

## Book Reviews

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### **European Perspectives on Music Education 2:**

**Artistry** by A. De Vugt & I. Malmberg.  
Innsbruck: Heibling, 2013. 288 pp.,  
paperback. € 44. ISBN: 9783850619813.

‘Music education should reflect music and musical practices and their current existence in society. This means that learning music is diverse, active and dynamic.’ This statement, found in the concluding chapter of the book *European Perspectives on Music Education 2: Artistry*, highlights in a nutshell the purpose of the book, which is to understand and challenge musical practices and perceptions in a diverse, active and dynamic 21st century society. The book is the second in a series published by the European Association for Music in Schools (EAS) and it contains a selection from papers presented at the 2012 annual EAS conference, in The Hague, on ‘Craftsmanship and Artistry’.

A very well-structured and informative introductory chapter explains that understanding and interpreting the term ‘artistry’ in music education is no easy matter. The book is presented in three sections: the chapters of the first section – *Artistry in Music Education* – explore creativity, authentic learning, craftsmanship and artistry in instrumental playing and singing, and the use and function of music in daily lives. The second section – *Key Components of Students’ Artistry* – discusses creative musicianship, argumentation skills and assessment as part of students’ development. The third section – *Teachers’ Artistry* – focuses on music specialist and generalist teachers as artists with reference to musical expertise, identity and learning outcomes for training in music. The majority of the studies presented draw on the authors’

own research and the methods adopted include observations, questionnaires and interviews.

Before focusing on a few chapters in some detail, there are several strengths of this book worth mentioning. Firstly, the book contains a wealth of research studies and other readings in languages other than English; mainly in German and in Dutch, and this is very much linked to the *music education Network's* (meNet) and the EAS's aims to ‘aid the intensification and reinforcement of mutual communication, transparency, discussion and Europe-wide understanding’ (Hennessy, Malmberg, Niermann and Vught, p. 260). Secondly, the book offers a variety of perspectives on artistry filtered through different educational systems. For example, Rūta Girdzijauskienė explains that Lithuanian music teachers identify communication and cooperation with pupils, their parents and colleagues as the key indicator of a pedagogue's competence to artistic abilities. This is no surprise considering that a substantial part of Lithuanian music teachers’ everyday practice revolves around cultural activity, which includes project management, event and extra-curricular activity organisation (contents, Song Festivals). A contrasting discourse on artistry is presented by Evert Bisschop Boele, who challenges the centrality of performance as ‘the quintessential musical behaviour’ (p. 55) that defines craftsmanship. He argues that ‘institutionalised musicality – music as a combination of art, craft and expression, finding its culmination in the performance – does not coincide with musicality as experienced in daily life by many pupils’ (p. 57) and proposes a form of music education that ‘takes into account not only the use of music in

performance but all possible uses of music, and not only artistic and expressive functions but all possible functions of music' (p. 57).

Thirdly, it was inspiring to read two chapters on the application of the theoretical framework of Cognitive Apprenticeship (Collins *et al.*, 1989, 1991) in group improvisation (Andrea Sangiorgio and Sarah Hennessy) and as the instructional approach towards developing an 'endogenous' definition of a music teachers' artistry (Thomas De Baets). This framework offered a lens through which to study effective choral conducting education (Varvarigou & Durrant, 2010) and its use by other studies illustrates how successfully the framework describes the parameters that influence effective teaching and learning during interactive music-making activities.

Finally, practical examples of music lessons where artistry was enabled and where the focus was directed on artistic group and individual (teacher or student) activity were offered in the chapters by Oliver Krämer; Leo Samama; Andrea Sangiorgio and Sarah Hennessy; Isolde Malmberg; Ruth Frischknecht and Brigitte Lion, Christine Stöger and Rineke Smilde.

