

Editorial

The main section of this issue has two main foci: the first is the relationship and potential synergy between music education and the philosophical concepts of democracy and spirituality and the second is different aspects of performing or performance. Conversely, the contributions to the teacher-practitioner section focus entirely on composing within the UK classroom.

Beginning with the main section of the journal, in *Music education and human flourishing: a meditation on democratic origins*, Allsup (USA) ponders upon the multiple and contested meanings of the term 'democracy' and the tensions between typically understood meanings of the term and the implications of these for the role of the teacher in the classroom. Drawing on Chinese conceptions of, and terms for, 'democracy' Allsup argues for a more nuanced understanding of the concept of democracy and the way in which it might be manifest in the music classroom. Here, democracy is not the exercise of power by a 'voting majority', but rather provides a conceptual framework which 'capitalises on the diverse mix of powers capacities and endowments . . . to shape the learning of all'. He concludes by offering three conditions upon which student growth can be built and where they can '... move beyond established orders to places of unpredictability and innovation'.

The association of music with notions of spirituality is not new. In terms of the way in which it can be understood as an aspect of the transcendent power of music its meanings lie deep in the Romantic tradition and, educationally, through the ideas embedded within and promoted through the ideology of music-education-as-aesthetic-education (MEAE). Adopting a case study approach, Koji Matsunobu (Australia), in *The role of spirituality in learning music: A case study of North American adult students of Japanese music*, explores conceptions of spirituality through the lens of a learner of the shakuhachi (a Japanese end-blown flute). He begins by surveying some of the differing conceptions of spirituality in and beyond music before eventually settling on Hay and Nye's (1998) five dimensions of spiritual awareness as a framework for exploring how the experiences of those learning the shakuhachi manifest aspects of spirituality.

Cristina Marin (Spain) also explores aspects of flute performance but in a more tangible and traditional form. Her paper, *Using the musical score to perform: A study with Spanish flute students*, adopts a semi-structured interview approach with 17 higher-education flute students to analyse the process of learning a new piece of music with a particular focus on the musical score as a learning tool. The paper explores the developing relationship of students with 'the score' in terms of the procedures that they adopt and the elements to which they pay attention noting that as their expertise develops, they have a growing concern with 'expressive' issues over simple realisation of the notation.

Mark Pulman (UK) also considers aspects of the learning process but in this case the way in which pop music bands rehearse and prepare for public performances. In *Round and round we go: an 'action' ride on the rehearsing and performing cycle*, Pulman adopts the framework of an action research cycle as outlined by, for example, Cain (2008) as a means of exploring the process of rehearsal of musicians on a popular music course and the

implications of this for teaching, learning and assessment within this context. Through the analysis of data from four action research spirals undertaken over a 10-year period, Pulman reflects both on the way in which such spirals allow greater rigour to be brought to the research process and findings and also how this research has led to rethinking pedagogic and assessment practices and course evaluation.

Moving now from the learning contexts of higher education to the less formal interactions between an individual teacher and learner beyond formal institutions, in *Using repertory grids to explore musical skills and attitudes in a mature-age adult at the early stages of learning for self-fulfilment: A case study of James*, Angela Taylor (UK), uses 'repertory grids' as means of exploring the musical development of James, a mature learner, coming to instrumental learning – the keyboard and more latterly the Appalachian Dulcimer – later in life. The study explores James' conceptions of his musical identity in relation to the two instruments and particularly the pedagogic and learning devices and contexts through which the learning and performances take place.

Finally, in this section, Lamont, Daubney and Spruce (UK), in *Singing in primary schools: case studies of good practice in whole class vocal tuition*, explore examples of good practice in whole class vocal tuition in primary schools in England. Drawing on observations of practice and semi-structured interviews with musicians and school staff, the article identifies both conditions necessary for the promotion of successful singing in schools and also barriers to its achievement as well as the best means of ensuring that initiatives result in an ongoing interest in, and engagement with, singing.

This issue sees the second occasion on which we devote a section of the journal to contributions from practicing teachers. In this issue three music teachers from England reflect on the challenges that are presented to teaching composing within their particular contexts. In *How music technology can make sound and music worlds accessible to student composers in Further Education colleges*, Leah Kardos, a composer, performer and lecturer, uses a case study approach to demonstrate how music technology and ICT can support students from non-formal music education backgrounds to create their own music. She wonders, however, whether in doing so such students miss out on developing more traditional and important skills. Rebecca Lewis, in *Composing the curriculum: Teacher identity*, reflects upon how working with a professional composer helped her to address her feelings of a lack of identity as a composer and to rethink her approaches to teaching composing in the classroom. Finally, in *Teaching composing with an identity as a teacher-composer*, Jennie Francis draws on Marcel's (1949) ideas of 'problem' and 'mystery' to contrast experiences of composing where the motivation is extrinsic to the composer e.g. examination requirements, with those where the motivation comes from within the composer. All three contributions offer differing but fascinating perspectives on the challenge of integrating composing into the music curriculum.

References

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