

## Book Reviews

**Musical Development and Learning: The International Perspective**, edited by David J. Hargreaves and Adrian C. North. London: Continuum, 2001. 224 pp, £60 hardback.

As music learning becomes increasingly formalized in systems of education internationally, the field of comparative music education becomes more useful in deepening our understanding of the relationships among education, music, and society. In *Musical Development and Learning: The International Perspective*, editors David J. Hargreaves and Adrian C. North assemble an interesting collection of case studies of music education from across the globe. Their innovative publication represents a significant contribution to music education literature.

The values and practices of music education are embedded in the unique historical foundations and contemporary circumstances of a nation or community. Thus the editors were faced with the challenge of finding a strategy flexible enough to allow such uniqueness to permeate each case study while simultaneously addressing some common themes across all fifteen national or regional cases selected for inclusion in the book. A basic assumption of the book is that 'specific conditions which shape music education in each country – details of curriculum content and objectives and the specific methods and attitudes of the teachers involved – clearly have a direct influence upon children's musical development and learning' (p. xii). In that context, the book aims to explore these influences in addition to those that originate in activities and experiences which take place outside the classroom.

In the Preface, Hargreaves and North explain their methodology. They chose three broad issues around which authors were to

structure their chapters: aims and objectives of music education; contents and methods, and student issues. Aims and objectives included the three areas of performing, composing and listening to music, notation and music reading, and specialist and general music education. Under contents and methods authors were asked to address national curricula, technology, assessment, world and popular music, and multicultural issues. Student issues included gifted students, gender issues, music learning outside the classroom, and careers in music.

The editors present the case studies in alphabetical order, by the name of the country or region. This reviewer did not find such an arrangement helpful in moving from one chapter to another. (Of course the reader is free to approach reading the book with whatever order seems logical.) Chapter length ranges from eleven to seventeen pages, averaging about fourteen pages. Certain chapters are aimed at describing continents or regions (Africa, North America, post-USSR countries, Scandinavia, South America), while others focus on particular countries (Australia, China, Federal Republic of Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom). In this review, I will briefly describe the focus of each chapter, first approaching the chapters whose titles claim to address regions or continents.

Kathy Primos' chapter on music education in 'Africa' provides interesting insights into the 'uneasy co-existence' of African and western traditions as reflected in the transmission of music in formal education and beyond. The major issues she addresses are 'the pervasiveness of western culture, the legacies of colonialist structures, the effects of globalization and the desire to regain and maintain African traditions' (p. 1). This is a richly textured interpretation of music learning in the African tradition, and particularly in

South Africa which is the focus of her study. The chapter's structure is quite satisfying in that Primos first provides an overview of music learning and culture in sub-Saharan Africa, then focuses on South Africa, and concludes by returning to the larger context of teaching African music. The author recommends an inclusive approach which would consider African, western, global, and any other ways of music learning that can contribute to the process.

An attempt by any author to describe music learning in North America is an enormous task since the United States of America and Canada have their own distinctive set of historical circumstances, political structures, and cultural conditions. Author Rudolf Radocy is intimately familiar with music education in the United States and this is evident throughout the chapter. Yet, he chooses several topics that are relevant to both national contexts. They include immigration to the North American continent over the centuries, the dominance of competition in formal music education, research traditions, recent and contemporary developments in education such as mainstreaming and the standards movement, the role of schooling in culture, and teacher education. Separate chapters for Canada and the United States, or the separate treatment of both countries within a chapter on North America, would seem to be a more effective solution for describing music education in this context.

Attempts to address multiple unique national contexts in one chapter also apply to the chapters on post-USSR countries, Scandinavia, and South America. The chapter on South America could be retitled to reflect its focus on Brazil. The author, Alda de Jesus Oliveira, provides the reader with excellent historical and contemporary background on South America as a whole, and Brazil specifically. Although many readers are familiar with the approach of Villa-Lobos, the author

sets it in an historical context that illuminates his contribution. The author's rich portrayal of music education in Brazil demonstrates its growing professionalism, increasing governmental interest in music education, the incorporation of oral music traditions such as the Capoeira into the formal educational system, and heightened attention to research in music learning and development.

Maris Valk-Falk and Marina Gulina take the reader through a clear and insightful description of music and society in the former Soviet sphere, thus providing a background for understanding music education in Russia and post-USSR countries whose formal music education systems were laid during the Soviet regime. The authors highlight the central role played by Russian aesthete, musicologist and composer Boris Assafiev in the development of music and music education philosophy. In essence this chapter is focused on Russian music education and I question the title of the chapter which infers that all post-USSR countries can be described collectively. These countries, such as Estonia or Lithuania, although having a common Soviet past experience, are reconstructing a national identity. National musical development plays a significant role in that effort, one that is unique in each national context.

