

## Book Reviews

**The Arts in Children's Lives: Context, Culture and Curriculum**, edited by Liora Bresler and Christine Marmé Thompson. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002. 250 pp, £50 hardback, £20 paperback.

The careful reading from cover to cover which the review process necessitates was richly rewarded with this book. An anthology of 15 varied chapters, each by different authors, the book does not lend itself to being easily reduced to tidy descriptions for prospective readers. The chapters cover widely differing aspects of the full range of the arts in young children's lives: art, music, dance, literacy and film-making. Some provide broad overviews and general discussion, some focus on specific aspects of education in one of the arts. The editors declare that the book's purpose is to 'generate renewed dialogue on the role and the significance of the arts in the education of children from 3 through to age 8': to be a forum for extensions into understanding and thinking.

It would be easy enough in a book that covers so much ground – all the arts, an age phase during which children change so much, a broad cultural and contextual view – to point a finger at aspects that have been neglected or excluded. But such nitpicking would be to miss the point, for comprehensive coverage of any kind has not been the aim. These chapters are intended to be thought-provoking contributions, which not only reflect what is happening now but begin to inform possibilities.

As readers we might lose our way among the many chapters were it not for three excellent interludes – entitled 'Context', 'Development' and 'Curriculum' – written by the editors. These provide thumbnail introductions to the sets of five chapters which follow and for the purposes of orientation begin to highlight similarities and comparisons. Such

is the diversity of chapters that the editors were sometimes, in my view, drawing some tenuous connecting threads. And this introduces the only issue I would raise. Is it preferable to be challenged by a range of perspectives from often very disparate fields and have the quite arduous task of finding our own connections and points of relevance? Or does such diversity have a downside? For without any similarities of style, content or structure, each chapter represents an original contribution so that identifying themes and clustering ideas is difficult work. A few of the chapters seem to strike out in such individual directions that their inclusion would be debatable. I leave these questions unanswered.

Since it would be impossible to review all of the chapters, I will single out some I found particularly interesting. The influence of Japanese graphic narratives in manga comics and animated cartoons on Japanese children's drawing is described by Brent Wilson. The influence is so striking as to be easily discernible in the examples provided. It prompts the realisation that the same processes of influence and absorption must be happening to children in all cultures and in all art forms, yet from within our own culture the influence is more difficult to 'see'. Donna Grace and Joseph Tobin led a project on video production and discuss what they call the 'carnavalesque' in the children's work. It is a chastening reminder of just how school knowledge is circumscribed and censored to remain within certain unsaid but mutually understood boundaries. The interesting discussions of the nature of school art, particularly that by Liora Bresler, and school art in comparison with different art contexts by Karen Hamblen, are almost directly transferable to 'school music'.

The chapter 'We Begin as Poets' by Keiran Egan and Michael Lin is particularly valuable because it challenges long-standing ideas about

the nature of young children's learning. As the title suggests, they propose that metaphor, rhythm and rhyme, affect and visual imagery are powerful sources of young children's imaginative thinking. They criticise curricula designed around deficit expectations of young children's capacity for artistic learning and what they call the 'useful but industry-influenced' objectives-content-methods-evaluation scheme for the delivery of curricular content. Their suggested alternative, 'mythic planning frameworks', looks for the emotional significance and 'the story' that can be found in any given topic. Their ideas are more than conjectural for they conclude with examples of possible activities.

For music educators a chapter by Peter Webster tucked in at the end of the book is highly recommended reading. Are we to impute anything from its positioning as the final chapter? As a stand-alone, it manages successfully to combine thoughtful analysis and presentation of some broader issues with specific, down-to-earth information. Even allowing for the fact that the software described is not all available in the UK, this is still a valuable appraisal. We should heed his chidings that the music education community is doing poorly in terms of researching technology in music in comparison with other subject areas. This chapter also raises some interesting ideas which could relate back to issues from earlier in the book. I looked to see if this weaving back had happened in the interludes. While acknowledging the strong sociocultural emphasis that characterises the book, the interludes perhaps lose opportunities to make connections between in-school and out-of-school contexts, the technologies available to children in different contexts and cultures and how that influences their participation in arts activities. The ambiguity that children experience between different musical experiences is often defined and mediated by the technologies available to them.

For readers in the UK, the writers are mostly writing about education in the USA, and this is the educational and cultural context within which the editors have edited and framed the book. Readers in the UK therefore have the additional task of adding a conscious filter to their reading and further questioning the culturally contingent nature of the content. Sometimes this is obvious. We do not, for example, have a tradition of specialist teachers at upper Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. Therefore, some specific discussion of specialist art teachers' working practices has to be translated from a specialist to a generalist situation. The age at which children enter full-time schooling is a little younger, and so on. Sometimes it is less obvious. The interpretation of the influence of Japanese manga draws heavily on the contrast between societal values of conforming in contrast to the strong individualism characteristic of the USA. Would we see this in quite the same sharp light framed by our cultural values and beliefs?

The process of filtering produces one contrast that is striking. Here we are bound by a National Curriculum for over 5s and curriculum guidance in the Foundation stage for 3s to 5s. The category of 'creativity' in the Foundation stage seems to be dominated by processes and ideas drawn from the visual arts in which music sits somewhat awkwardly. At least in the interpretations and applications of the creativity strand this appears to be the case. The Key Stage 1 curriculum has been invaded by the literacy and numeracy 'hours'. Heavily prescriptive curricula and other influences are shaping arts education among our young children in ways that we need to identify and communicate loudly. Reading authors whose writing reflects the educational context of the US is an eye-opener to the relative curricular freedom they enjoy. Here is writing which imagines and proposes practice in different ways; risky stuff which pushes at the edges. Are we becoming dulled to the constraints within

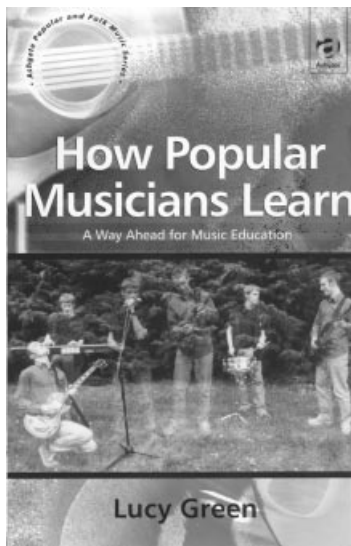
which arts education is operating, and overlooking or avoiding the glaring discrepancies in school-based arts education in primary and nursery schools?

