using background music while learning new material might help his students to both absorb and retain knowledge. The results were phenomenal. Students learned material 3 to 5 times faster than with ‘normal’ teaching methods. Interestingly, little, if any, research has been done on the effect of spa music on learning and behavior, but as anyone who has visited a spa can attest, it would seem to have a very calming overall effect and perhaps most particularly on mood. However, the full effect of spa music remains to be explored. In education, ‘alert relaxation’ – a relaxed state that also encourages and enables listening and readiness to learn, is the key.

The frequency of exposure to music is also critical. Timing is important so that desensitization is avoided (playing music too often, or for too long a period, can result in students ‘switching off’ and no longer really being aware of it). Music is much more effective when used at specific intervals and for a specific length of time (Campbell, 1997).

Playing baroque music throughout the school early in the morning when students are just coming into school (after time on the school yard) for five to ten minutes, before announcements, to bring them to ‘learning readiness’, and, in individual classrooms, after a spirited recess or gym lesson, in preparation for and during silent reading, would be ideal. This might be repeated before afternoon classes begin. From 5 to 15 and no more than 20 minutes of music per hour during the school day are recommended. But for educators who might imagine this a little too intrusive at first, as little as 5 minutes of music at three specific times in the school day may well be enough to make a difference. It may be worthwhile taking time to experiment to see which music patterns work best for each individual school community.

There are many opportunities in school to excite and to challenge, to arouse, to stimulate and energise and these are all critical components for learning. However, there are fewer opportunities to help students to ‘come down’ to a state of ‘alert relaxation’, self-control and readiness for learning, a change of pace and contemplation. Music may well be the answer.

References
Irene G. Wilkinson, F.I.B.M.S. Although her formal qualifications are in biomedical science, Irene Wilkinson has worked, for much of her life in fine and performing arts as a musician and singer, in broadcasting, motivational speaking and in educational support for special needs students. While working in the Nova Scotia School System, Irene understands the nature of our interdependence and nurturing self-esteem were of particular interest and importance to Irene and in this context she taught dance and ran a variety of school clubs for special needs as well as for the general student population. In her “retirement”, Irene continues to write and present programs to teachers, parents and students within the Halifax Regional School Board.
principal themes

First Prize: 2012 CMEA/Acme Kenneth Bray Undergraduate Essay Competition

Examining the Construction of Music Teacher Identity in Generalist Classroom Teachers: An Ethnographic Case Study
Jacqueline Kraay

Abstract: The purpose of this research was to determine what factors influence identity construction in non-music specialists and the implications those factors might have on the classroom. Generalist teachers often have low self-efficacy perceptions in their ability to implement a meaningful music education; therefore, children do not receive the instruction they deserve. Furthermore, when generalist teachers rely heavily on primary socialization experiences, children receive a one-dimensional music education. As a result, students do not receive a well-rounded, diversified, music experience, nor develop values where music is considered an important subject to learn.

Introduction
It began during my elementary education seminar course. My professor informed the class that it was not mandatory for Ontario school boards to hire music specialists, and that generalist classroom teachers were often responsible for music education in elementary schools. I found this information alarming because even with a music background, I frequently question my abilities in becoming an effective music teacher. I was not sure how generalist teachers would feel teaching music without the same training. Later, for the same class, I observed a local music specialist and reported on how she conducted her class. The students’ skills, capabilities, and excitement for music surprised me. Reflecting on my own elementary music education, I realized that my experiences were not as rewarding. It was upon this discovery that the purpose of my research surfaced: I wanted to compare the classrooms of two teachers, one with specialist qualifications, and one without. My aim was to advocate for music specialists, and provide another research paper on the benefits of specialists in elementary music classrooms.

I was fortunate to locate a generalist educator who was willing to participate in my study. After completing the observation and interview, and upon reflection and analysis of the data, I found myself at a crossroad. Themes emerged that were unexpected, and my study focused on thoughts, beliefs, and social order (p. 679). In North America, music students are predominately exposed to the values of Western culture through the detailed study of Western art music. Without exposure to the music of various cultures, the musical experiences of undergraduate music students are being limited (Woodford, 2002, p. 679).

Finally, identity construction can develop through secondary socialization, occurring after childhood through specialized instruction, such as in a university setting (Woodford, 2002, p. 676). Students are encouraged to challenge their previous concepts on thoughts, beliefs, and social order (p. 679).

Woodford (2002) concludes that music education majors are not constructing their own professional identity, but replicating previous experiences received through primary socialization (p. 676). The studies of Rose (1998) and Beynon (1998) revealed that the values and beliefs of undergraduate music education majors, despite exposure to secondary socialization,
were being “shaped by their prior background as pupils in classrooms” (Benyon, 1998, p. 98). Benyon concludes that pre-service music education professors must engage their students in critical inquiry, a process that “challenges accepted truth and knowledge... which are commonly taken for granted in a policy or community, such as in curriculum or in the field of teacher education” (p. 85). Only through critical inquiry, can a music education major place the effects of primary socialization into perspective, and begin to develop new music education values and a professional identity (Benyon, 1998, p. 101).

Although the above literature focuses on identity construction in music education undergraduates, the implications are not only transferable to generalist classroom teachers, but present a bigger issue when generalist teachers try to develop their own music teacher identity. With little to no exposure to critical inquiry relating to music education, primary socialization would remain the only possible model for generalist classroom teachers to construct their music teacher identity. If one considers the number of elementary schools that fail to implement a music curriculum, some pre-service teachers are receiving no music socialization.

A close parallel can be drawn between identity construction and Albert Bandura’s self-efficacy theory (1994). Self-efficacy is the belief in one’s abilities to complete a task successfully (p. 2). These beliefs motivate and influence how people think, feel, and act in any given situation. Bandura explains four experiences that influence self-efficacy perceptions. Mastery experiences relate to the confidence we build through trial, error, and repeated practice. The more experience one has at any given task, the more capable one feels at completing the task. Vicarious experiences relate to observing others in similar situations. Social modeling can persuade a person’s perception of their capabilities. Social persuasion is the result of positive or negative encouragement from others. When others believe in one’s abilities, self-confidence is increased and one is willing to try harder to succeed. Likewise, when one is discouraged, one is likely to avoid certain tasks. Finally, physiological and emotional states affect self-perception. Positive mood enhances perceived self-efficacy, whereas, negative mood diminishes it (p. 3-4).

Eyre (2010) relates this theory to generalist music teachers in an elementary classroom:

If non-specialist music teachers feel they can teach music successfully, they will likely be able to do it to some degree, even if their skill level might be lacking.

The other extreme is also true. If non-specialist music teachers have some skill and knowledge to teach music, but are not confident teaching music, it is likely that they will fail (p. 32).

In 2005, Kane explored Bandura’s theories through a study designed to measure the self-efficacy perceptions of pre-service generalist teachers assigned to music instruction. Kane measured self-efficacy perceptions on three separate occasions during the participant’s two-year teaching methodology instruction. The results indicated that although perceptions on music-teaching efficacy increased over time, it started below the mid-point of the scale, and only increased minimally (p. 13). Kane revealed some emerging themes that influenced perceptions of self-efficacy, including lack of content knowledge, low self-confidence in musical abilities, and minimal practical experience of music teaching during teacher preparation courses (p. 14).

Issues arise when generalist teachers experience low perceptions of self-efficacy regarding their capabilities to instruct music. In research relating to academic self-efficacy, “students were found to engage in tasks in which they feel competent and they tended to avoid those tasks in which they did not have the same levels of competency beliefs” (Pajares, 2000 as cited in Kane, 2005, p. 4). If generalist teachers do not feel a high level of self-efficacy in relation to teaching music, they are more likely to avoid or minimize the task, and unfortunately, their students will not receive a beneficial music education.

Method/Participants

Because the purpose of this study was to discover how generalist classroom teachers construct music teacher identity, an ethnographic data collection process was undertaken. The names of the participants were used with permission.

Through a mutual acquaintance, I was put in contact with a generalist teacher who instructs grade six through eight instrumental music classes. With a degree in French and not music, she fits the previous definition of a non-music specialist. In addition, this participant is a recent graduate from the Faculty of Education, so she is new to teaching. She allowed me to gain insight into the common difficulties one might have in the transition from pre-service to professional teacher, and I am very grateful Kristina agreed to participate in this study.

My second participant, aside from having extensive credentials in the field of music and education, instructs music to generalist pre-service teachers at the Faculty of Education. Undergraduate students like Kristina enter her class and undergo the required six-week or full semester music course. I selected Maureen to participate because I felt she would have some firsthand experience in dealing with the common concerns and frustrations of generalist pre-service teachers as they prepare to teach music at an elementary level.