Although the Scandinavian countries are located in close proximity to some of the post-USSR countries, the status of music and music education is quite different, based on Bengt Olsson's account. Olsson states near the beginning that he is writing from a Swedish perspective and does not attempt to generalize to all Scandinavian countries. One feature of musical culture throughout the region is the presence of community music schools and the close relationship between music in the classroom and music in everyday life. The latter is identified as authentic music learning or 'ethno-didactic' where students' everyday musical experiences are used in school to

develop their knowledge of music (p. 180). For the reader who is interested in assessment of music learning across cultures, Olsson provides a detailed analysis of assessment issues, referring primarily to Sweden and Norway.

Other European countries included in the book are treated in separate chapters: the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, and the United Kingdom. In his organization of the chapter on the Federal Republic of Germany, author Heiner Gembris adheres strictly to the topics provided by the editors. A striking feature is his constant reference to survey results to support his description of music education at all educational levels and music in the culture at large. Such extensive documentation facilitates an in-depth analysis and the identification of strengths and weaknesses in the system. Since we frequently depend on data to advocate the arts, it would be wise for each state or nation to adopt the standards and methods that have been developed in the FRG.

Johannella Tafuri's description of music learning and development in Italy demonstrates well-established and rich musical traditions reaching back to the birth of the conservatoire in the fourteenth century, the opera-based musical culture of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the highly developed discourse about music pedagogy. This chapter could be used as core reading in a graduate seminar on music learning. The need for reform in music education in Poland is one conclusion drawn by authors Wojciech Jankowski and Kacper Miklaszewski. They call for immediate reform in both the General Music Education system (GME), controlled by the Ministry of Education, and Specialized Music Education (SME), financed and governed by the Ministry of Culture. Graça Mota is similarly critical of music education in Portugal, particularly 'the absence of any real assessment of its institutional agents, curricula and syllabuses' (p. 161). She calls for the incorporation of

diverse models of music education that can accommodate many different cultural values. For example, the Portuguese formal music education system ignores the *banda*, a form of community music education that takes place outside of school culture.

Graham F. Welch's account of music education in the United Kingdom clearly illustrates a highly developed and well-documented system. Welch confronts the cultural and musical realities of the contemporary child who is 'born into a complex and varied, sonic world' (p. 203). Whereas other countries may be struggling with basic reform issues, Welch's primary recommendation is for increased communication between designers of the various national curricula and the UK research community. This attests to the advanced stage of development of music education in the UK.

Music education in Australian schools and communities is highly developed, according to Gary McPherson and Peter Dunbar-Hall's account. Music is 'one of the most visible and imaginative subjects in the schools curriculum' with high levels of student involvement and this is matched by the 'high level of general participation in various forms of music-making within the wider community' (p. 24). This situation seems to be founded on a national policy that views the arts holistically as a 'Key Learning Area', serving the core goals of education. The authors provide a comprehensive, yet concise and clear description of music education at various levels, with special attention to achievements of Australian music education they consider unique – universal access, official support of music in the curriculum, eclectic methodologies, acknowledgement of student interests and needs, teacher autonomy, broadly based approach, and inclusion of diverse repertoires. Unlike other national contexts, it seems that the healthy state of music in the culture at large has developed in close

relationship with music education in the formal school system.

Descriptions of music education in North and South Asian countries (China, Japan, Korea, India) appear throughout the book. Cheung-shing Yeh emphasizes that music education in China is influenced by a deep-rooted belief founded in Confucian philosophy that 'musical learning is a means of achieving morality, beauty, self-control and virtuous living' (p. 38). Yeh's overview of twentieth-century music education development is particularly helpful in understanding why western music is not central to the music education process. Many parallels can be drawn with Valk-Falk and Gulina's account of music education in Russia.

In contrast to China, Tadahiro Murao and Bernadette Wilkins point out that music education in Japan 'is not seen as a means of communicating political or ideological doctrines' (p. 90). Also, the formal system has been orientated towards western music since the late nineteenth century. Of central concern in this national setting is the teaching and learning of traditional Japanese music both within the formal system and outside the classroom under the *iemoto* system or in the new 'culture schools' managed by companies, churches, and so on. The authors achieve a fine balance in their description of music education inside the classroom and in the community, and their account is quite optimistic about the future of musical culture in general.

One of the fascinating features of Myung-sook Auh and Robert Walker's chapter on music education in the Republic of Korea is the inclusion of Korean traditional views on child development in music. This provides a meaningful backdrop to the subsequent analysis of the national music curriculum, how music is taught, and selected psychological and social issues. Similar to Japan, South Africa and other countries, Korea's most important task, according to the authors, lies in promoting traditional music. In Korea, this is particularly

challenging since the strong political and cultural influences of Japan and the United States have impacted the Korean educational system.