Finally, to technology once more. The assistance of contemporary computers in book-editing processes and production is now essential. Some chapters are beset by proofreading errors – even, extraordinarily, a nonsensical parenthesis which I suddenly realised is a message from one editor to the other inadvertently left in the final printed text. To me, however, such mistakes matter not a jot in a book of this quality of content and even amuse or reassure us in our own editorial efforts.

SUSAN YOUNG  
University of Surrey Roehampton

---

**How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education** by Lucy Green.  
Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001. xii + 238 pp,  
£42.50 hardback.



In a former life, as an electric guitar teacher based in schools, my lessons on pop and rock

guitar were oversubscribed. Here the class 'misfits' excelled, getting 'straight As' (as part of their GCSE coursework) for their performance of Metallica riffs, the tapping part from Van Halen's *Eruption* (à la Kreutzer, Bach and Vivaldi), and sections from Steve Vai and Joe Satriani pieces. Occasionally we would play *Apache* or even a Joe Pass solo. It was mostly Nirvana though. Sometimes they would play with 'feel', emotion and commitment, and make the music speak for themselves. Yet I was always unhappy with what I was asked to assess and report as dictated by exam boards in relation to what actually happened in the course of our lessons; it was such an interactive group learning experience. Incredibly, there was enough play in the system to enable me to fulfil grading procedures. Outside of school, many of the pupils found that their guitar lessons helped them get into bands. It gave them the edge, at least for the audition, and it gave some of them a certain pride when they appeared to be 'useless' at everything else in school.

I also taught guitar at home. Here students would come along seemingly more readily able to learn, not just about Vai and Satriani guitar technique, but to engage in the culture of popular music. And in this guitar culture (see Bennett & Dawe, 2001) questions were asked. If virtuoso rock guitar player Steve Vai had *never* gone to the Berklee School of Music, would that have made him a *better* popular musician? An absurd question? What about: 'What use are my A-levels for going on to study electric guitar?' Absurd questions? No, these were not absurd questions in this guitar world. In this world, students asked these types of questions all the time, but none of us were really sure of the answers. As the teacher, should I advise my student to apply for a popular music studies degree? Is that where popular musicians should go to *learn*?

Most of the students were Vai and Satriani devotees (more than air guitar fanatics) who

would need little prompting to spend some time criticising, say, Vai's 'excessive' soloing but never his 'flawless and fluid technique' (for they would practise his licks all day long). Joe Satriani, Vai's guitar teacher, would be talked about in different tones. Another eminent 'widdler', Satriani did not go to Berklee (he said, reportedly, that he would never get any work done in that 'noisy' place). Accordingly, but mostly evidenced by his recordings, most of the students felt that 'Satriani has got that raw *feel* that Vai lacks'. I was told this again and again. 'Satriani is *not* an ultra-smooth technical player like Vai, although he is fast . . . he is more bluesy, ballsy, and you hear a good strong melody . . . I really *enjoy* his music.'

What can be gained from these anecdotes? Obviously, one can see notions of musical authenticity emerging as negotiated around such guitar legends as Vai and Satriani, and the roles that they perform in guitar culture have clear significance and connotation. My students, though, wanted to be more than Vai and Satriani clones, even if most of them would end up going down that road (some ways). But more than that, the boundaries that separate formal and informal learning zones (and their benefits) are unclear and to some extent questioned by the irony of Vai (student) and Satriani (teacher). If Vai had stayed with Satriani and had not gone to Berklee (and had 'all that theory rammed down his throat' ['Why do I need to know Mozart or Bernstein to play rock guitar?']), in my students' eyes he *might* have been more of a 'real' popular musician. Yet Vai's ability also stems from years of experience playing in some of the most prestigious bands on the planet – from Frank Zappa to Whitesnake. How then is one to gain any further insight into this conundrum? How is one to deal with the tensions that exist when students with A-levels and a high level of ability on rock guitar, for example, want to go to study for a degree but are highly suspicious of the learning environment they would be going into?

Rather, how is one to improve one's teaching to deal with the full range of issues, concerns and problems that appear to impinge upon the learning of popular music?

I have found much to help in Lucy Green's fascinating and challenging book *How Popular Musicians Learn*. Written with a focus on instrumental tuition and school class teaching, the book should attract a wide readership, from academics, musicians and music teachers to researchers working in the fields of music education, musicology, popular music studies and ethnomusicology. As an ethnomusicologist (teaching on popular and world music degree courses), I have found much that I can make use of here, particularly Green's incisive treatment of the question 'What is it to be musically educated?' But I have also found much to admire in her clarification and debunking of terminology, in her methodology, and in the questions she puts forward to a sample of popular musicians.

If Green's assessment of the current state of instrumental music teaching and classroom teaching in schools is correct, then the music that most of the world's population listens to and enjoys – pop, rock and dance music – has yet to find any real place in our formal education practices. It is little wonder then that Green draws on Everitt's work in which he claims that only 1 per cent of the adult population can be classed as amateur musicians, with even fewer being professional musicians. Green also draws on research that suggests that participation in music is beginning to undergo a general decline. A gloomy picture emerges regarding the state of popular music-making that may or may not be supported by further research and analysis.

Whatever, it is clear that important questions need to be asked and soon. Lucy Green is already on the case (this is her third book) and she sets out the aims of this her latest book very clearly:

- to examine the nature of popular musicians' informal learning practices, attitudes and values;
- to consider the extent to which these changed over the last 40 years of the twentieth century;
- to come to an understanding of popular musicians' experiences in formal music education, and whether these too changed over the same time span;
- finally, to explore some of the possibilities that informal popular music learning practices might offer to music education. (p. 7)

In order to pursue these lines of investigation, Green interviewed 14 musicians in 1998–9, including seasoned professional session musicians (performers, composers and arrangers) and young and aspiring non-professional musicians playing in covers and original bands. All the musicians were performers of 'Anglo-American guitar-based pop and rock music' (p. 9) and varied in age from 50 to 15. She notes that:

Some popular musicians have never been offered any formal music education, but many of those who have been offered it have found it difficult or impossible to relate to the music and the musical practices involved. (p. 5)

She puts flesh on the bones of these and other issues in the interviews that form the basic substance of the book. Fourteen musicians is quite a small sample for a book of such proportions, scope and theoretical content, so I would presume that Green's research is ongoing and will be further tested in the field. Clearly, she will need to draw upon the experiences of a greater range of musicians from different social and cultural backgrounds (after all, most of the 14 musicians were contacted through Green's social network) if she is to hope that her findings might affect the direction of educational policy.