Data Collection Devices

Data collection was obtained through observation and interview. I observed Kristina’s grade-six instrumental music class, and then followed with an interview. Both interview and observation occurred in one day. The observation was unobtrusive; I watched and made notes while Kristina conducted her class as usual. We exchanged follow up emails for further questions and data clarification. Observation notes served primarily as a source for triangulation of data collected in the interview.
“The biggest obstacle I see is the confidence of the teacher. They would be fine, but they don’t believe they can do it.”

Data collection from Maureen was obtained through interview, as she recounted her experiences with generalist preservice teachers. Again, we exchanged emails for further questions and clarification. Both interviews lasted approximately fifty minutes in length, and I collected over fifty pages of data in the process. I prepared a series of questions before each interview, but they merely served as a starting point for more open-ended questioning.

Triangulation/Data Analysis
Triangulation of data was made possible by comparing researcher observations with the interviews of both participants, establishing similarities and differences, and relating my findings to previous research literature. I incorporated member checking into the research as each participant reviewed and confirmed interview transcriptions. For privacy reasons, I changed any names of students or schools that surfaced during the interview process.

I audiotaped and transcribed the interviews for future reference. During the interview/observation process, and upon analyzing the data, two dominant issues emerged which appear to inhibit identity construction. Firstly, low self-efficacy perceptions stems from insufficient knowledge and skill, lack of resources, and lack of practice. Secondly, music preparation courses offered at Faculties of Education do not provide adequate preparation for the generalist teacher to build strong self-efficacy beliefs. As a result, teachers are either not constructing an identity or relying on primary socialization.

Results/Discussion
Music Teacher?
According to Maureen’s experiences, most generalist teachers do not feel confident instructing music. “The biggest obstacle I see is the confidence of the teacher. They would be fine, but they don’t believe they can do it.” Maureen delves into this further by suggesting the lack of confidence results from having very little musical knowledge, which is consistent with related literature (Byo, 2000; Propst, 2003; Kane, 2005). Music teacher preparation courses offer very little time for non-musicians to develop musical understanding and skill, and teachers often leave training courses uncomfortable teaching it. In Maureen’s courses at the Faculty of Education, for example, consecutive students receive one hour of music instruction a week from September until June, with time off for placement. Concurrent students, on the other hand, receive only six weeks of instruction at an hour and a half a week, to which Maureen states, “It’s not even close to being sufficient.” Because very little time is dedicated to music instruction, Maureen spends most of that time teaching the foundations of music. “Many (students) don’t understand what beat is. It’s very hard to believe how simple I need to start.” Kristina confirms this stating, “We took six weeks of music…it wasn’t really specific. I found it was more getting us familiar with music, rather than teaching music. I wasn’t really taught how to teach it.”

Lack of resources also contributes to feelings of low self-efficacy in generalist music teachers. When Kristina received notification that she was going to be instructing music, she recalls, “I was nervous. I had nothing. I had no clue how to get anything.” However, she took it upon herself to find her own resources. “I began right away talking to music teachers and university music students about their thoughts on what I could do to prepare, and things that they suggested to focus on with my students. The internet is very helpful for a new teacher.”

A theme consistent with Kane (2005), Maureen explains that lack of practical experience contributes to low self-efficacy beliefs:
You can watch basketball on TV, but unless you actually do it, you do not know how to dribble a ball. And you can look at music, you can talk about it, you can read about it, and you can imagine how you would teach it to a group of small children, but unless you’ve actually (practiced).

Generalist teachers receive very little to no hands on practice at instructing music. Some of Maureen’s students return from teacher placement reporting that there were no opportunities for them to instruct music. Kristina confirmed this, stating that she did not have an opportunity to teach music during her teacher placement assignment. Maureen claims, “They need more hands-on opportunities to practice before they would start in a classroom” because generalist teachers who do not have the exposure to practice instructing music will, “never feel good about it, and they’ll never be confident, and they won’t be able to do the job.”

Maureen questions if generalist teachers are capable of constructing their music teacher identity. With minimal musical knowledge, insufficient resources, and no practice, “I don’t know if they even do. I don’t know if they would see themselves as music educators.” Part of this may be contributed to their perceptions on what constitutes a music education and the importance it has in a child’s development. “I’ve heard teachers say, ‘well we do music all the time; we sing all day long’…well that’s lovely, but I’d like to think there’s a little more to music than singing all day.”

The Primary Socialization Effect
It is important to place Kristina’s musical experience into context by revealing her background. She began music instruction in elementary school and joined a youth marching band in grade seven. Kristina studied music throughout high school, and continued in the marching band until her first year of university. In her second year, she began to instruct. It is fair to say that Kristina has significant experience in the world of concert band music. Even though she does not have a music degree, she spoke of experiences in flute, clarinet, saxophone, piano, and percussion. When asked to comment on non-music specialists instructing music, she claims, “I do think it can be done. I think it would be a little harder in a school with instrumental music
rather than a school that doesn’t have instruments.” She attributes her confidence in instrumental music instruction with the experiences she received while involved in the marching band.

In Kristina’s case, primary socialization and aspirational recruitment as defined by Woodford (2002) remains the only possible model she has been able to draw upon in order to develop a music teacher identity. The experiences she received in high school music class and the marching band heavily influenced her teaching strategies. Everything from the way the class was structured, to the music the students were studying reflected a traditional band setting. “I always start off with a scale, usually B flat concert...play a whole note, play a half note, play a quarter note. I play from the book after that, and try to play three or four songs. And then after, I try to throw in a song.” Kristina structures every class in the same manner with a focus on playing.

The music the class studied fell under the concert band repertoire to which Kristina identifies as similar to her musical experiences. “I find it fairly similar, in the stuff we are playing. I mean, we use a different book, but even still the stuff was fairly similar.” The popular music her students were playing was popular forty years ago, and Kristina mentioned that she has not addressed multicultural music in her classroom.

**Implications/Discussion**

Researchers have conducted extensive studies on the benefits of music instruction. Music encourages creativity, increases academic performance, builds social skills, increases self-esteem, and improves memory and brain development (MENC, 2007). There is no arguing that music instruction is important for the development of any child, and research has proven that music instruction from a qualified teacher enriches a child’s education. However, a 2010 report conducted by the Coalition for Music Instruction from a qualified teacher enriches a child’s education. However, a 2010 report conducted by the Coalition for Music Education revealed that 53% of Ontario elementary schools are offering music instruction from a generalist teacher (p. 9). It becomes a concern when these teachers feel low levels of self-efficacy regarding their abilities to instruct music because they will simply not integrate it into their classroom. Consequently, students learn through role modeling that music is not an important subject to learn, and will not experience the benefits of music instruction.

Faculty of Education teacher training programs must provide their pre-service students with adequate music preparation including resources, knowledge, and practical experience in order to raise self-efficacy perceptions of generalist teachers. Ideally, more study time would be allotted during teacher training; allowing generalist teachers the opportunity to grow as musicians, understand the benefits of music instruction, and offer practice teaching opportunities so confidence can increase. In addition, professors can move beyond the basics and address the critical issues surrounding music education, engaging their students in critical inquiry, and help them construct their own music teacher identity.

When primary socialization remains a teacher’s only model for identity construction, new teachers are unconsciously continuing hegemonic tradition. Maureen describes,

The negative for the student is that they are not being introduced to music that they are even remotely fa-

miliar with, nor are they being introduced to it in a modern of education that they are relating to on all other levels with all of their other subjects.

As a result, students develop through role modeling the old, elitist musical values, and the cycle continues.

As mentioned earlier, Kristina is very experienced in concert band settings because of her involvement in wind and marching bands. It was evident through interview and observation that her comfort level was restricted to that subject area and method of instruction because she did not receive exposure to other genres while she was a musician. As a result, the music and instructional methods of traditional band remained a primary focus in her classroom. With an emphasis on playing, Kristina’s students received very little guidance in musical theory or music history. “If I take a whole class to teach theory...they don’t play any instruments for two weeks.” However, without necessary theory instruction, students fail to develop musical literacy. This was evident in Kristina’s class as many students were writing note names into their score.

In addition, Kristina was primarily exposing her students to the music of traditional concert band repertoire. Prior to the start of class, I observed her students gather around the keyboard to listen to a girl in grade seven play a popular song by the band Coldplay. Kristina mentioned that her students often come into class demonstrating popular music on their instruments, “I have a lot of piano players. You hear Justin Bieber on the radio and a lot of them are going home and they’ll play (his music) on their piano.” Kristina’s students are trying to find a connection between the music studied in class, and the music they experience in their daily lives. However, without exposure to the growing body of literature on informal music learning (Green, 2002), it is understandable that Kristina is unaware how to draw the connections in her classroom.

A well-rounded music education exposes children to every aspect of music including theory, history, composing, improvising, and music from other countries. It should also allow students opportunities to relate the music they make in class to the music they experience in their daily lives. Without these experiences, students receive a very one dimensional music education.