One South Asian country is included – India. Author Gerry Farrell recognizes the enormity of the task of accounting for music education in India and chooses to limit his narrative to the relationship between formal and informal methods of music education in Indian classical music. Unlike the majority of colonized countries, Farrell states that western classical music has had little or no impact on materials or performance practices within this classical genre (p. 59). The author provides a detailed account of learning Indian classical music in the *guru-shishya* system and in the college system. He points out that the specialized and elite music education system of the past is no longer sufficient to meet the competing demands of mass education. While the focus on Indian classical music is effective, it leaves the reader wondering about music education in the myriad of other music learning contexts throughout India.

*Musical Development and Learning: The International Perspective* is a valuable contribution to the literature on comparative music education. It is an important status report of music education in several countries and regions across the globe. The editors provided clear guidance to the authors and that resulted in a cohesive collection of case studies. A major strength of the collection is the inclusion of music education systems and contexts outside the formal system of education. In the final chapter the editors discuss common concerns across individual chapters: the historical, political and cultural background of each country; curriculum issues, aims and objectives, music learning inside and outside schools. This interpretation extends the book's value beyond the sum of the individual accounts of national and regional contexts. For this reader, the most striking themes that

surfaced in the various accounts of music education were the differences between rural versus urban access to music education, even within countries that include music in the national curriculum; the impact of political ideologies on the form and content of music education; the diversity of developmental stages in music education in different countries, reflected in the degree to which music education is documented and the breadth and depth of the research base; the varying relationships between music in mass education and specialist music education; and, the dominance of popular music and mass media in the musical education of children and adolescents.

Minor criticisms include the use of the definite article in the book's title. 'The International Perspective' implies that it can be contained within this singular collection and from the perspective of these particular authors. In addition, I would change the order of the chapters and present the studies based on geographical proximity, historical circumstances or a logical choice other than alphabetical order. However, these are but minor recommended changes in an overall fine collection of essays that not only provides interesting narratives but also demonstrates the challenges and tasks involved in organizing and presenting comparative studies in music education.

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**Sound Identities: Popular Music and the Cultural Politics of Education**, edited by Cameron McCarthy, Glenn Hudak, Shawn Miklaucic and Paula Saukko. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1999. 504 pp, \$32.95 paperback.

In this timely work the editors and authors grapple with some of the most contemporary

and contentious issues regarding popular music, identity and education. The theoretical perspectives explored in these eighteen essays are as many and varied as the language and styles of discourse employed in them. The cultural materials from which the discussions are derived are equally diverse. There are wide-ranging references to sociological studies, ethnographies, historical and cultural studies, the internet, personal experiences and anecdotes. At first glance this *mélange* of cultural voices may seem disparate and lacking in focus but a closer reading reveals that such an approach is highly appropriate to the complexities of the subject matter under discussion. As in all studies that seek to explore the dynamics of cultural change in the present day the intellectual ground in *Sound Identities* is always shifting, or to put it in the language of cultural theorists it is continually 'contested'. Although this sense of 'nowness' is ultimately a strong point of the work, like the often ephemeral fads and fashions of youth culture that are the central focus of investigation, many of the references in this book may very quickly seem out of date. In some respects it remains unclear from these essays whether or not the concerns they raise are highly localized and bounded by narrow cultural parameters. A central question arises from this observation: are there some currents of thought, modes of action and cultural positions that transcend their moment in time and apply to all youth cultures?

The book is structured in four sections: Music in the Nation: Rap, Hip Hop, and the Flow of Values; Music in the Postcolony and in the Diaspora; Music in the Contested Metropolis: Rock and the Contradictory Politics of Youth; The Pedagogy of Musical Affect. The book is not primarily a discussion of the role of popular music in school teaching, or any other institutionalized educational setting, although these learning situations do make an appearance in a number of essays. However,

the authors state that they have four clear objectives in this book: to raise the status of popular music studies in the curriculum; to show the relevance of cultural studies analysis to schooling; to widen the debate on the relationship of popular culture to schooling; and to call attention to the 'transformative and reproductive tensions embodied in the production and consumption of popular music and other cultural forms in contemporary educational and social life' (p. 3).

One of the strengths of this book is the broad and encompassing notion it presents of what education is and how it functions. The role of so-called informal learning and how young people's relationships to popular culture define identity and learning processes in a number of educational spheres – the school, the home, the street – is a central focus of this work. The tone of the writing is often political and polemical, steeped in the increasingly self-referential and sometimes confusing terminology of post-modernist cultural theorizing. The site of cultural contestation is chiefly urban North America, although references are made to other areas, for example British South Asian music in Nina Asher's essay on Apache Indian, Cameron McCarthy's essay on Barbadian school songs, Lise Waxer's discussion of Colombian Cali music, and Chris Richards's discussion of attitudes to rock in a London school.