Throughout the book popular musicians' attitudes to facets of learning are well documented. Their answers to Green's questions and her fine-grain analysis of their replies bring the book to life. What I find particularly noteworthy is the way in which the learning of popular music comes across here as a multifaceted and organic process, even if the social and cultural aspects of learning and socialisation into popular music culture are merely touched upon. A learning package is involved where young musicians apprentice themselves informally to the system. In fact, they enter into a dialectical relationship with their peers, musical elders and the musical infrastructure of towns and cities (young covers and original bands), and in some cases (session musicians) enter the music industry controlled by the multinationals. At once we are dealing with very local issues and issues that have global significance, with interviews akin to ethnography, the elucidation of local knowledge, insiders and outsiders, and the seasoned approach of musicians' musicians working in a star-studded studio system. In terms of what musicians do and say, and why, I'm more convinced by Cohen (1991) and Shank (1994) and hardcore ethnography than Green; I wanted to know more about the musicians she interviewed because they remain largely faceless wonders here.

Green is particularly interested in the relevance of ethnomusicology in any consideration of formal and informal learning practices, and in the teaching of non-Western musics in education where there is emphasis on communal participation, as in the learning of popular music. She notes that:

The idea that only a few people are musically able is being challenged by the recognition that whilst some people do display greater propensity and ability in music than others, at the same time the vast majority of people are capable of making music to standards that are

competent enough to meet that approval and engender the enjoyment of their communities. (p. 210)

Green draws on a range of ethnomusicological literature to support her thesis. Ethnomusicologists and anthropologists of music such as Blacking, Merriam and Nettl rub shoulders with Middleton, Frith and Moore from popular music studies, and also those scholars studying popular and world musics as a unified field, people like Peter Manuel (1988). Clearly, Green is as interested in the importance of informal musical practices within other cultures and what we can learn from them as she is in those within her own culture. In fact, it is now up to ethnomusicologists to come up with a study of the teaching of world musics in education that fully complements Green's work. However, the general parameters of the musical learning experience have been laid out in different cultures by the work of scholars such as Berliner (1993) and Rice (1994), and they merit attention here. These works might have been used to develop and support Green's argument in Chapter 1, 'What is it to be musically educated?'

Chapters 2 and 3 are concerned with the ways in which musicians get to share in and acquire a skills base, the nature of those skills, their definition, and the beginnings and ends of the learning process. Chapter 4 concerns the attitudes and values of musicians learning to play popular musics and how these shape their acquisition of musical, technical and social skills. What is it that they value most? – 'feel' over technical proficiency in terms of musicianship and also personal qualities such as co-operation, reliability, commitment, tolerance and shared tastes, along with a shared passion for music. Chapter 5 looks at how popular musicians have fared in the traditional music education system, with 'classical' music lessons and classroom music, while Chapter 6 looks at 'new' music education and the building of

popular music studies and instrumental tuition into the classroom curriculum.

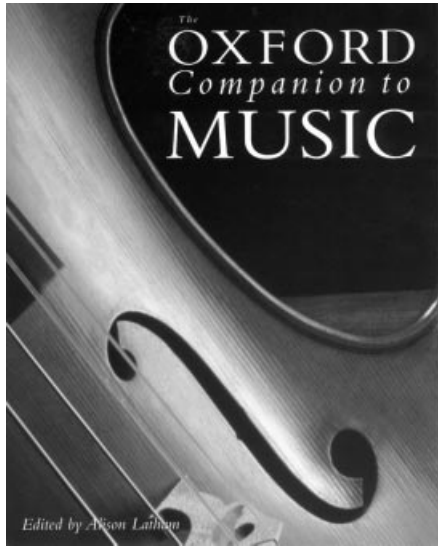
The final chapter of the book, 'The formal and the informal: mutual reciprocity or a contradiction in terms?', brings me back to the subjects of my opening preamble.

For her questioning of accepted musical and educational paradigms, Green will probably receive some flak; others might not even bother to read her book. I can only add support to the thrust of her argument drawn from experience of working within a wide range of educational institutions and with popular and 'world' musicians. The quality of her empirical research, the entertaining and revealing interviews, their lucid analysis, the setting out of the popular music learning experience, along with the breadth of theoretical material brought to bear on her findings, all make for a thought-provoking and important book that we ignore at our peril.

#### References

- Bennett, A. & Dawe, K. (Eds.) (2001) *Guitar Cultures*. Oxford and New York: Berg.
- Berliner, P. (1993) *The Soul of Mbira: Music and Traditions of the Shona People of Zimbabwe*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapter 6. Originally published 1978.
- Cohen, S. (1991) *Rock Culture in Liverpool*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Manuel, P. (1988) *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World: An Introductory Survey*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rice, T. (1994) *May It Fill Your Soul: Experiencing Bulgarian Music*. Chicago: University of Chicago, Part Two.
- Shank, B. (1994) *Dissonant Identities: The Rock'n'Roll Scene in Austin, Texas*. Middletown: Wesleyan/New England Press.

KEVIN DAWE  
University of Leeds



**The Oxford Companion to Music**, edited by Alison Latham. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. 1,434 pp, £35 hardback.

Over the past 60 years, the *Oxford Companion* has come to be regarded by musicians as one of the most useful (if not indispensable) of library resources, and it is probably the first reference book that people turn to when checking details, settling factual arguments, or seeking preliminary information on some unfamiliar topic. First published in 1938, and compiled almost entirely by Percy Scholes, the *Companion* was amended from time to time over the next 30 years, and substantially revised as the tenth edition by John Owen Ward in 1970. It was then reissued under the editorship of Denis Arnold in 1983 as the two-volume *New Oxford Companion*. Arnold expressed concern over what he saw as Scholes's narrow conception of music, and introduced a much wider range of material which, in effect, modernised this famous reference work. Whilst not completely replacing its predecessors, Alison Latham's very impressive 2002 edition (once again a one-volume publication) contains 1,000 new entries with contributions from some 120 international authorities. She pays generous

tribute to the work of Scholes and Arnold and outlines the rationale that underpins this latest version of the *Companion*. Latham points to the enormous expansion of musical knowledge during the twentieth century and the fact that music is no longer a single insulated discipline, concerned essentially with the Great Western tradition; it now draws on, and is frequently integrated with, psychology, anthropology, literary criticism, sociology, and many other fields of inquiry.