Maureen is sensitive to the difficulties non-musicians face when trying to teach music, and understands the implications this has on elementary music classrooms. Because her primary concern is to advocate for music education, and to ensure all children receive music instruction, she wanted to make the idea of teaching music not so daunting. As a result, she developed and published a simplified music curriculum based on her experiences as a music teacher to assist those who feel less confident teaching music. The book *Music in the Young Mind* (2009) provides teachers with the necessary resources to provide a qual-

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**students learn through role modeling that music is not an important subject to learn**
ity music education for students. It offers curriculum guides, lesson plans, CD’s with children’s songs, and information on music teaching methodologies, advocacy for music education, children’s cognitive development, music and technology, world music, as well as additional resources.

She takes the same approach in her Faculty of Education course. When she was approached to instruct the course she recalls, “There was a (course) outline, and I thought, I'll teach this outline, but how can I teach it in a way that will be the most beneficial to the teachers.” In her two years of instructing, she has developed a curriculum that offers non-musicians the essential tools needed to instruct music at an elementary level. Aside from teaching the fundamentals of music, she provides hands on opportunities for her students to practice teaching. Students leave the course with a music portfolio that combines lesson plans, curriculum guides, and information on world music, music methodologies, and music advocacy. “Hopefully by the end of my class, they’re confident. That was my…goal.”

Maureen proposes summer training camps as a means to help generalist teachers become more comfortable and confident in music instruction. Workshops could offer opportunities to update skills, gain confidence, and develop experiences in practice teaching. It would also be an excellent opportunity to introduce generalist teachers to the issues around music education, engage in critical inquiry, and reflect on the implications of their current teaching practice.

Conclusion
This paper took a drastic turn from its original intent; however, without undergoing the process, I would not have become aware of the difficulties generalist teachers face and the implications on children’s musical exposure. Until the Faculty of Education programs allot more time for music teacher training, it is important for specialist teachers to support their generalist counterparts to develop stronger self-efficacy beliefs. When generalist teachers have low perceptions on their capabilities to implement a meaningful music education, music takes a backseat, and children do not receive the instruction they deserve. Alternatively, when generalist teachers rely heavily on primary socialization experiences, children receive a one-dimensional music education. In both cases, students are not receiving a well-rounded, diversified, music experience, and develop values where music is not considered an important subject to learn. A student’s musical development must be of primary concern, and working together to benefit children must be the priority.

References

Taking Our Rehearsal Temperature
Hilary Apfelstadt

Abstract: In this column, the author presents six principles of effective rehearsing with corresponding questions that, when answered honestly, can result in a reading of one’s “rehearsal temperature” or effectiveness. The main points include structure, sequence, clarity, appropriateness, musicianship development, and encouragement.

In early July, we sponsored our second annual choral symposium at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music. For four days, we made music in rehearsal, studying several varied compositions. We also worked on additional repertoire in conducting classes. On the last day, by way of summarizing our experience, we talked about “taking our rehearsal temperature.”

While observing choral educators, I look for several characteristics in their teaching and have developed a kind of rubric to help me focus. This rubric applies primarily to learning music with notation, but can relate generally to any type of choral learning experience.

To take your temperature, ask yourself the question in italics after each of the six statements.

Following is an outline of the key points, which I hope will be helpful as we all head back into another season of music making in our various choral communities:

1. Effective rehearsals are organized around a whole to part to whole structure. (Does your rehearsal follow this model?)
   The first “whole” comprises an overview of the music. This can be accomplished in a number of ways. For example, one might play a recording of the music to introduce the piece or, if the ensemble’s skill level allows, have the group sight-read the piece on a neutral syllable or with the words. One of my university teachers always had us sing new short pieces on “loo” while he played the parts on the piano in order that we would have a sense of the music’s shape and structure. While one could quibble about the fact that we were not really sight-reading, but following along with the piano, it was a strategy that always resulted in our having a sense of the whole piece. (Later I came to regard this approach as “spoon feeding” because it did not make us independent of the piano, or make us accountable for our own rhythm and pitch, but understood that it was one approach to getting a sense of an entire short piece.)

   The “part” comprises the detailed work that leads from accuracy (getting the rhythm and pitch correct, along with other musical details) to artistry (conveying the expressive intent of the music). Here we use teaching strategies developed according to our analysis of the music. For example, if the composition has repeated dotted rhythms, we might present those initially in the warm-ups and then help the singers find them in the music as they listen or as they scan it visually. If the music is based on a minor scale, we might sing that scale prior to the detailed rehearsal, to get the tonality established and give singers a chance to tune their ears and voices to that minor mode.

   The final “whole” is the putting back together all of the parts into a cohesive unit that is artistic and expressive. It might take one rehearsal or many rehearsals to accomplish this, but each rehearsal should offer some sense of whole. Perhaps it is only the A section that is really accurate by the end of the allotted time, but before leaving that piece to go to something else, we can have the singers perform it as best they can to experience a sense of musical closure for the moment.

   In planning for a rehearsal in this whole-part-whole paradigm, the teacher needs to do several things: analyze the music; discern its teachable elements; develop appropriate teaching strategies; implement them; and finally, evaluate them.

2. Effective rehearsals offer a logical sequence of strategies. (Do your teaching strategies flow in a logical order?)
   Where do we start now that the read-through or introduction is accomplished? Most fundamental are the elements of rhythm and pitch, in that order. If the rhythm is difficult, it may be best tackled by speaking the text without pitch. Perhaps we can isolate it so that singers see it on a Smart board where we can help them track it visually. Then we take it to the score and review it. Tricky passages can be prepared in the warm-ups at the aural level, and then related to the notation.

   Teaching pitch when notation is involved can take several paths. The quickest route may be to teach by rote, and this is a natural way of learning. We all do it; that is how we learned to talk, by hearing aural examples. If, however, we are trying to
build notation recognition skills, we need a system to do it. The system we choose is not as significant as the consistency with which we apply it. Whether it’s using solfège syllables or note names, whether moveable doh or fixed doh, the key is that we commit to and reinforce a system consistently.

Once those basic elements are taught, then we can move to more expressive aspects of the music, such as articulation, dynamics, and so on. Indeed, we can reinforce those things as we go along and not teach them in isolation.

3. Effective rehearsals incorporate clear strategies. *(Do you say WHAT to do and then help the singers figure out HOW to do it?)* It is vital to clarify what to do and how to do it. The less experienced the singers, the more essential it is to abide by this principle. Singers with minimal experience are not likely to read our minds and figure out how to fix things themselves. They can learn how to do that as we give them a vocabulary of strategies but initially, at least, they need our guidance.

In our discussion at the symposium, we talked about the role of the teacher as a diagnostician. It’s up to us to hear what needs to change in our quest for artistic excellence, but we can involve the singers in the process of making those changes. Sometimes it is appropriate to give two options and try both approaches, deciding collectively which is more effective. Other times, we may offer only one option.

William Weinert, Director of Choral Activities at the Eastman School of Music, our guest instructor for the week, suggested that sometimes it is appropriate to simply give people a second chance to correct things without specifying how. “Sing it again” may work well with a group of experienced musicians who know their own mistakes and can fix them without being told how. Less experienced singers, however, often need to know what and how to improve. Most of us work with amateur singers who benefit from specific guidance.

Imagine, for example, that an interval is wrong. Saying “That is wrong,” or “Fix that mistake,” won’t help most people correct the error. What if they do not realize the error, much less know how to rectify it? Saying something like, “Let’s check that interval; it looks like a fifth but we are singing a fourth. The top note is doh; let’s find the fah below, not soh.” Then singing down the scale stepwise, stopping on the appropriate pitch, gives the singers a strategy for finding the right note.

4. Effective rehearsals use appropriate strategies. *(Do your rehearsal techniques relate to the musician’s needs and readiness level? Do you match strategies to the age level of the group?)*

What is appropriate in one context is not necessarily so in another. The strategies we plan to use in teaching must fit the needs of the people involved in the learning process. Be sure that the strategies match the experience level of the group. While using solfège to conquer a difficult passage can work with singers adept at using the syllables, it will not be helpful to people who don’t know the system. First they must know it, and only then can they apply it effectively.

The language we use must also match the level of the group. If we use words, images or gestures that the group has experienced, we are more likely to be successful in getting the point across than if they are unfamiliar with our strategies.

Inexperienced singers will not respond well to highly technical terms, whereas more sophisticated singers will understand them.

Finally, strategies need to fit the music. It can be tempting to find “things that work” and try to apply them to multiple situations. A “one size fits all” approach, however, does not work. I have observed young conductors enamored with a teaching technique they have learned from a respected mentor, and wondered why it didn’t work the first time they used it, not realizing it wasn’t a good fit. For example, count singing (i.e. using numbers to delineate pulse in a “one-and-two-and” kind of pattern) may be very effective in a straightforward context, but if the music is more complicated with a variety of patterns, count singing might make things even more difficult. In that case, reading the rhythm on a neutral syllable might be more effective because it is simpler to do so.