From these essays emerges the idea that 'sound identities' is a multi-layered and deeply complex concept, and one that, in the opinion of authors, has generally been not fully understood or utilized by educators. The section on rap and hip hop is fascinating in this respect. Several authors approach the idea of rap as an 'oppositional' form capable of expressing discontent and anger about racism, segregation and economic disparities. Simultaneously rap often celebrates sexist and criminal behaviour, and acquiescent attitudes towards commodification and consumerism. A

particularly interesting discussion in the Introduction centres around the perceived appropriation of dress style from black hip hop culture in the Tommy Hilfiger line of designer clothing. Drawing on an Internet debate on this subject the authors show how the question of identity is rooted in the often confused connection made between musical genres and consumer items. Hence there are voices in cyberspace decrying Hilfiger's clothes as representative of white America and distortion of the 'real' hip hop community whereas others claim these clothes as a racist symbol of white opposition to black attitudes. The authors observe: 'In all of this, the themes of anxiety and celebration work themselves into contemporary discourses over the cultural practices of inner city youth' (p. 5).

Questions of cultural ownership loom large throughout this book. Among the many interesting takes of this issue is Ruth Vinz's 'Learning From the Blues: Beyond Essentialist Readings of Cultural Texts'. The context of this discussion is an in-service training course for teachers in a large North American city. By chronicling the way in which discussions of the meaning of the blues developed over a period of time Vinz shows how ideas of identity in relation to music shifted, changed and realigned. In often heated exchanges between the teachers the blues acted as a catalyst for the construction of essentialist positions on race and gender, but also as a way of challenging these positions. Vinz's use of ethnographic material is strong and focused and demonstrates how effectively these types of data may be employed to reveal often hidden, or unspoken, cultural undercurrents.

However, in my opinion, not all such material is employed as effectively elsewhere in the book. For example, in 'Gender, Generation, Space and Popular Music' Angharad N. Valdivia reports on a dialogue with her adolescent daughter Rhianonn S. Bettivia concerning preferences in popular music,

particularly within the home. Sibling preference and rivalry loom large and the position-taking around popular music genres will be very familiar to all readers (but how quickly everyone seems to forget that they were adolescents once too, before they were cultural theorists . . .). The main focus here is pre or early adolescent (PEA) girls and their musical preference. The author claims that her article is a dialogue between a feminist mother and a feminist daughter, but surely it is a questionable assertion to project theoretical positions such as 'feminism' on to children so young? In the Introduction the editors make this statement about Valdivia and Bettivia's study: 'They maintain that adolescent girls have contradictory needs and desires and they prosecute these in their participation in popular culture. In this sense, girls like Rhiannon are not the mindless charges of the culture industry and the cultural forms that it produces and circulates' (p. 14). The autonomy of action suggested here seems overstated. Adolescent preferences for music are often centrally about the construction of difference and bonding within peer groupings, and those differences fade and change as quickly as age and popular fashion. Valdivia and Bettivia's article can be read in an entirely different way: no matter the musical preferences of girls and boys perhaps they are primarily being trained, through music and other cultural forms, to be good consumers of clothes, music, even political or social ideologies. Surely a key part of the lore of late twentieth-century consumerism was that everyone has a choice . . .?

*Sound Identities* is a complex and thought-provoking work. It deserves to become a valuable resource for all those working in education who seek to understand the abiding and central importance of popular music and culture in the lives of young people.

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**Many Seeds, Different Flowers. The Music Education Legacy of Carl Orff**, edited by Andre de Quadros. Nedlands, Australia: Callaway International Resource Centre for Music Education, University of Western Australia, 2000. 235 pp, \$Aus15.50 (for further information contact circme@arts.uwa.edu.au).

For over forty years, Carl Orff's contribution to the teaching of music, within the context of a general education, has been recognized across the world. He is rightly acknowledged as one of the 'Great' modern music educators, and this recent publication of writings by distinguished academics and practitioners serves to illustrate his extraordinary influence. Most of these papers were originally presented at the Melbourne international Orff centenary conference in 1995. The editor points out that together they do not constitute yet another statement of the Orff philosophy; rather, the papers cover a range of current issues but usually with reference to the lasting effects of Orff's highly original and imaginative innovations.