Although this type of book is obviously of practical value to those directly involved in musical pursuits, it was always intended that the contents should also be of interest to the general reader aiming to further an understanding of music. Latham's volume maintains that tradition and may well appeal to a wider circle of performers, teachers and students since it represents an ever-broadening outlook. The very informative and updated articles on topics such as popular music, jazz and ethnomusicology are all illustrative of a musical inclusiveness that characterises the contemporary scene. Indeed, some of the 'new' sociologists of the 1970s, who were so critical and often scornful of the musical establishment, might well feel that their views have now been incorporated into the mainstream thinking of decision-makers and those in positions of power. It would probably be unwise to pursue such a theme too far, but it is fascinating to compare, for example, Scholes's original article on jazz with the most recent entry on the subject, in terms of underlying attitudes and value positions. Scholes also had an entry entitled 'pops', but its meaning bears not the slightest resemblance to our modern perception of popular music. As attitudes change towards what counts as music, so does the propositional discourse, and there are many terms in the new *Companion* that are relatively recent additions to the language of music and musicology. For those of us who continue to be slightly mystified by topics such as postmodernism,

semiotics, garage, hermeneutics and the new musicology, there are useful and reader-friendly introductions often with selected bibliographies that provide helpful starting points for further study.

As in previous editions there is a sizeable entry on education. The new article consists of Keith Swanwick's earlier contribution to the *New Oxford Companion* with additional material provided by Piers Spencer. Swanwick directed readers to Scholes's historical survey and so for anybody attempting to understand the growth of music in education it is probably necessary to consult all three main editions. Spencer covers the current situation in an economical and thoughtful manner and discusses some of the significant theoretical and practical issues that nowadays occupy the minds of teachers in schools and other educational institutions. It is, of course, impossible to deal with every aspect of education in one article, but there could perhaps have been more reference to musical activities beyond the classroom since these have become such an important aspect of school programmes at both primary and secondary levels. The *Companion* is well known across the world and readers from other countries might conclude that music in Britain's schools is essentially the English National Curriculum. From the mildly prescriptive tone of the article colleagues working in other educational systems abroad could also form the impression that the 'official' specification has received universal approval. No doubt there would be more than a few English practitioners who would not exactly share such an interpretation.

There are many entries in this new volume that are of particular interest and relevance to educationists. The articles on Kodály, Orff and Suzuki are succinct accounts of their principles and methods, and again the bibliographical details will be helpful to those who wish to discover more about these international figures.

Hullah and Curwen now receive less attention and there is no mention of Sarah Glover. In fact, inclusions and exclusions convey interesting messages regarding the changing nature of musical education. For example, Charles Kitson had an individual entry in the early editions as a celebrated teacher whose manuals on harmony and counterpoint were used by generations of students in this country and abroad. It was taken for granted that the formal studies associated with such texts were absolutely vital in the training of all musicians. Consequently, one might hypothesise that the omission of Kitson and other renowned British 'paperwork' teachers is a sign of a move away not only from an established instructional style but also from previously accepted, and largely unquestioned, notions of musicianship.

The *Oxford Companion* is one of the most authoritative and comprehensive sources of musical knowledge and will continue to be a major reference source for all who are participants in the many different branches of music-making and musical studies. It is almost certain that people looking for information on a particular subject will find an entry in this volume which, even if not sufficient in itself, will indicate the right direction for further investigation. There are, of course, many extensive articles, and the detailed essays on Ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian and Greek music, opera, serialism and the symphony are typically representative of the high standard of scholarship that is the mark of this new *Companion*. What is especially attractive is the accessibility of the writing, something that will be warmly welcomed by those younger musicians (or indeed anybody) trying to get to grips with subjects for the first time. On occasion it is said that some modern texts seem to baffle rather than inform and engage readers, but this is by no means the case here. The outstanding feature of the articles, many of which are introductions to extremely complex topics, is their coherence and clarity. This



makes for a volume that is not only informative but also a pleasure to read. Alison Latham and her team have produced a splendid and important publication that is a worthy successor to the previous editions. For teachers and students in schools it will be an invaluable addition to libraries, and at only £35 this new *Companion* will surely be purchased by large numbers of musicians for their personal collections.

CHARLES PLUMMERIDGE

University of London Institute of Education

---

### The Rhinegold Dictionary of Music in Sound

by David Bowman. London: Rhinegold Publishing Limited, 2002. Published in 3 volumes: Vol. 1, **Dictionary**, 395 pp; vol. 2, **Music Examples**, 379 pp; vol. 3, **Recordings**, on 3 CDs. £75.00.

This useful and innovative dictionary comes in an unusual three-volume format. The first volume further divides into two roughly equal sections. The opening 200 pages are a conventional 'dictionary' that lists entries alphabetically. The remaining pages form what is really a textbook, covering 'The Elements of Music': rhythm, tonality, melody, counterpoint, harmony, timbre, texture, structure and style. Both sections are designed to interact with the contents of Volume 2, which consists of notated examples, and Volume 3, which presents nearly 300 recordings on three CDs.

David Bowman, a writer with a lifelong experience of teaching and examining, has produced an erudite and informative publication. The dictionary entries and commentaries throughout are lucid, pithy and illuminating. The examples in Volume 2 are clearly set out and helpfully annotated. The CDs, which are expertly performed and well recorded, form a rich anthology for teachers to dip into and use with students. However, some of Bowman's claims and the assumptions that

lie behind his selection of illustrative material need examining.

The title itself begs a question. This is only a 'dictionary of music in sound' insofar as the sounds discussed or explained also exist in notation. Indeed, nearly all the examples *originated* in notated form. This is fair enough when dealing with European music from the twelfth to the nineteenth centuries, and Bowman's thoughtful selection of this material does indeed cover a huge and varied repertory. However, it is surprising that, in a dictionary published in the twenty-first century, its author should remain wedded to received notions of what counts as significant repertoire from 1900 onwards. The only selected examples of twentieth-century music are those that exist in prior published and notated form. So while the *composed* music of Schoenberg, Boulez, Steve Reich and James MacMillan is included, there is, for example, no folk music, no 'world music', no rock'n'roll and no jazz.