5. Effective rehearsals develop musicianship skills. *(Do your strategies help the singers become better readers, listeners, and thinkers?)*

One of my personal teaching goals is that every rehearsal should help develop participants’ musicianship and lead them toward musical independence. That obligates me to develop strategies that help the singers become better music readers, more astute listeners, and more discriminating thinkers. That goal can be met beginning with warm-ups. For example, instead of using the piano to give pitches, I can teach the singers to pre-hear half-steps and whole-steps and learn to transpose vocalizes themselves. They can learn to move patterns up and down by various intervals by gradually being weaned away from the piano. We can sing warm-ups in minor keys, not just in major. We can learn to sing various forms of the minor scale, and chromatic scales, in order to refine pitch sense and help accuracy in a variety of modalities.

Musical independence allows musicians to learn on their own, and to function well without depending on someone else to teach them. The ability to read music is central to musical independence. Solfège syllables are a useful tool, so when we encounter challenging passages, we sing them on solfège to help singers identify patterns and perform them accurately.

In terms of independent thinking, we can encourage ensemble members to make interpretative decisions by reflecting on text, for example, in rehearsal. Hearing several singers read the poem in their own way and then comparing the versions and discussing which seem more appropriate to the music setting is one way of engaging singers in the creative process. The interpretation does not rely then on only the conductor’s viewpoint as the singers become fully engaged in the expressive process. Understanding how musical decisions are made and the effects of various decisions is a valuable lesson that singers can apply to solo repertoire, thus transferring their skills to another context. The ability to transfer thinking is yet another sign of musical independence.

My graduate advisor in music education was fond of telling her students that the best thing she could do for us was to make herself obsolete. Knowing that we have empowered our students empowers us. It is not unlike parents launching their offspring. What a good feeling that is!
6. Effective rehearsals encourage singers and help them enjoy making music. (Do your strategies result in positive experiences for the singers?)

Making music can be hard work, but should not be drudgery. Expending effort for the reward of a satisfying musical experience is worthwhile. Sometimes it is tempting for us to be so focused on the product that we forget to make the process enjoyable. Being sensitive to participants’ attention levels, to the possibility of fatigue setting in, to their state of mind, is all part of the choral conductor’s job. It takes flexibility on our part to meet their needs and balance those with our musical goals. If we become so intense that we forget to take the singers into account, we can turn a potentially enjoyable experience into a tedious one.

Using humour to deflect tension or to simply break the routine is one way of making rehearsals enjoyable but must never be used at the singers’ expense, of course. Sometimes we can keep singers on their toes but changing the pace of activity or incorporating a novel element into rehearsal. It can be as simple as a change of seating plan (use name cards on the seats or risers to help people find new placements). It might be a matter of sequencing the rehearsal so that we alternate easier segments of familiar pieces among sections of a very challenging one, rather than sticking to the hardest music until we have conquered it.

Some of these strategies can be planned in advance; some might be developed on the spot, as we remain alert to the group’s “temperature” or mood. An element of surprise can keep the energy level high and ward off boredom or nonchalance.

Leaving a rehearsal with more energy than we started is a good indicator that it has been a positive experience.

Summary

Most of us work with amateur singers and for relatively little time each week. We want to optimize the results, to make the time well spent for everyone. Taking our rehearsal temperature is a good way to hold ourselves accountable. Are we being as effective as we could be? Are we providing the kinds of experiences that will have a long-lasting impact on the people we teach? Will we make them lifelong learners by inspiring them to want to continue making music after they leave us? If we can answer “yes” to these questions, we can be sure that we are contributing positively to the participants’ experiences, now and for the future.

Hilary Apfelstadt was recently appointed Director of Choral Activities at the University of Toronto where she received her undergraduate degree in vocal music education. She earned graduate degrees at the Universities of Illinois and Wisconsin-Madison, and enjoyed a long teaching career in the U.S., most recently at the Ohio State University. She has guest conducted many honour choirs throughout the U.S. and Europe, and has published numerous articles in professional journals. She is past national president of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) and a member of Choirs Ontario and the Association of Canadian Choral Communities (ACCC).

Vocal Psychotherapy:
Connecting to the Self via the Voice
Amy Clements-Cortès

Abstract: This article describes vocal psychotherapy, a technique developed by Diane Austin. Vocal psychotherapy promotes personal growth and insight using a variety of interventions such as: deep breathing, toning, vocal improvisation, holding and free associative singing.

This article will define music psychotherapy, vocal psychotherapy, outline common vocal psychotherapy techniques, and discuss a case study example given by Diane Austin. A short outline of the research on vocal psychotherapy and the training necessary to become a vocal psychotherapist is provided.

Music Psychotherapy

Vocal psychotherapy belongs to the larger umbrella of therapy known as Music psychotherapy (Austin, n.d.). The overall goal in music psychotherapy is gaining insight (Davis, Gfeller &
Vocal psychotherapy can be used with clients showing a variety of symptoms at any level of functioning, but it is often used with those experiencing issues surrounding childhood trauma.

Thaut, 2008), and common goals include: increasing self-awareness, constructing and repairing a sense of identity, resolving traumatic experiences, self-expression and improved interpersonal behaviours (Bruscia, 1998). A variety of techniques are used by music psychotherapists such as improvisation, patient-selected music (Davis, Gfeller & Thaut, 2008), induced song-recall (therapist asks client what song comes to mind in reference to a specific issue or topic), song communication (client brings in recorded music), song writing and music imaging (Bruscia, 1998). Music imaging is a broad term used to describe the process of listening to music and responding in images, feelings, memories, or other ways (Bruscia, 1998).

A specific method of music imaging was developed by Helen Bonny and is called the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (BMGIM). This method uses relaxation inductions to bring clients into an altered state of consciousness (Bonny, 1999) followed by the therapist selecting a music program (developed by Bonny) for the day’s session and bringing the client into a visual scene from where they can begin to visualize images and describe them as the music unfolds (Bonny, 1999). The BMGIM is a powerful method where for example, clients often relive childhood memories, and gain insight through remembering and discussing memories with the therapist after being brought out of their altered state (Bonny, 1999).

What is vocal psychotherapy?

Austin (2008) defines vocal psychotherapy as “the use of breath, sounds, vocal improvisation, songs and dialogue within a client-therapist relationship to promote intrapsychic and interpersonal growth and change” (p. 13). This can include deep breathing exercises; natural sounds the body makes such as yawning, laughing, or sneezing; and verbal discussion, as well as musical sounds such as vocal improvisation and structured sounds. Vocal psychotherapy can be used with clients showing a variety of symptoms at any level of functioning, but it is often used with those experiencing issues surrounding childhood trauma. The trauma could be the result of parental abuse, addiction in the family, or other family dysfunctions. Vocal psychotherapy seeks to give clients a sense of security and comfort through which they can reconnect with their various selves and unite them into a current, present sense of identity. It is rooted in theories of psychology such as Freud’s psychodynamic theory, Jungian psychology, object relations theory, and trauma theory (Austin, 2008).

Techniques

Austin describes six methods and specific interventions she uses to conduct vocal psychotherapy sessions including: the use of the breath, use of natural sounds, toning, vocal improvisation, vocal holding, and free associative singing (Austin, 2008). Deep breathing exercises are used to connect the mind and body in a relaxed, centered state. Austin believes that a person’s method of breathing is directly related to their psychological health and personality (Austin, 2008, p. 24-25). The production of natural sounds such as a gasp, sigh, moan, laugh, cry, or other sounds is made spontaneously when a person feels that they are in an open space free from judgment. These sounds are believed to be linked to emotions and feelings that are repressed and not tolerated by the significant others in the client’s life. Through releasing these natural sounds, the client also releases their repressed emotions and begins to accept and understand them (Austin, 2008, p. 27-28).

Toning used in vocal psychotherapy practice is a technique similar to the one used in meditation and involves the use of sustained vowel sounds. The therapist may intone sounds at the same time as the client. Toning is used to release stress and emotions, and to unite the mind and body in a similar way to deep breathing (Austin, 2008, p. 29). Vocal improvisation is the spontaneous and unplanned use of the voice. It is thought to reflect the client’s unconscious feelings and impulses that are usually repressed and contained, and connect the therapist with the client’s true, inner self (Austin, 2008, p. 136-140). Vocal holding is a type of vocal improvisation activity, but it includes additional structure and is thus helpful for clients who are initially uncomfortable with the freedom and spontaneity necessary for complete vocal improvisation. With this technique, the therapist plays two chords on the piano in a rocking motion. The client improvises over top of these chords, with the therapist helping by singing directly with him/her, singing a harmony or root note (known as grounding), or mirroring (repeating) the client. These methods give the client a sense of safety and security, and mirroring their words validates their emotion and allows the client to hear and understand what he/she is feeling and saying (Austin, 2008, p.147-152).