Few people would want to dispute Andre de Quadros's claim that almost everybody working in the field of music education has been affected, in one way or another, by Orff's ideals and principles. His insistence that all children are musical is now widely accepted, but it is worth remembering that in the immediate post-war years such a view was strikingly unusual since educational thinking was still dominated by a classical view of intelligence and abilities. Musical talent was frequently regarded as being reserved for a small minority; the idea of musical operations as representing one of several intelligences, if ever mentioned, was likely to be dismissed by decision makers as nothing more than a romantic theory. But for Orff, musicality was part of the human condition, to be nurtured through practical activity that would be not

only artistic and creative but also accessible. Schulwerk is a form of music-making that is immediate and meaningful to all. This point is taken further by John Drummond and Doug Goodkin in their very scholarly and comprehensive papers. Orff, the composer and teacher, developed a distinctive style in which music is an expression of the community rather than the individual. Accordingly 'elemental' music is within the range of everyone and especially suitable for children. Furthermore, music and musical education were never seen in isolation. There was always an emphasis on holistic learning and the development of the whole child. This is the theme of Sue Snyder's fascinating account of how an activity like weaving can be related to music, and bring together a number of different intelligences. Another form of cross-curricula work is discussed by Judith Thomas and Susan Katz who reflect on links between poetry and music and illustrate how it is possible to unite the two disciplines in powerful educational encounters.

Some of the writings in this diverse collection demonstrate ways in which the Orff principles have helped to shape official policies and practices in different countries. Lois Birkenshaw-Fleming maintains that this is certainly the case in Canadian elementary schools where Schulwerk, more than anything else, has had a profound influence on class music teaching over the past thirty years. Similarly Tatsuko Takizawa and Dorothy Taylor indicate how the principles are incorporated into the centralized national curricula of Japan and England. Dr Taylor also pays tribute to Margaret Murray who has done so much to disseminate Orff's ideas over a long period, and no doubt many readers will have happy memories of Miss Murray's splendid courses for students and teachers.

Orff's influence on current practice is to be found not only in the adoption and adaptation of his pedagogical strategies but also in his more general commitment to musical and

educational innovation. Consequently, Judy Bond's thought-provoking paper on moving students to a greater understanding and appreciation of contemporary music, although rooted in Orff's approach to teaching, is a significant development rather than a modification of his pedagogical techniques. And, of course, ideas change. For Kathryn Marsh a critical re-examination of the Orff principles provides an appropriate starting point for an investigation into Australian playground singing games which in turn sheds light on the nature of children's musical development. The theme of games is also central to Wolfgang Hartmann's sensitive paper in which emphasis is placed on encouraging children to explore and play with their music in ways that will foster creative potential.

For practitioners, in both primary and secondary schools, seeking new ideas for classroom activities, these papers will be a rich and stimulating resource. Much attention is given to the notion of music education in and for a pluralist society. Peter Dunbar-Hill reports on classroom activities for secondary school students which draw on popular styles and Ann Power also demonstrates how Orff principles can be used to develop experiences for thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds, based on what she calls their particular musical property. It is well known that Orff always showed great respect for cultural diversity and was interested in all types of music, especially non-western genres. Carol Gartrell and Emily Akuno present two charming children's songs from Kenya and provide much information about the country's musical traditions, and an illuminating account of Namibean songs and dance by Minette Mans also includes plenty of ideas for integrated classroom practice. A rather different type of practice is described by Heather McLaughlin and Jon Madin in their report of marimba building as a community activity supported by the Victorian Orff-Schulwerk Association. It is clearly a popular pursuit and the paper is a



timely reminder that for many children instrument making is actually a very good way of getting them going on music.

Although all the contributors are concerned to some extent with practical ideas, some also explore the background issues to the multicultural and intercultural themes in more detail. Indeed, for people with an interest in ethnomusicological issues there is much material here that will prove relevant and valuable. Patricia Shehan Campbell, well known for her promotion of 'world musics', provides an excellent article on Cambodian music which is also a fine introduction to the country's history and culture. For those who are not familiar with Jewish dance music from Eastern Europe, Gregory Hurworth's paper on Klezmer will open up a challenging and exciting soundscape and probably a new literature. In the same way, Ellen McCullough-Brason's moving account of the Navajo Indian's history, culture and music, contains many useful references that may not be widely known in music education circles. Bryan Burton also writes about native American music and dance and introduces carefully designed instructional materials based on traditional Hopi and Saponi melodies. Nowadays, there is much interest in the gamelan and teachers will welcome the discussion of Balinese music and culture, together with the suggestions for classroom practice, as outlined by Mary Shamrock and I Nyoman Wenten.

The editor is to be congratulated on bringing together these writings which represent a wide variety of expertise and experience. They add a new dimension to the Orff perspective and will be an extremely useful addition to college libraries and departmental resources. A publication with such a range of contributions will be of value not only to practising teachers, but also to those engaged in the academic study of music education and to researchers. Readers will probably forgive the typographical errors and even the missing

references, but some might be slightly perturbed by the tendency towards a prescriptive tone in a few of the papers. The word 'should' sometimes creeps in and reminds one of the language of official documents, especially those in England. Of course, Orff himself was never prescriptive; indeed, the characteristic features of his writings are modesty and a sense of circumspection. Things might and could be otherwise. Sadly, in these days of national curricula and central control we are in danger of losing that reflective orientation which was so essential to Orff's vision. Consequently, it is reassuring to know that there are still those like Professor de Quadros and his colleagues who uphold and promote ideas and forms of experimental and exploratory practice. For these are things that are at the heart of curriculum development and vital to the broader enterprise that is music education.