The references to jazz, in particular, are tantalisingly patchy. In Volume 2 there are four illustrations from Debussy's *Préludes*, to which Bowman has added jazz chord symbols. Thus, we find extract C23, from 'La Cathédrale engloutie', described as having a basis in 'Cmaj7'. This, as far as I can see, is the only occasion where this nomenclature is used. Bowman does not explain why he sees this as appropriate here, or how the terminology relates to the other ways of describing chords, such as figured bass or the use of Roman numerals. Bowman rightly signals here a link between this music and the harmony of jazz, but the link is, disappointingly, not pursued. To Messiaen, the octatonic scale was a 'mode of limited transposition'. Jazz musicians, whose melodic thinking is rooted in chord progression, simply call it 'the diminished scale'. Examples of modes, whole-tone scales and octatonic scales abound in jazz, and their inclusion would have enriched the collection and provided enjoyable and clearly audible

examples of these usages. They would have stimulated a discussion about terminology and strengthened the links between what many teachers and students still see as disparate and unconnected ways of making and thinking about music.

This leads me to the other claim Bowman makes for his selection of examples: *audibility*. His preface states: 'a final premise is that music is primarily the art of significant sound. It follows from this that terms relating to techniques that cannot be heard by most people have been excluded.' Bowman is referring in particular to serialism. Only 'a tiny minority of people ... will be able to detect these processes by ear alone'. I know of no research that indicates the size of this 'tiny minority', if indeed it exists at all. Nor have I read any investigation that demonstrates that identifying these processes leads to a deeper response to serial music in the same way that Bowman's re-barring of the A major Intermezzo (Example B79) illuminates the subtle rhythmic undercurrents in Brahms. Bowman is at pains to give a fair and wide-ranging survey of structural devices used by modernist and postmodernist composers, from the octatonic harmonies in Messiaen's organ works to the rhythmic displacements audible in Reich's *Clapping Music*. However, of the serialism in Boulez's *Le Marteau sans Maître*, he merely says that 'the work can make an impression on a sympathetic ear without any necessity for getting to grips with a composer's creative techniques'. This, surely, is evading the issue, and contrasts sharply with his commentary on the 'hanging' interlude from *Billy Budd*. Here Bowman shows, with lucidity and conviction, how Britten's handling of harmony and orchestration contributes to the devastating impact of this music in the theatre.

The other issue that the format of this dictionary has raised for me is the sheer difficulty confronting teachers and students in studying music through the sound of it. Our

colleagues in the visual arts would seem to have it easy. Go into any library and take out a reputable dictionary about art or a book such as Gombrich's mighty *The Story of Art* and observe the ease with which your eye connects both text and illustrations. Look up 'perspective' in your art dictionary and you will find verbal explanation and graphic illustrations set out on the same page. There may even be several examples taken from different periods in history, so you can quickly see how the technique has developed and become refined over the centuries.

Now look up 'counterpoint' in this dictionary. This will involve first going to the entry listed alphabetically in the first part of Volume 1. Here, we read two alternative definitions, the first of which is 'The combination of two or more melodic lines'. If we want to hear an example of this, we are directed to the second of the accompanying CDs and invited to listen to track B13. If we want to study how this music looks on paper, we can then refer to Music Example B13 in the second volume of the dictionary. In addition to this, the entry refers to an extended article on counterpoint in the 'Elements of Music' section, which forms the second part of the dictionary. This cumbersome process acts as a salutary reminder that music teachers and their students have to be strongly motivated to pursue the acquisition of knowledge in a way that truly reflects the nature of their art. In the case of this dictionary, however, I emphasise that the reader's efforts will be rewarded through heightened understanding and extended acquaintance with the repertoire.

Music is a time-bound art, and time is space (and, by extension, money) where compiling an anthology of recorded examples is concerned. As a result, much of the music in Volumes 2 and 3 is presented as extracts. Returning to my comparison, most illustrations in art books will show complete artefacts – paintings or sculptures, rather than fragments.

Here, however, we have truncated examples, 'bleeding chunks' – many of them very attractive, but others too short to convey musical significance. For instance, Example A86 presents the closing bars of Bach's organ toccata in F to illustrate the terms 'dominant pedal' and 'modulating sequence'. One only hopes that teachers using this extract with students will have the sense also to play them this exhilarating piece from start to finish, to appreciate Bach's mastery of large-scale construction. The true impact of the accumulating wave-like sweep of these closing bars will be lost without experiencing the music that leads up to it.

Despite these criticisms, the *Rhinegold Dictionary* is a valuable addition to a teacher's library. It forms a very useful and wide-ranging anthology and its text is very well written. Indeed, the overall impact of the dictionary and the way it has been presented have been, for this reader, surprisingly thought-provoking.

PIERS SPENCER  
University of Exeter

---

**Big Bangs: The Story of Five Discoveries that Changed Musical History** by Howard Goodall. London: Vintage, 2001. xi + 238 pp, £7.99.

This is a stimulating and engaging book aimed at a non-specialist audience in which Howard Goodall encourages his readers to reconsider some of the unique features of Western music – pop and classical – that make it what it is. The first three discoveries (our system of notation, the universality of the piano, and the tuning system which in fact makes everything just a tiny bit out of tune) are fundamental to what we hear in concerts, on CDs and coming out of the walls of High Street chain stores. Goodall describes the invention and the influence of these musical milestones in clear, understandable and anecdote-laden style,

making the least prepossessing of subjects (tuning systems?!) compelling reading.

The other two discoveries are opera and recorded sound. Even the most hardened opera-haters will be persuaded by Goodall that opera is indeed one of the central forces that changed music history. Its continuing wide appeal – despite constant media baying of 'elitist' – and its power as a tool for political and social commentary are contrasted with its beginnings as the attempt of a group of Florentine intellectuals to recreate ancient Greek drama. Recorded sound is equally fundamental to modern understanding of music. Goodall's description of the technology and its development is interwoven with a consideration of its enormous effect on musical culture. The role of recording in the burgeoning popularity of early music is made clear, as is the growing ossification of a museum of Great Works, spliced to perfection and revisited at whim.

The other chapters in the book are reflective interludes. As Plato mused on the power of music to move and inspire, so Goodall, with vivid anecdotes, illustrates that same power. In an era when accounts of Mozart's or Beethoven's reception of their compositions from their inspiring muses are treated with scepticism, Goodall's account of just such an experience is worthy of thoughtful consideration. At a time when inter-faith conflict destabilises the globe, his acknowledgement of the Jewish contribution to the history of Western music is a timely reminder of the important role played by cultural outsiders, and of the hatred with which their efforts are too often rewarded. The epilogue considers the role of music in the future – including the imminent demise of the classical concert in an age of three-minute attention spans.