Free associative singing is a similar technique to vocal holding that is rooted in Freud’s free association technique (Kris, 1996) and uses singing instead of verbal discussion. It makes use of the same methods as vocal holding, but the focus is on moving the therapeutic discussion forward, rather than on the expression itself. This is done through more complicated piano patterns such as the inclusion of dynamics and articulation, and also through a more critical use of words from the therapist. Rather than simply mirroring all of the client’s words, the therapist may choose which words to repeat and add an interpretation to the client’s words. Doubling is a technique used within this intervention where the therapist repeats the client’s thoughts and feelings in first person; thus, the therapist speaks the client’s inner voice, and the client is able to hear and process it (Austin, 2008, p.158).

Austin stresses that not all of these techniques are necessarily used with each client, and there is not a specific pattern or protocol for including the techniques. Therapists may decide to
use these interventions in the order they were presented here, starting with the techniques that are less stressful for the client; however, vocal psychotherapy leaves considerable room for the intuition of the therapist.

Case Example from Austin’s Work
Austin presents the case of Sara, a 25-year-old dance therapy student who sought vocal psychotherapy because she was worried that she was becoming passive and distrustful of others, which would inhibit her in her future career (Austin, 1991). Austin found that Sara’s problems were rooted in her parent’s treatment of her as a child. Sara “grew up too fast” (p. 295), and was mature and adult-like even at a young age primarily because her parents allowed her too much freedom. Austin used improvisational activities with Sara to help her to release her natural impulses, stop repressing her spontaneity, and discover her inner child. Austin also believed that improvisation would help Sara to explore and integrate the different parts of her personality. Sara relayed her dreams to Austin, and they were explored through musical improvisations.

Austin used the specific techniques of mirroring, holding, and dialoguing with Sara (Austin, 1991). She used mirroring as a form of empathy and reflection to compensate for the lack of acceptance Sara received from her parents as a child. Holding was used to support Sara’s musical statements, which clinically seemed an appropriate intervention as Sara expressed that she felt a lack of support from her parents. Dialoguing was an interactive technique where Sara and Austin would alternate expressing and responding to the others’ musical statements. Each session also included discussion as an important part of the therapy process.

Sara participated in vocal psychotherapy for two years and this therapy was helpful in breaking down Sara’s defenses and allowing her to discover and accept her unique self (Austin, 1991). She used the music to reflect her thoughts, feelings, and personality traits and this helped Sara to integrate the various parts of herself that had been split off; for example, she discovered the “needy” and “weak” parts, as well as the critic” and “playful child”.

Research
Vocal psychotherapy is a new field that has only recently been developed by Austin. At present there is little research that focuses specifically on vocal psychotherapy and quantifies its effects. The majority of the literature is written by Austin and focuses on qualitative accounts, case studies and examples to illustrate her points (Austin, 1991; Austin, 2001; Austin, 1993). Case studies suggest that vocal psychotherapy may be most beneficial for clients who are already involved in the arts, whether it be through music, dance, visual art, or another art form, and for clients who have experienced a traumatizing event (Austin, 1991). Austin (1991) cites the benefits of helping a client become aware of their feelings and learning to relate to and accept those feelings, as well as bringing together all the parts of the client’s consciousness and improving their confidence.

How to Become a Vocal Psychotherapist
Vocal psychotherapy is a certificate program that can only be completed by an accredited music therapist with a Masters degree in music therapy (Austin, n.d., ¶6). Individuals can complete training at Austin’s Music Psychotherapy Centre, which is based in New York. Additional trainings have also recently been made available in Vancouver, British Columbia, and Seoul, Korea. The training consists of 175 hours which is split up into 40 hours of direct training, 16 hours of 2-hour monthly seminars by Austin (videoconferencing is an option), direct one-on-one supervisory training from Austin, and time spent completing assignments and practicing skills. Training takes approximately 1.5 years. Those certified by the program hold the credential of Austin Vocal Psychotherapist (AVPT) and are able to use vocal psychotherapy techniques in their work.

Conclusion
Vocal psychotherapy uses vocal techniques to encourage self-awareness and the integration of various parts of a client’s personality. It is a technique housed with the larger scope of music psychotherapy. The voice is a powerful tool for encouraging self-awareness in individuals who are experiencing emotional problems. Vocal psychotherapy provides the tools for music therapists who are psychodynamically oriented to implement therapeutic vocal interventions in order to support the client towards personal growth and insight.

References
Abstract: In this article the author offers some suggestions for evaluating and selecting educationally and developmentally appropriate repertoire for study and performance by jazz ensembles. One of the most important responsibilities undertaken by any educator is the selection of appropriate pedagogical materials to help foster student learning. While many pre-service music teachers gain familiarity with criteria for selecting quality educational repertoire for concert bands and orchestras through their university methods courses, such courses often give at best cursory attention to criteria for selecting quality literature for jazz ensembles. While many of the factors that teachers must consider when selecting music for their jazz ensembles are similar to those used to evaluate concert band repertoire, there are also a number of unique aspects to consider when choosing music for jazz study. In this article I will offer some suggestions for evaluating and selecting developmentally appropriate repertoire for study and performance by jazz ensembles.

Curricular Considerations

First and foremost, jazz ensemble repertoire should be selected for its potential to aid in the development of student knowledge and performance skill within the art form. The initial step in repertoire selection is to reflect on your students’ current levels of declarative, conceptual, and procedural knowledge within the jazz idiom, and then to devise potential learning objectives for the coming term or year. Once you have decided on some potential areas for development, you may begin to contemplate potential repertoire choices that would be appropriate for helping students build from their pre-existing knowledge to the attainment of your learning objectives. For example, works could be chosen to develop understanding and aural recognition of certain standard compositional forms (e.g., blues, AABA, etc.) or cultural influences (e.g., Bossa Nova, Afro-Cuban, etc.). Consider a work’s potential to serve as a vehicle for a comprehensive musicianship approach to jazz education, in which music performance study incorporates development of instrumental technique, theoretical analysis, the study of historical performance practices, biographical information about the composer and/or performers, the study of compositional techniques, and, of course, comparison of improvisational styles.

Technical Considerations

Each potential selection must obviously be considered in terms of its level of technical difficulty. In every ensemble there will be students with a wide variety of ability levels, and as music educators we are charged with meeting each student at his or her current developmental level and offering differentiated instruction that will foster musical growth. Battisti (1972) espouses that teachers should not think of students as a group, but instead as individuals who make music in a group.

While music for concert bands and orchestras is often
graded on a one through six scale (with six designating the most challenging works), such classifications often are not provided for jazz ensemble works. Instead, many publishers categorize works using descriptors such as “medium easy” or “advanced.” Such designations are usually based on a combination of a variety of technical considerations such as range, tempo, meter, rhythmic complexity, overall length of the composition and independence of parts. Jazz educator Greg Yasinitsky (2001) has offered some helpful general guidelines for evaluating jazz charts in terms of their technical demands on younger players. He suggests that parts for young trumpeters should mostly remain in the A3 to D5 range, with occasional forays to F5 or G5 for climactic points in the music. He considers G2 to C4 a good range for young trombonists, with Eb4 or F4 notes reserved for high points. He also suggests that saxophone parts should generally avoid written notes above D6 because of a tendency for young players to produce thin sounds in this register, and warns that written notes below E4 are difficult for young saxophonists to control. As a reminder, it is important to examine not only the ranges demanded of the first part performers, but also the range demands of the lower parts.

As with concert band and orchestra repertoire, publishers often designate slow tempo works as less challenging than pieces written to be performed at brisk tempos. Occasionally directors are hesitant to program pieces that are rated as “easy.” As musicians well know however, music that moves at a slower tempo and is constructed with many notes of long duration can be the most challenging to perform well because of issues with intonation, expressivity, dynamic control in various registers, and ensemble balance. Such works can be especially educative in teaching musicality and beauty of sound. Part independence is another important technical factor to consider when evaluating big band charts. The more independent lines there are in a piece of music, the more challenging it will be for less mature players to perform. Also, check for the extent to which parts are cross-cued or doubled in multiple voices. While the doubling of parts can make a piece playable by ensembles lacking full instrumentation, too much doubling of parts constrains variety in colour and texture and may diminish the overall effect of a work. Finally, check for woodwind doubles in the saxophone parts, as the presence of additional responsibilities on flute or clarinet may well be a determining factor in the suitability of a chart for your group. The consideration of the technical challenges present in a work is of great importance. If rehearsal time is consumed with mastering only the technical aspects of the selected pieces, then the repertoire must be considered inappropriate for the current developmental level of the students (Colwell & Goolsby, 2002). It is preferable to program pieces that the ensemble can play with stylistic accuracy and a high degree of musicality.