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**Children Composing 4–14** by Joanna Glover.

London: Routledge Falmer, 2000. 143 pp, £14.99 paperback.

On the face of it, the title *Children Composing* may not seem all that unusual or controversial. As Joanna Glover points out, the idea of children composing music as part of their education has been around since at least the work of Maxwell Davies in the 1960s. Indeed, Glover finds an interesting reference to the work of the composer Walford Davies as far back as 1922, encouraging children to create melodies. What is interesting (if not unique) is that Glover's book, in its first section, urges all of us to do something which we have conceivably neglected: this is to listen, in great detail, to the music of children . . . and to learn.

The author's aim is stated unequivocally:

The aim of this book is to give an account of children's composing, from 4–14, which may help bring together the dual considerations of encouraging children's musical and compositional development and helping them to integrate work done in school with the musical worlds they experience beyond. The intention is to explore how children's own music-making activity can be built on through the ways in which teachers and composers work with pupils in school. (p. 2)

The book begins interestingly, with a series of pictures of composers, seen through the eyes and imaginations of some children aged seven and eight. Light-hearted though they are, the pictures demonstrate what a mythology there is surrounding composers and what they do. Children have their own view of characters like composers, and have their own way of going about creating music. The pictures alone are a salutary lesson to music educators and composers, and a good introduction to one of the book's basic premises: that children compose interesting music in their own way, largely free of the stereotypes and mythologies of adults. As Glover observes:

Children are inventive and capable as music makers. They make music independently of being shown or taught how to do so. (p. 1)

The basic structure of the book combines a chronologically based account of the developmental sequencing of children's composing with closely related chapters focusing on related themes. Chapter 1 sensibly gets straight to the core of the subject, with an introductory account of children's music. This is followed by *Children and Composing*, and then by *Listening to Children's Music*, which addresses the role of teachers (indeed of adults in general). Clearly, we don't listen often enough, or well enough, and when we do give the music some listening time and space, it is usually for some ulterior reason, possibly to do

with fitting to a curriculum or achieving an (adult) target. There is much discussion throughout the book of the issue of allowing adequate time and space, and a powerful case is made here for flexibility, leading to quality.

Chapters 4 to 7 focus in turn upon age ranges, beginning with children aged four to seven. Ideas are supported and enriched here through reference to examples of children's music, always shown in their own notation, and to other research. There is much wisdom here. I refer, for instance, to the following comment:

Instrumental skills can easily be overlooked when composing is seen simply as confined to a brief class activity carried out with school instruments in the music lesson. (p. 77)

I also like the attention to musical detail here. Later in the chapter, when discussing E's recorder piece, the author shows how focused a teacher's advice can be, when based upon realistic musical analysis of the child's output.

When we reach Chapter 7, subtitled *Musical Style, Children aged ten to fourteen*, I particularly draw attention to the list of strategies to help children see school music as integrated with music outside. This comprehensive list of nine points is one of many such check-lists in the book, showing that our author is able to combine the researcher's view with that of the teacher.

Chapter 8, although seeming to be added on at the end, is highly important. It seems that we have accepted the importance of professional composers in education ever since the Gulbenkian report *The Arts in Schools* (1982). What we have rarely considered is what their role should or could be, with the result that quality residencies and projects almost seem to happen accidentally. Here, Glover cogently asks many of the right questions from an educator's point of view, to enable planners to construct interactions between children and composers which at least have a reasonable

chance of being successful. She also addresses the problem of the one-off, short-lived interaction. Writing as someone who has attempted to bridge the composer/educator gap for many years, I can testify to the candour and the usefulness of her discussions on this subject.

The final chapter, *Composing in Schools*, perhaps brings us back to a focus on activities inside schools, and yet Glover counsels us always to take into account children's musical experiences outside school, including avoiding the obvious stereotypes, for instance that all teenagers always listen to pop. A listing of the subheadings here helps to show how Glover has contextualised composing in schools: Time, Quiet, Materials, Aloneness, Partnership, Groupwork, Class community, Notebooks, Reviews, Audiences.

Just to pick out two of the intriguing sections here, 'Quiet' appeals for sensitive listening and undisturbed work, 'Reviews' refers to children responding orally, and in writing, to their work and that of their peers.