These are big issues, and these readable, gripping and above all non-intimidating accounts will encourage non-specialists to

consider aspects of music-making that are perhaps usually taken for granted. Why does music move us to tears or laughter? Why do creative artists sometimes find staring out of the window for three weeks an integral part of the creative process? What is the nature of the music that we love so much? We are invited to consider the perfection of the CD and the subsequent dulling of the concert hall experience; the excitement of a trip to the opera; the aural inaccessibility during much of the twentieth century of 'art' music; and the creation of a canon of musical works that we love to hear time and time again.

My reservations about the book relate only to one chapter, and to matters of detail rather than the substance of the argument. Guido d'Arezzo, as Goodall recounts, was a key figure in the history of Western music, inventing the notational system which, by its very existence, made possible so much of what is unique in Western music. However, some of the information used in this chapter is inaccurate, sometimes confusingly so.

For example, Gregorian chant is named after Pope Gregory the Great, and Goodall repeats the familiar story that he composed the chants inspired by the dove of the spirit. However, scholars now widely accept that this hardy perennial is a ninth-century myth rather than being based in truth (Hiley, 1993). At this time, Frankish reformers were imposing Roman liturgy, including chant, on their huge realm. How better to bolster the authority of this chant than to claim that the Holy Spirit had given it directly to a saintly pope? The fact that this large musical repertoire was composed and accurately retained over many years without notation by groups of specialist Roman and subsequently Frankish singers is impressive enough; it does not need to be bolstered by mythical claims of saintly origins.

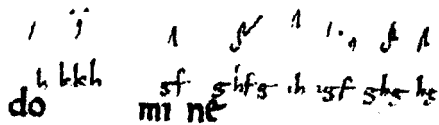
The thrust of Goodall's argument relates to the revolutionary nature of Guido d'Arezzo's new notational system by which pitch could be

accurately notated and fluently read for the first time. He is absolutely right – the invention was devastating in its impact. But it is worth observing that notational systems before that time were not inadequate. Instead they were fit for their purpose. Gregorian chant was performed by people who had learned it by heart over many years, spending hours every day rehearsing and performing the liturgy (Boynton, 2000). Notation was needed simply as an *aide-mémoire*, to remind choirmasters of the chants to be sung by giving a rough outline of the melody. The 'neumatic' notation shows the ups and downs of the melody, but not how far up or down the singer should go. Sometimes it wasn't even necessary to give that much information. The earliest surviving manuscripts with musical notation date from the end of the ninth century, and the six earlier surviving books, dating from the eighth and ninth centuries, contain texts to be sung in the Mass through the church year (the 'Mass Proper' – introits, alleluias and so on) with no notation at all.

For contexts when it was important exactly to define the pitch, such as notation of polyphony and examples in music treatises, systems of pitched notation using letters of the alphabet were widely used by Guido's time. As they do not go up and down on the page they are less easy to read fluently than neumes, but they do define exactly where the semitones lie (between E and F, between B and C, and between A and B flat).

Guido invented a notation that combined these two approaches of precise alphabetical pitch indication and notes going up and down on the page. Horizontal lines on the page were associated with letters of the alphabet (F and C at first), and the neumes were written so that they corresponded to the vertical space associated with each alphabetical pitch indication, conveying their exact relative pitch. As with the invention of previous forms of notation, Guido's met a particular need at a

particular time and place (as local chant repertoires had expanded over the centuries, the memory burden had become increasingly onerous), but it was not a bolt from the blue. I like to think that had things been a little different, we might still be familiar with a different eleventh-century combination of the two systems of squiggles and alphabet (the example is taken from the Dijon Tonary, a manuscript compiled at the monastery of St Bénigne in Dijon under the direction of its reforming abbot, William of Volpiano, around 1020 [Solesmes, 1901]):



A final quibble relates to Goodall's passing identification of Pérotin as the first named composer. The evidence linking Pérotin to any music is actually pretty slender (Van der Werf, 1992). He is identified as the author of a short list of compositions, indicated only by their titles and the number of voices, in an anonymous treatise written c.1280 by a monk from Bury St Edmunds, around 50 years after his death. We have three manuscripts containing (among many other pieces of music) compositions with these names and with the indicated number of voices. There is food for thought here. Are these pieces by Pérotin, or are they later revisions, or are they by entirely different people? Did Pérotin exist at all? Why are we so prepared to believe in the existence of a composer who, if he existed at all, has a handful of composition titles connected to him by someone writing 50 years later which might, with imagination and some massaging, be linked with actual pieces of music?

These are minor points of detail in what is otherwise a readable and thought-provoking account of the enormous impact that the unique Western form of notation had on

subsequent developments in compositional technique. But perhaps in his next book, Goodall will be inspired to debunk some of the astonishingly persistent myths. Why are we all so willing to believe – in the teeth of the evidence – that Gregorian chant emanated from a divinely inspired pope? Or that Pérotin was the twelfth century's answer to Bach? Or that remembering chant without notation was a difficult task for nuns and monks who spent all day every day singing it? Goodall is certainly the man to stimulate us all, both professionals and amateurs, into reconsidering such myths, and returning, newly inspired, to the cultural gold mine that is Western art music.

#### References

- Boynton, S. (2000) 'Training for the liturgy as a form of monastic education'. In G. Ferzoco and C. Muessig (Eds.), *Medieval Monastic Education*, pp. 7–20. Leicester: Leicester University Press.
- Hiley, D. (1993) *Western Plainchant: A Handbook*, pp. 501–13. Oxford: OUP.
- Solesmes (1901) *Paléographie Musicale* 7. Solesmes.
- Van der Werf, H. (1992) 'Anonymous IV as chronicler'. *Musicology Australia*, 15, 3–25.
- EMMA HORNBY  
Christ Church, Oxford

---

#### Using the Internet – Music by Daniel Herbert.

Cambridge: Pearson, 2000. 66 pp, £24 unbound paperback in plastic folder.

#### ICT in Music by Derek Mill. Cambridge:

Pearson, 2001. 61 pp, £26 unbound paperback in plastic folder.

#### C.A.T.S. Computer Aided Theory Skills.

Lingfield: Take Note Publishing, 2000. 2 CD-ROMs. Vol. 1 (Beginner to Grade 2) £14.95, Vol. 2 (Grade 3 to Grade 5) £24.95.

These three publications address the potential

of ICT for music teachers. Each has something of value to offer.