Stylistic/Cultural Considerations
Lawn (1995) states that a well-educated jazz ensemble understands and can perform music in a variety of styles, including swing, ballads, and Latin genres such as Bossa Nova and Afro-Cuban styles. Jazz is, and always has been, multicultural music, and the study of the various social and cultural influences that have impacted the jazz idiom can lead to a wonderfully rich musical and cultural education for students. Just as students who perform in concert bands study the music of important composers of the genre such as Grainger, Holst, and Persichetti, students who perform in a jazz ensemble should study and perform the music of the important composers of the jazz idiom such as Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Kenton, and Thad Jones. Many of the original arrangements written for these seminal groups are available, allowing intermediate and advanced level ensembles to study and perform these historic works. At the same time, developing bands may perform modified versions of classic charts by respected arrangers who are able to capture the essential stylistic characteristics of the music while moderating technical demands. The study of seminal works of the jazz repertoire should be an indispensable element of students’ jazz education, yet it is also important to incorporate new works by current composers as well. The study and performance of new works allows the students to learn that jazz is a living and evolving art form, with both strong roots in a deep tradition and an emerging future which the students themselves might play a role in shaping.

Improvisation Considerations
An educationally meaningful jazz ensemble experience must involve not only the preparation of notated charts, but also training in the art of improvisation (Kay, 2004). Mantie (2008) has suggested that jazz pedagogy at the secondary school level largely ignores improvisation in order to focus instead on the rehearsal of notated ensemble parts. In a study of repertoire written for vocal jazz ensembles, Baker Jr. (2011) found that only 23% of surveyed charts included opportunities for improvisation, whereas the remaining 77% of the charts made no reference to improvisation in the printed score. Accounting for improvisation opportunities certainly adds an additional element of challenge to the repertoire selection process. Most teachers are well aware of the level of their students’ existing knowledge and abilities when it comes to theoretical elements such as chord nomenclature, or technical facility on their instrument. However, one area that teachers sometimes neglect to examine in terms of developmental pedagogy in the jazz ensemble is improvisation. Students’ developmental level for creating their own musical lines over a given chord progression is almost always much lower than their notation reading level (Kay, 2004). Our ensembles may be quite capable of performing notated music which is melodically, rhythmically, and/or harmonically challenging. The dilemma that we face in the jazz ensemble is that charts with advanced level parts in the notated sections often contain a corresponding level of complexity in the improvised solo sections, and our students may not be developmentally ready to undertake the challenge of improvising over such complex chord changes, making such a chart pedagogically inappropriate (Kay, 2004). This circumstance dictates that, in the short term, we include in our repertoire a substantial number of blues-based compositions and pieces in which the harmonic movement is simple enough to be accessible to the majority of our students. At the same time, the development of aural and technical skills necessary to improvise over progressions with more complex harmonic movements needs to be scaffolded through the employment of smaller, developmentally appropriate tasks which build sequentially to the goal of creating melodies over these more complex harmonic patterns. In a future column, I plan to outline some possible procedures for such an approach.

Resources
In order to facilitate the process of repertoire selection, it is important for music educators to be familiar with the various publishing houses that distribute sheet music for jazz ensembles.
Many local music dealers are stocking far fewer charts for jazz ensemble than in years past, and while your local dealer will usually be able to help locate and obtain a particular chart that you wish to procure, the process of researching and selecting repertoire necessitates looking beyond the current stock maintained by any individual dealer. Researching repertoire on the publishers’ own websites carries the added advantage of access to streamed or downloadable reference recordings for many of the charts. By listening to these recordings, your students can develop an aural image of the sound they are striving to achieve. Such focused listening is especially valuable for young rhythm section players, whose written parts are often skeletal and demand interpretive skills that younger musicians may have not yet developed. While it is not feasible to offer a comprehensive listing of music publishers here, I will suggest some sources where you can begin your explorations.

Two of the largest publishers of educational music for jazz ensemble are Hal Leonard and Alfred Music. Hal Leonard Publishing (www.halleonard.com) distributes music for a wide variety of ability levels, from professional big band charts written for the Mingus Big Band to the Easy Jazz Ensemble series by composers and arrangers such as Paul Murtha and Michael Sweeney. Alfred Music (www.alfred.com) publishes jazz compositions by artists such as Gordon Goodwin, Victor Lopez, and Canadian jazz composer Vince Gassi. In addition, many of the Duke Ellington works transcribed for Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Essentially Ellington program are available from Alfred. UNC Jazz Press (www.uncjazzpress.com/Default.asp) is associated with the Jazz Studies Program at the University of Northern Colorado, and some proceeds from the publishing wing help to fund scholarships and the purchase of equipment for the program. The catalog features nearly 3,000 charts for big band, vocal jazz, combos and chamber groups, and the roster of composers includes well-known Canadian jazz composer and educator Neil Yorke-Slader. Really Good Music (www.reallygoodmusic.com) is a small Wisconsin-based company that publishes music for big bands and combos by esteemed composers such as Geoff Keezer, Michael Phillip Mossman, and Brent Wallarab. Second Floor Music (www.secondfloormusic.com) publishes charts written and recorded by jazz legends as well as important contemporary jazz artists. The website also provides composer biographical information as well as audio clips and access to solo transcriptions. Kendor Music (www.kendormusic.com) is a great source for music by legendary jazz composers such as Sammy Nestico, Toshiko Akiyoshi, and Thad Jones, while Walrus Music (www.walrusmusic.com) is a good source for standards of the big band repertoire and includes works by Canadian composers/arrangers Rob McConnell and Ian McDougall. Finally, Sierra Music Publications (www.sierramusinc.com) is a great source for music from the Stan Kenton library as well as music written by Maynard Ferguson, Bill Holman and Pat Metheny.

Despite the many great resources offered by current music publishers, evaluating the suitability of any given piece for your students simply on the basis of the publisher’s description or even a reference recording can be challenging, especially for teachers with a limited background in jazz. Fortunately many music distributors will allow you to return music if, upon examining the score, you deem the work to be unsuitable for your needs. Over time you will become familiar with the writing styles of various composers/arrangers whose works fit the developmental levels of your students, and whose works effectively serve your curriculum. Some of the most well-known and respected writers for young, developing instrumental jazz ensembles include Michael Sweeney, Mark Taylor, Paul Murtha and Victor Lopez. For intermediate or advanced instrumental ensembles, look for music written or arranged by Bob Brookmeyer, Bill Holman, Thad Jones, Sammy Nestico, Maria Schneider, and Frank Foster. Prolific vocal jazz arrangers/composers include Kirby Shaw, Steve Zegree, and Darmon Meader (Baker Jr., 2011).

Conclusion

Jazz ensemble repertoire should serve to challenge and improve performance skills, offer perspectives on historical performance practices, serve as a vehicle for teaching important structural elements of the music, and above all motivate and inspire students to delve more deeply into the art form. While there are many critical pedagogical elements to consider when selecting charts, remember that the repertoire must also generate excitement and passion for the music in the students, as well as the director. Personally I know that I would have a difficult time getting my students excited about a piece that I myself did not feel excitement about performing. If you would like to investigate further resources on repertoire selection, check out the following helpful texts:


As always I would welcome your comments on this article, or suggestions for future articles. You may contact me at kwatso54@uwow.ca or follow me on Twitter @kwatso54.

References


Music: A World of Opportunity for Sightless Students
Lori Kernohan

Abstract: Sightless students are engaged in differing music education contexts. As sighted instructors encounter these varied circumstances, they need to realize and remember specific features of music education relevant to sightless pupils. Leaders should model significant behaviours when other members are amongst the group as well. Sightless students deserve to be treated applicable by each one who is involved in the learning/performing setting/ensemble. My column further addresses important ways to educate sightless students and affective reward modes to use while advancing the artistry and technical skills of sightless pupils. While these students merit accessible music education opportunities, creating, and retaining productive ones may be difficult for sighted instructors to execute.

In writing a column on the topic of music as a world of opportunity for sightless students, the reader must keep in mind that I am a sightless musician myself. Therefore, my column will be written from the perspective of an individual who once was a sightless student of music and now is a sightless music maker. As I open this column, I will say that I have enjoyed singing since the age of two, and began piano lessons at the age of five. Then, by the age of seven, I had lost my vision. However, I continued to sing, and renewed my piano studies at the age of eight. At the age of nine, I began my studies of the clarinet in the context of the private music studio. Therefore, I have a personal understanding of singing, and playing with, and without sight as well as a comprehension of playing a woodwind instrument as a sightless musician from the opening of my experiences studying and performing the clarinet.

In this first column, my aim is to explain the meaning of its title. Sightless students deserve access to all music education contexts. These may be classroom teaching, and learning situations, large chorale rehearsals, instrumental chamber ensemble performances, community centre activities, and/or private music studio circumstances. Using the word access means that when students without vision are a part of any setting that I have identified, then they should be made to feel welcome, accepted by the remaining individuals (i.e., the director(s)/instructor(s), the team members), included within the situation, and encouraged to contribute as a full participant of the group. The leader of the specific music education environment should also give students without sight clear guidance through positive feedback, and useful correction that will enhance their musical growth. Teachers should note though that these specific students must always be rewarded verbally as visual gestures, smiles, and other cheerful facial expressions are meaningless when performed in front of persons without sight.