So, what is artistry in music education? James Mainwaring (1951, p. 207) opined that 'the essential distinction between a craftsman and an artist is that which distinguishes a class from a species: the artist is a creative craftsman'. Oliver Krämer's chapter entitled 'Music education between artistic aspiration and the teaching of craftsmanship' took this definition a step further by exploring the relationship between craftsmanship and artistry in music and teaching. Inspired by Franz Koppé's philosophy of art, the author offered three art-oriented teaching situations as examples where the six essential features of art (absence of synonyms; synthesis of sensuality and meaning; symbolic character;

inconclusiveness of meaning; autotelic nature; and inclusion of variable particularities in invariable basic characteristics) could be adopted to 'enable musical laymen and laywomen to produce the highest possible degree of art (artistic behaviour) with few practical skills (manual ability)' (p. 42). Krämer highlights that 'music education would be selling itself too cheaply if it were to aim solely at craftsmanship' (p. 37) and urges music teachers and students to recognise and celebrate music's 'unique characteristic – its artistry and the concomitant existential experience . . . [with] music as a way of life, music as something to identify with, a life of fulfilment with music' (p. 37).

Isolde Malmberg's chapter on 'Assessing the artistic: music teachers establishing formative assessment' describes how a group of six music teachers, 'functioning as a practitioner research focus group' (p. 156) approached the issue of assessing their students' creative/ artistic performance. 'Hot topics' in the teacher focus group discussions included: time restrictions in offering formative feedback; 'inner feel' for grading and feedback by experienced teachers; the language of feedback and how it can be clear and helpful; quality of peer feedback; how to value process and product/performance (concept of school versus artistic creation); and over-assessment. When the author asked how teachers valued the processes/products of the music sessions in terms of their artistic value she found that, to the teachers, 'the concept of learning, daring and trying out new things were much more important than the question of quality or distinction of the artistic' (p. 161). Although this finding was not explored further, it enriches the discourse on musical artistry in formal music education contexts.

Lastly, Thomas De Baets asked the question 'how can we define a music

teacher's artistry?', which led him to the (working) definition that 'the artistry of the music teacher lies within the extent to which he can use his musical competences in "immediate" teaching situations' (p. 204). The definition emerged from an operational, three-dimensional model of real-time musical teaching actions that the author developed. The three dimensions of the model were: *action* (prepared, un-prepared, routinised, unprepared non-routinised), *communication* (verbal, non-verbal, musical) and *instruction* (modelling, scaffolding, coaching, fading). The author's 'contribution is a warm appeal to think of music teachers as professional entities, and not as two separate professionals united in one body (the musician and the teacher)' (p. 204).

To conclude, this book will serve as a rich resource to all musicians involved in education, but particularly to music teachers interested in music's multiple roles in today's society. The book will also appeal to readers who enjoy examining studies that embrace a qualitative research paradigm. The editors have done a great job in presenting different European viewpoints, which are undoubtedly of great value to European and non-European colleagues (students and teachers) in departments of music, performing arts and education around the world.

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### Composing Our Future: Preparing Music Educators to Teach Composition

by M. Kaschub & J. P. Smith. Oxford University Press, 2013. 377 pp., paperback. £22.50. ISBN: 978-0-19-983229-3.

The target audience for *Composing Our Future: Preparing Music Educators to Teach Composition* is clear from the outset. 'This book is designed to address the difficult topic of teaching music composition in today's schools' (p. 19). A key word in the title is 'preparing' rather than 'teaching', implying that a certain amount of groundwork needs to be done in order to enable successful teaching and learning of composition. It also demonstrates that the book's focus is not solely pedagogy but takes a much wider viewpoint; it is not so much a 'how to' book but rather an 'if you want to, then firstly you need to' resource. Another key question posed by the title comes from the words 'our future'; if this book is to be of any use to music educators, does it sit firmly in the 21st century?

The first inkling that Smith and Kaschub do indeed look to the future comes in the introductory section, where they write of three shifts in experience (p. 4). The second of these, the area of 'experiential context', is