For many young people the Internet has significantly changed the way in which they think about accessing information and resources. The availability of an ever-increasing number of web sites dedicated to music makes the Herbert publication highly relevant to the music teacher. The introduction provides an excellent overview of how the Internet can be used to good effect to improve the teacher's bank of resources, including ideas for using downloaded MIDI files and researching materials from Palestrina to Puff Daddy. There is also useful information on a broad range of topics and interactive sites where teachers can exchange ideas and share teaching strategies.

The pack is divided into sections on General education sites, General music links, Encyclopaedias and glossaries, Musical organisations, Teaching resources, Music history, Music theory, Orchestra, Jazz, World music, Pop, Song lyrics, Compositions, MIDI sites and Guitar tablature. It thus enables both the learner and the teacher to focus on and explore relevant issues and avoids the turmoil of thousands of results, many of which are irrelevant, that the usual search engines throw up. Each of the topics is subdivided into a review of the web site (including the URL), tips for using the site, and guidance as to which groups it may be suitable for. There is also a fairly comprehensive glossary of common Internet terms. This is particularly useful in providing the user with clear definitions of Internet language now in common usage.

There are 15 student worksheets and the teacher's notes outline possible strategies for delivery. Suggestions are made about checking hardware and software and the necessity of checking that everything works before attempting activities with pupils.

The 'student worksheets' section of the pack provides a variety of activities that can be undertaken. Students are directed to specific

web sites and asked to complete the associated tasks, although these often focus on historical and musical factual information at the expense of musical activity and skill development. For example, the worksheet based on the symphony orchestra (Sheet 2) asks the pupil to draw the plan of the orchestra and then subsequently asks a range of questions associated with the instruments. The teacher would do well to critically analyse the content of many of the worksheets and consider how these match up with the underpinning rationale for music education. At times knowledge about music and its history is expanded by demanding that pupils listen to clips of downloaded music and describe what they hear. Too often, though, the questions are far-reaching, with a huge variety of possible solutions, which will make the role of managing teaching and learning a difficult one. When time is so precious in the music curriculum teachers will need to reconsider many of the activities and modify the worksheets to match their own intended learning outcomes.

Teachers with little knowledge of music-related Internet sites will find this publication useful. Its positive impact on the delivery of music within the National Curriculum is, however, more questionable.

The pack by Derek Mill aims to help teachers to embed ICT into music policy and practice and to serve as a foundation source for the development and provision of ICT within the school. The opening sections, 'Defining ICT' and 'ICT in the music classroom', are informative and provide the least confident of music teachers with a sound platform from which to develop their knowledge. ICT within the music curriculum includes a wide variety of things that music teachers often take for granted, and these are successfully highlighted and should provide teachers with the confidence to include this broad perspective when planning and documenting their work.

The section that evaluates various resources is an excellent reference tool. It clearly sets out the advantages and disadvantages of each type of ICT resource for music and then audits the Music department's priorities. This will be of particular use to music teachers who are fairly new to ICT yet keen to develop its use. It steers carefully away from being influenced by the glossy publicity of the latest 'must have' techno gadget. There is a section dedicated to possible inclusions for the development of a Music department web site, and this is again well laid out with a clear explanation of how this can be achieved. One of the key strengths of the pack is that it takes generic ICT education issues and mirrors these within the context of music education. It is refreshing that this stance is adopted and that the subject-specific issues of music are clearly articulated. After reading this publication many music teachers might well realise that they have been incorporating ICT into their teaching unknowingly for some considerable time.

In part, the success of the pack and its impact in schools will depend on the teacher's motivation to purchase it in the first instance. Those who do will find a wealth of clear information and prompts that should provide them with the confidence to further develop ICT in their music teaching. They will also gain confidence in being able to communicate this activity clearly to others.

The section 'Classroom management issues' will be of particular use to teachers who are currently in training, or who are not yet well experienced or lack confidence in managing resources, and throughout the pack ideas are offered as guides that can be adapted to suit the needs of the individual. The list of web sites and other resources is also useful and, although not extensive, should provide teachers with a good starting point for developing a list of useful Internet sites that can be added to a Favourites list. The final section is a case study of the development of ICT in a Music

department, and each part is divided into the development of teaching and the actual or perceived effect on learning. Not all teachers will want to follow the path outlined here, but it does provide interesting food for thought.

This is a very worthwhile publication in that the vast majority of music teachers will benefit from considering the issues it addresses, if only to confirm the nature and quality of their current practice.

Catering for a slightly different audience, *C.A.T.S.* is an interactive software package designed to help students to cover the requirements for Associated Board, Trinity, London College and Guildhall examinations. It contains over 25,000 possible questions and, by today's standards, the program requires a fairly minimal PC specification to run. The process of installing it is relatively simple and the on-screen instructions are clear and informative. *C.A.T.S.* is subdivided into two CD-ROMs: Volume 1 is designed for the Beginner to Grade 2 and Volume 2 is aimed at Grade 3 to Grade 5. With the intention of making learning music theory fun, the topics covered include the inevitable notation, key and time signatures, chords, ornaments and musical terms. The sub-menu links on the screen enable students to identify the area in which they want to work. There is some amusing aural feedback at times and I was a little alarmed on first hearing the sound that accompanies the exit button as I felt that I had personally insulted my feline host. Nevertheless, this program does encompass worthwhile principles associated with other music packages. It attempts to enliven the arid exercises of old, which have been the basis of the syllabi of the examining boards to which it is geared. In achieving this it sets out a colourful and welcoming environment in which to work. Younger children particularly should find this more attractive than the traditional pencil and paper option. The interactive nature of the program allows students to practise their

techniques and provides feedback to the user both pictorially and in audio. The droplet for a correct answer is, surprisingly, somewhat less exciting than the 'Oh, oh' for an incorrect answer. I did experience one or two glitches with the software where the symbols displayed did not match the question in the Beginner stages of Volume 1. Volume 2 has a full Windows Help Menu but younger users will find this rather technical and alien from the main program environment.

Essentially in two parts, *C.A.T.S.* operates on a 'learn and test' basis. Both sections are well constructed. Unlike a teacher, no diagnostic reason is supplied for incorrect input, so teachers of theory need not lose sleep over the fear of being replaced by technology, at least not in the shorter term. This program is useful for reinforcing what pupils have been taught and to test their theory skills. The program environment enlivens the learning experience and overall it provides fitness for purpose. Those looking to find a more exciting way in which to practise theory knowledge will find both volumes of *C.A.T.S.* a worthwhile investment.