Sightless students, then, merit accessible music education experiences that are enriching. However, well-created, beneficially designed, and confidently run accessible music education contexts may be challenging for directors of musical teaching and learning episodes to develop and maintain. Sightless students may also have difficulties with studying differing qualities of musicianship such as technical skills, and/or artistic expression. In future columns, I plan to discuss useful ways of producing, organizing, and employing valuable methods that will assist with the establishment of accessible music educational studies for sightless students. Putting these teaching and learning strategies into practice will be another aim of mine in order to effectively enable music educators to utilize the techniques that I suggest so that notable and meaningful results may be demonstrated and realized.

In closing my first column on the topic of music as a world of opportunity for sightless students, I am reminded of a remark made by a university professor with whom I studied. Her words have remained in my memory, influenced my own musicianship, and impacted my beliefs regarding what should be included in the musical training of students without vision. She urged all music education majors to continue performing music once they concluded their own studies, and became active practitioners in the field of music education. Therefore, I advocate that as sightless students proceed with their artistic and technical studies, they should be motivated to rehearse music as progressing practitioners, and be offered differing opportunities to perform from which to choose. The style of rehearsing that I have just described will embody feelings of control, competence, and confidence in the students as they learn to sing, and play. Improvements in their skills and abilities will definitely be noticed, and the performance venues from which these students may select will become more diverse and varied. As teachers and students work together using these strategies and obtain realistic performance goals, then, students without sight will become musicians, and be able to maintain their musicianship. Their world of opportunity within the field of music will also broaden as well as become enriched and enhanced. Finally, enjoyable and expressive sessions within diverse musical environments will be experienced by both these excelling singers and players as well as their artistic and technical guides.

As a sightless individual, Dr. Lori Kernohan has earned Ph.D. (Music Education), M.Mus, B.Mus degrees from the University of Toronto, and A.R.C.T. Diploma (Clarinet Performer) from the Royal Conservatory of Music. She is a published author, conference presenter, and guest lecturer on topics relevant to music education, and accessibility issues. She taught Elementary Schools/Music and at Laurentian University, Orillia, and gave private music lessons. She has experience as a researcher, dealing with accessibility issues at Georgian, and Seneca colleges, and continues to present her motivational program entitled, Pursue A Dream.

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technology

The Creation of the Learning Resource ‘Video Guide to Audacity’
Andrew Mercer

Abstract: In this article the author describes the design and development of an online learning resource: Video Guide to Audacity.

On October 18th, 2006 I created an account on what was then the relatively new, www.YouTube.com. Video streaming over the Internet was still relatively new, but it definitely held potential. As part of my Masters of Education program, I decided to investigate how this medium could benefit education. I set up my account and began uploading some simple videos.

For many years, I have been using a piece of software called Audacity. Audacity is a free, open source sound recorder and editor. Being free and open source, Audacity can be legally downloaded and installed for free on any computer. During music classes and teacher PD sessions, I was asked many of the same questions time and time again. I decided to address some of these common questions in the form of tutorial videos and placed them on YouTube. I used some software that recorded the video of my computer’s desktop and sound from my microphone. As I moved my mouse around the screen and spoke, the software captured it all and combined it as a single video file.

After doing countless retakes I placed my finished videos on YouTube and waited patiently to see if people would be interested – they came by the thousands!

I was thrilled to see that people were interested in watching my simple educational videos on how to use Audacity. I continued to create new videos on a variety of topics, but my main focus was on how to use Audacity.

YouTube has a suite of excellent tools to evaluate the level of engagement your viewers have with your videos. By studying user tools I was able to figure out which instructional techniques tended to work best in this medium. My viewers were also a great source of inspiration and feedback. When things worked or did not work, viewers were quick to let me know. I used all this information to refine my videos to be as educationally sound as possible.

Eventually my YouTube channel reached 1-million video views and over 4000 subscribers! I realized quickly that the level of interest in this type of content could warrant the creation of a more formal learning resource. I decided to create the Video Guide to Audacity.

The Video Guide to Audacity was to be a thorough and pedagogically sound learning resource that could enable learners to express themselves and satisfy curricular outcomes through the production of video and sound.

I went to work to design and develop the Video Guide to Audacity. I wanted to create a resource that would accommodate all learning styles as well as be intuitive and accessible enough to easily be used in schools by teachers and students with minimal experience with using technology in the classroom. The resource had to make use of all the YouTube lessons I had learned on how to create engaging multimedia content. I also wanted to provide all content as text for learners who prefer that medium of learning. Teachers needed to be provided with a Teacher Guide to assist in implementation and a robust set of evaluation tools to gauge student progress.

One big challenge was the creation of professional quality video and audio content. YouTube is a great place to learn just about anything and it was my main resource as I learned to create high quality video and audio. Using these new skills and audio and video equipment I was able to create video tutorials that look and sound as if they have been produced in a professional studio.

It took one year to design and develop the Video Guide to Audacity to a point where it could be used as resource in schools. In January of 2013 it was ready.

The Video Guide to Audacity is a digital resource, which means that it can be used entirely over the Internet. I decided to set up a website for the resource. I did some research and chose BlueHost to host the website – www.MakeAndBreakEducation.com. To create the website I chose Wordpress and with help from YouTube, I learned how to build a nice little home for the resource.

Security was a concern from day one. I did not want to lose control of the content. I wanted to ensure that the intellectual property that I worked so hard on was protected. I learned of a Wordpress plugin called S2Member that allowed me to password protect the website and resource. S2Member also provided me with the ability to all the video content with Amazon’s S3 and CloudFront services for pennies per month. Amazon’s services allow learners to watch the video content in their web browsers, but does not allow the videos to be downloaded or copied. The end result is that the resource is completely secure and easily accessible to registered users.

Being web-based, the Video Guide to Audacity is a ‘living resource.’ I am able to make changes and add new content to the resource at any time, allowing it to grow and evolve.

I am very proud of the Video Guide to Audacity. The process of creating the resource has provided me with an opportunity to explore many things I may have never been exposed to. Now that I have created the Video Guide to Audacity and have seen it being used by learners in schools from New Zealand to New York I am inspired to explore new opportunities for this medium. The combination of multimedia content and the Internet as a delivery mechanism is a powerful team.

I have run into a multitude of technical and educational roadblocks during the creation of this resource, but now that I have learned how to avoid these obstacles, and in some cases use them to my advantage, I am excited to explore what lies ahead.

Learners can check out the Video Guide to Audacity at www.MakeAndBreakEducation.com.

Andrew teaches music via the Internet to high school students living in rural and isolated communities of Newfoundland and Labrador. Email Andrew at andrew@cdli.ca.
in the spotlight

Winners of the 2013 National Undergraduate and Graduate Student Essay Competitions

The Canadian Music Educators’ Association/L’Association canadienne des musiciens éducateurs is pleased to announce the winners of the National Undergraduate and Graduate Student Essay Competitions. The jurors were treated to thirty undergraduate and five graduate papers, for a total of thirty-five submissions! This year’s winners are:

Dr. Franklin Churchley graduate essay competition:
FIRST PLACE: ARIEL SWAN, MCGILL UNIVERSITY
Faculty advisor: Dr. Lisa Lorenzino

Kenneth Bray undergraduate essay competition:
FIRST PLACE: MELISSA LALONDE, WESTERN UNIVERSITY
Essay title: “Reshaping Competition to Redefine Music Education”
Faculty advisor: Dr. Paul Woodford
SECOND PLACE: MORGAN WAGNER, UNIVERSITY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
Essay title: “Creating Creativity”
Faculty advisor: Dr. June Countryman
THIRD PLACE: EMILY EMBERTON, UNIVERSITY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
Faculty advisor: Dr. June Countryman

All submissions were blind reviewed by two reviewers. All have outstanding credentials and offered a considerable amount of time to reading and critiquing the submissions.

The jurors for the undergraduate essay competition were:
• Dr. Jeremy Brown, University of Calgary
• Dr. David Buley, Laurentian University
• Dr. Nancy Dave, Memorial University of Newfoundland
• Dr. Lori-Anne Dolflo, University of Toronto
• Dr. Marta McCarthy, University of Guelph
• Dr. Darrin Oehlerking, University of Saskatchewan
• Dr. Kay Abinson, University of Alberta
• Dr. Sheila Scott, University of Brandon
• Dr. Nancy Vogari, Professor Emerita, Mount Allison University
• Dr. Janice Waldron, University of Windsor

The jurors for the graduate essay competition were:
• Dr. Susan O’Neill, Simon Fraser University
• Dr. Paul Woodford, Western University

Special thanks is offered to all those who participated in the competition, including students, faculty advisors, and reviewers. Together, we all make a difference in promoting Canadian music education.