As I read the early sections of this book, I found myself beginning a mental debate with the author about some of the issues. For instance, whether children work better alone or in groups; to what extent teachers should select musical exemplars for their students, rather than relying on the quality of their own listening; considering how much of a composing assignment should be defined, acting as a limitation and stimulus, or left open-ended.

It is a sign of the high quality of this book that as I proceeded, I discovered that many of these issues were not only discussed, but at least partially resolved in very sophisticated ways. As a text for interrogation and debate, and as a source of high-level thinking about creativity in the curriculum, I have no hesitation in recommending Joanna Glover's book. Her final words are apposite:

Time spent on identifying what is to be aimed for may seem like idealism when

viewed from some perspectives. Without such idealism, children's music is easily lost. (p. 134)

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**Making Music at the Piano – Learning Strategies for Adult Students**, by Barbara English Maris. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. 242 pp, £20.

*Making Music at the Piano – Learning Strategies for Adult Students* is a most welcome addition to the bookshelves of adult piano students and their teachers. It is unlike anything else currently available, as far as I am aware, in that it is written specifically for adult students and recognizes the unique problems they have when learning the piano. The book contains a series of wide-ranging discussions that are designed to encourage independence of thought and action in adult students. It gives beginners the opportunity to read further about issues and problems that have arisen during their piano lessons and urges them to experiment and think for themselves when trying to find solutions. The book is aimed at early level, new or returning adult piano students. In the UK context I would suggest that adult students ranging from beginner to Grade 5 (Associated Board) level would most benefit from reading this book, although there is also plenty of material for those of a higher grade. The author, Barbara English Maris, aims to provide adult students with a resource that can act as a supplement to their teacher and their lessons. It is worth pointing out at this stage that the book is not designed to replace the teacher. Maris, Professor Emerita of The Catholic University of America, is a piano teacher with a vast amount of piano teaching experience at all levels. She has tried in her writing to share her teaching experience and the strategies she has used over the years so that students may

increase their efficiency at the piano and enjoy their playing to the full.

The contents of the book are divided into two sections. The first, *Pianists and Pianos*, includes chapters on Clarifying Goals, Learning about Learning and Developing Musicality. It asks questions such as how do people learn and what makes a pianist sound musical? The second section, *Pianists at Pianos: Productive Practice*, covers topics which include learning to play, planning effective rehearsals and identifying and diagnosing problems. There are also four appendices, including a useful performance and sight-reading checklist. Each chapter is divided into four sections, 'concepts to consider', 'activities to explore', 'thoughts about words' and 'additional resources'. As the title suggests, the main theme of the book is that all students should be encouraged to play musically from the very beginning. Other aims include helping students to develop their listening skills, setting and achieving manageable targets, and supporting and helping them to understand what is causing their frustrations. The latter is bound to strike a chord in many adults who often have a good cognitive understanding of the music but physically are unable to execute the moves.

*Making Music at the Piano* begins by asking questions designed to help the new or returning students to consider their goals. What do they want to accomplish and how much time can they spend trying to accomplish it? Students are then encouraged to consider whether their answers to these two questions are compatible or not. From the very beginning of the book Maris stresses to her readers that they 'do not have to wait months before you play musically' (p. 5) and the 'activities to explore' sections in each chapter help to reinforce this basic assumption. For example, in Chapter 1 students are asked to 'experiment with sounds'. They are encouraged to learn that by making just small adjustments to the volume and length of tones there is an enormous sound

palette at the pianist's disposal. Her explanations of topics such as the right and left hemispheres of the brain and short-term and long-term memory are brief but clear and informative. Very importantly, these sections help students to understand why they make the same mistakes repeatedly, in spite of their best intentions. Adults can get frustrated by their seeming lack of progress and being able to read and consider various reasons and possible solutions is a beneficial way of helping them to rationalize their problems.

Chapter 7, *Planning Effective Rehearsals*, is a thought-provoking discussion of practice and encourages beginners to consider in great depth how best to use their time. Maris suggests developing a rehearsal agenda that incorporates a wide range of categories. This includes repertoire, improvisational activities, technical patterns, etudes, sight-reading, analysing and memorizing. She then presents a detailed breakdown of an hour's practice and shows how a daunting sixty minutes can be turned into a highly productive practice session. In the 'activities to explore' section, the readers are encouraged to assess their morale following their practice sessions, giving their response on a scale of 1–5 to statements such as 'I enjoyed this rehearsal' and 'I can identify specific things that I can do now with greater ease and security'. Words and our use of words feature highly in the book as Maris feels that 'sometimes words are accompanied by a good deal of garbage' (p. 16). She considers the words 'always do your very best', a phrase that is often heard in childhood. However, she argues that as adults we should come to realize that trying to do our very best in everything can just lead to frustration and anger. Instead she suggests we should do as well as we can, given the circumstances.