PAUL THOMAS  
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff

---

**Now Let's Make Music! 10 Arrangements of Popular Songs for the Classroom** by Julie Piacenti and Paul Thomas. Cardiff: UWIC Press, 2001. £25 ringfolder including CD and floppy disc.

I enlisted the help of my current PGCE cohort to perform and evaluate this material, and their comments are included in the review.

This publication presents a series of popular songs arranged for Key Stage 3 (KS3) classroom performance. The material is chosen to supplement the UK and Welsh National Curriculum for Music, and all written material is presented in English and Welsh. As the authors

point out, this publication is a resource for teachers, and is not intended to be a self-contained scheme of work. The songs selected pay 'due attention to Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig through the inclusion of songs sung and/or composed by Welsh artists'. To this end Catatonia, Barbara Dickson and Tom Jones are represented in the collection. The selection also presents music in a range of tempi, structures and pieces which use a variety of musical devices. The trainees felt the music was generally well chosen and likely to be popular with KS3 pupils.

Each song is presented as a full score and set of parts. These are also replicated on a CD backing track and as MIDI files. Supplementary notes give background detail and suggestions for wider listening of other songs using similar compositional techniques. For example, the arrangement of Travis's 'Why does it always rain on me?' is linked with other songs with a prominent cello line, syncopated vocal line, or compound time signatures. This linked repertoire is selected from a broad spectrum of pop, rock and musicals. The teachers' notes also point out structural features and significant musical devices in each piece, indicating where the songs might be integrated into other units of work. The trainees felt that this was a useful addition to the publication, and commented that although they were familiar with most of the songs, it was helpful to have an analytical commentary when selecting repertoire to perform.

Each arrangement includes parts for a rhythm section comprising bass and drum kit with piano, keyboard or chord parts; and 2–4 upper parts, comprising melody and harmony parts, and countermelody, descant, or riff parts. Song words are provided. We performed the songs using various combinations of instrumental and vocal groupings, and found that the arrangements are appropriate for the variety of different performers one might find in a KS3 classroom.



The arrangements encourage live performance, but also allow for integration of acoustic and MIDI instruments. The authors point out that the MIDI files included in the pack can be adapted to suit the needs of particular classes. Parts can be edited and transposed to suit particular instrumental combinations. The MIDI files can be used as a backing track for whole class performance, and as support for individual pupils' learning providing a model for individual practice. Use of the CD backing allows even those with limited ability to create stylistically authentic performances. Liberating the teacher from the necessity of being an accompanist also allows them to interact with pupils during the performance. Unfortunately, the arrangements presented on the CD backing track are predictable and at times banal, and teachers may wish to edit the MIDI tracks to create a more original and interesting sound.

The main weakness of this publication is the format and presentation of the notated parts. The music is not well presented on the page. There are some irritating omissions in the scores and parts. The anacrusis at the start of Robbie Williams's 'She's the one' is written as a full bar with rests, which serves to confuse the players. There are also some discrepancies between parts and scores, possibly due to errors in typesetting. There appears to be an incorrect use of harmony in 'Money, money, money'. The parts are written out in full without repeats, making them over-long. The inclusion of double bar lines delineating sections, rehearsal marks (bar numbers are included), or labels to indicate where different sections occur, such as verse, chorus and middle eight, would help to orientate the performer.

Although these are all songs, the words are not included on the score. The melody line is not printed with the words for the singers to follow, who are expected to manage by reading the printed word. This approach is unlikely to encourage singers to develop

reading skills in staff notation. The trainees pointed out that one is obliged to try and coordinate reading from two sheets at once, or write the words on the music. Those trainees who were less familiar with the songs found this difficult to do, even though they are competent singers and fluent readers of both musical notation and text.

Even though most of the arrangements do not specify particular instruments, the parts are instrument-specific as dictated by range and key. Although teachers can adapt these parts using the MIDI files, it would have been sensible to cut out extra preparation time for the teacher and provide the printed parts in keys that are manageable for junior and intermediate performers on transposing instruments. For example, Bob Marley's 'Three little birds' is written in A, requiring B flat instruments to play in B major, and E flat instruments to play in F# major. The trainees pointed out that this was likely to be a barrier for players below Grade 5 standard.

The authors argue that they are presenting flexible arrangements which give pupils opportunities to improvise over given structures, as well as performing the given parts. Although it is an attractive idea, the result is confusing as these instructions are not adequately indicated in the music.

The authors suggest points where pupils can adapt the arrangements by improvising over given chord sequences, as in 'Mustang Sally' and 'Baby it's cold outside', but these are not notated on the parts. In this instance, rather than presenting a fully notated part, it may have been more appropriate to create a lead sheet: a summary notation providing appropriate melodic material indicating at what points the performers are at liberty to adapt and alter the music and where sections should be repeated. In addition, chord symbols should be included on all parts where pupils are to be encouraged to improvise, as the current arrangements appear to suggest that only pupils playing piano

or keyboard will explore new ideas at these points.

The arrangements are pedestrian and repetitive. Each section is an exact repeat of its previous manifestation. Variety and challenge could be achieved by giving parts different roles in the music, for example swapping tune and accompaniment between instruments. Unfortunately, musical interest is largely reserved for the more complex parts, leaving players of a lower standard playing less interesting music. Introducing variety through rhythmic interest and melodic variation would address this problem.

With careful editing, these arrangements could be used successfully in the classroom. The inclusion of MIDI files and CD backing facilitates the teacher in editing material, assuming that the teacher has sufficient experience of arranging material for junior and intermediate performers to be able to spot the weaknesses listed above. Several trainees pointed out that they might not have realised the difficulties inherent in the music presented for instruments that they did not themselves

play, and the group agreed that these could be obstacles to successful performance for the unwary teacher.

The parts are differentiated, but less able players are given significantly less interesting music to play. The trainees commented that this may be demotivating for the less able, and for those pupils who are starting out as performers. They also pointed out that some parts contain sections with significantly more complex passages than the general standard of the part would support, as is the case with the drum kit parts.

It is a constant challenge for composers and arrangers of music for children to create parts that are musically significant but within the technical capacity of the performer. It would not appear that these arrangements have fully achieved this important balance. Although it is an interesting selection of repertoire which will appeal to KS3 pupils, the arrangements are likely to require some adaptation before being applicable to the classroom.

REBECCA BERKLEY  
University of Southampton