Dr. Shelley Griffin, Chair
Canadian Music Educators’ Association/L’Association canadienne des musiciens éducateurs (CMEA/Acme)
National Student Undergraduate and Graduate Essay Competition

New Book: Teaching Instrumental Music in Canadian Schools

A new and much needed book by Oxford University Press is now available. Teaching Instrumental Music in Canadian Schools by Ed Wasiaik takes a critical look at issues confronting Canadian music educators. Current assumptions, traditions, and practices are challenged and alternatives are explored. The purpose is to advance instrumental music education by assisting instrumental music educators to create a more viable future. This is done by building on past successes and expanding upon the usual offerings of band and orchestra curricula and in include more musical opportunities that better meet the needs and interests of 21st century learners.

Grounded in relevant research and the author’s experiences as a highly successful Canadian music educator for almost four decades, this book goes well beyond the typical ‘tips and tricks’ approaches and is unique and significant in several ways.

This is the first book of its sort specifically geared to teaching instrumental music in Canada. Wherever possible, Canadian research is used to support the ideas presented. Illustrations and examples are based on Canadian curricula and contexts. The issues addressed are specific to Canada; however, may also resonate with music educators who work beyond Canada’s borders.

The author demonstrates how teaching and learning in instrumental music can and should be aligned with current educational theory and practices. Relevant research in curriculum and instruction, assessment and evaluation, learning theory, and music education philosophy is applied in practical ways to enhance teaching, learning, and music making. Examples include the new paradigm for classroom man-

agment; musical‘Understanding by Design’ (UbD); and assessment for, of, and as learning. Approaches that actively engage students in critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and artistic decision-making, which ultimately lead to musical understanding are also explored. The complexities, conundrums, challenges, and opportunities that exist regarding traditional large ensembles, technology, popular music, globalization, creativity, musical understanding, multiculturalism and music teacher education are also explored.

This book does not duplicate or replace the many excellent resources available for traditional approaches to teaching band. Instead, the author encourages readers to use these resources by providing extensive reading and resource lists while addressing issues not met elsewhere.

The classically trained music educator with little or no background in jazz will find solutions to ‘bridging the gap’ by building on what they already know.

Along with the content that is more conceptual in nature, practical strategies and suggestions are offered to assist with the tasks of unit, lesson, and rehearsal planning; strategic planning for long term program development and administration; assessment; and professional development.

Several features make this book particularly useful as a course text. Objectives and a broad range of activities are included with each chapter to assist readers to meet the objectives. Sidebars, calls to action, points to ponder, introductory scenarios, and a flowing, story-telling narrative writing style keep readers engaged. Additional resources are available for traditional approaches to teaching band.

The book may be purchased through bookstores or online at Oxford University Press (oup加拿大.com) or Amazon.ca.

Canadian Association for Music Therapy Conference
June 23-24, 2014, University of Toronto

The Canadian Association for Music Therapy, along with the University of Toronto, invites you to explore the latest in music therapy practice, theory, and research, and explore how the profession is expanding into the future! Please visit http://www.camtconference2014.ca/ for information.

Call for Papers. The 2014 Canadian Association for Music Therapy Conference Committee is pleased to announce that we will be offering the 3rd Annual Research Paper Symposium at this conference.

This Symposium is open to all registrants and will feature experienced music therapy researchers as well as graduate students. Faculty are encouraged to support students to participate. All methodologies are welcome and research projects may be completed or in progress. We will also accept research proposals for traditional and online presentation materials, webinars, and podcasts. Instructors, pre-service and in-service music therapists will find this book a robust resource for teaching and learning instrumental music in Canadian schools in the 21st century.

While the book and website are primarily designed for undergraduate music education students, graduate students and in-service music educators will also find it useful. Though focused on instrumental music education, much of the material is also applicable to teaching music in other contexts.

The book may be purchased through bookstores or online at Oxford University Press (oup加拿大.com) or Amazon.ca.

OEMC/CMIEC Momentum 2013 conference

The Ontario Music Educators’ Association and Canadian Music Industry Education Committee will hold their joint Annual OEMC/CMIEC Momentum 2013 conference Nov. 7-9, 2013 at the Scotiabank Convention Centre and Marriott Gateway on the Falls Hotel, Niagara Falls, ON, Canada. For more information, see http://omea.on.ca/

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Pursuant to Section 7 of the By-Laws, all members are hereby notified that the Canadian Music Educators’ Association is invited to the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Music Educators’ Association.

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 3:30 pm on Saturday, October 19th, 2013 in the Archibald Room at the Delta Prince Edward Hotel, 18 Queen Street, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.
Dennis Tupman


A new school year in 2013 is beginning. Everything is changing; everything stays the same. We plan. We assess. We dedicate. We make music. Vive la music!

To reflect from my rocking chair for a moment, I remember the 1965 CMEA Conference in Calgary where I presented my survey of music education in Canada, which I did mostly on the phone, talking to fine folks from coast to coast. How I wish I had Social Internet Media back then!

So, it’s not that long ago.

We struggled then. We still do. As the writer Joseph Campbell stated: “We were then in a mess. We are in a mess. We will always be in a mess. That is exactly the way it should be.”

Here we are still talking about music advocacy when we know deep down that music making is in our primordial DNA.

First of all, I recommend this book: Developing of the Mind: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are by Daniel Siegel. Peter G. Prontzos had this to say of Siegel’s work: “This is for the reader who wants to get a state-of-the-art picture of what it is to be human...”

These aforementioned books have implicitly hinted at the requirement for us to be able to re-invent ourselves and the development of our imaginations, which Albert Einstein says should be the ultimate goal in education.

My point here is that there is a lot of scholarly material out there nudging us to be balanced and challenged in what we do ultimately as educators, and I would suggest as Ministries of Education. My second point is that music education is exactly the same. Job training. Job skills. Literacy (especially in writing and social/cultural requirements) are teaching a lot in forms that are Eurocentric, from aristocratic and church antecedents that are largely transformed and transplanted now.

Music Makes Us

When you are on Facebook check out the Coalition’s website at “Music Makes Us”.

Ah, social media! Better yet, join the Coalition.

I actually read the online Facebook comments and I must say that I actually “felt the buzz” of excitement of folks across Canada about music education and the “Hadfield Celestial Experience.” The chats on Facebook go a long way to bringing us together as Canadians. Wow, what a “mused tribal” experience!

Yes but...

OK, after the buzz of Hadfield et al., let’s reflect on some changes and reports, and current writers who are worth considering as we deal with a rapidly changing world culture, which we try to reflect smartly in our teaching.

First of all, I recommend this book: Finnish Lessons: What can the World Learn from Educational Change in Finland by Pasi Sahlberg. Remember, Finland topped the world in its achievement as an educational system. This is an inspirational book, and is an antidote to what we have created in our system’s obsession with behaviourist measurement of skills to the detriment of a holistic human education.

Job training. Job skills. Literacy (especially in writing and reading avoiding speech). Technology. The three R’s. Et cetera.

This reductive stuff is what the BC Education Plan—for but one example—is about now in its “new” vision for our education system. Yawn!

OK, so we can buy into that to a degree, but how about the research that also states that we must be considered human beings with human needs and attributes of communication and social skill needs and so forth. Research is out there to support this need. (I hear Dr. Howard Gardner’s voice here).

Where is the human in all of this? How do we measure these outcomes? Indeed, how do we measure the intended outcomes of the arts?


I find Ferguson compelling. His evidence shows that we are in decline in the West, and have been for some time. Our western culture is also of necessity having to become more inclusive and diverse. The Canadian Mosaic again. Nothing new here except that Eastern Cultures are becoming more prevalent in this Mosaic. But where do we go in this new, er...paradigm?

I draw your attention also to this book, by our “own” John Ralston Saul. This brilliant and controversial Canadian challenges us yet again in his 2009 Volume, Collapse of Globalism and the Reinvention of the World.

...Reinvention of the world? Whew! It reminds us that we are teaching a lot in forms that are Eurocentric, from aristocratic and church antecedents that are largely transformed and transplanted now.

My Last book pick is Developing of the Mind: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are by Daniel J. Siegel. Peter G. Prontzos had this to say of Siegel’s work: “This is for the reader who wants to get a state-of-the-art picture of what it is to be human...”

As you can see, my question is: Is our education “degenerating” into something that is no longer “human.”

My politicians seem to think that getting jobs, learning about the latest tech gadget, and getting our kids literate (probably in the 3’s) are all that matters and will turn the voters on at election time.

Sure these outcomes are important; but they are more about training than about education. Not to denigrate either side of this instepative choice.

Certainly a cursory glance at one example in the current cut-and-paste-retrogressive “Education Plan for BC” could elicit this conclusion that we are dumming down education for our kids for cheap and immediate political gains.

Oh, well. Another day; another rant. Rick Mercer would be pleased.

Have a good year. What you do with kids in music is precious. Go for it.

À la prochaine fois... from the rocking chair. Dennis Tupman
Where the Music Begins.

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