The tone Maris uses throughout the book is a positive one. At every stage there are questions designed to encourage adult students to be clear-cut in their thinking. Negative statements such as 'I can't play this passage. It is too

difficult' become 'I still need to do more work on that passage'. An adult student to whom I lent the book found this confident way of thinking extremely helpful as it enabled her to put her playing into perspective and clarified and reminded her of different ways of practising between lessons. She found of particular benefit the sections that asked her to consider why she was learning the piano and what her goals were. In addition, she was fascinated by the discussion of the brain and how learning takes place.

Although *Making Music at the Piano* is primarily aimed at adult piano students, I have no doubt that it is just as pertinent a read for their piano teachers. Its emphasis on making music as opposed to teaching technical skills is a welcome one in a world where most piano lessons, whether for adults or children, seem to be based on the acquisition of technical skills. Furthermore, the book reinforces the fundamental principle in music education of the sound coming before the symbol. It will help to remind teachers how new skills are learnt and will enable them to view the problems of their pupils more sympathetically. Hopefully, the book will also inspire piano teachers to reassess their own methodology, considering how to include many of the activities into their teaching and what the benefits to their pupils might be. *Making Music at the Piano* might also encourage teachers to be more creative in their teaching approaches with less emphasis on technique. As Maris points out 'piano technique is not just something done with the fingers or body. For musicians, technique can never be isolated from the music itself' (p. 159).

Like all good books, *Making Music at the Piano* was a thought-provoking read. It made me reconsider some of my teaching approaches and view them in a fresh light. It is a book that adult piano students have deserved and needed for a long time.

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**Performing Matters** by Barry Gibson. Oxford: Heinemann Educational, 2001. Loose-leaf pack in binder with 2CDs, 220 pp, £66.99 + £2.46 VAT. All pages may be photocopied legally.

Early in the introduction to this new resource, the author explains that it is not

'a one-stop shop' or a 'complete package'. It's more a set of wide-ranging recipes catering for a broad range of abilities, which you can access, select from, incorporate and order, according to your needs.

Designed to suit pupils at Key Stage 3 (ages eleven to fourteen), *Performing Matters* differs significantly from its many sister publications from the same stable: *Music Matters*; *New Music Matters 11–14*; *Singing Matters*; *Developing Singing Matters* and others. Some practitioners have felt uneasy about the 'one-stop shops' and the 'complete packages' that have dominated secondary music classrooms in recent years because such 'methods' reduce the need for teachers to consider their own aims and strategies. A sceptical view might be summarized: 'Buy the kit; read the instructions; get the kids to do it and everything slots into place. I have met the requirements of the National Curriculum; "assessment" has been done; I don't have to worry about what I teach or why.'

*Performing Matters* is not like that. It is concerned with ideas as much as with methods or materials. For this reason, the author's description of it as 'a set of wide-ranging recipes' undersells its merits. Many other schemes are 'sets of recipes', some of which lead to unappetising fare: composing by formula; nonsensical 'ragas'; babyish sound effects and more. Barry Gibson's offering is much better. If it had to be summed up in a few words, it is a 'set of stimuli'. It invites teachers to think, and teachers will encourage pupils to think, and to think musically as well.

The introduction runs to fifty-five pages, leaving 154 pages of ideas and suggested activities, and a few more pages devoted to lists of resources, contacts and references. Readers will be exasperated or delighted by the introductory section. Gibson delves into the philosophy of performing, viewing the activity from every vantage-point, borrowing freely from Swanwick, Odam and others, somewhat in the style of a higher-degree dissertation. To some, such navel-gazing may seem superfluous. 'Why doesn't he just get on with it?', they might ask. For others, less experienced teachers of music in particular, the discussion could be highly stimulating. I was delighted to see serious attention being paid to musical memory, playing by ear and improvisation. Gibson's advice to teachers is always sound and seems to be based on solid experience as both a teacher and musician. He dwells appropriately on pupils' need to listen while performing, attending to expressive and musical qualities, and on teachers' need to vary their methods to suit different circumstances. His style of writing is lively and readable if a little didactic, patronising even, but what he says should be of enormous value to receptive readers.

The main body of the text is divided into 'Starters, games, exercises and warm-ups', 'Beginner's luck – starters for instruments', 'Main projects' and 'Style projects'. The projects are divided into units which is more confusing than helpful. The 'Starters, games, exercises and warm-ups' are explained very briefly, each one under the subheadings: 'main aim', 'get organised', 'what to do' and 'comments'. The aims are self-explanatory, for example being aware of a steady beat; combining rhythms; controlling pitch; being aware of chord changes; understanding, using and developing musical motifs. The ideas themselves are not particularly new, but they are presented as cameos or vignettes, not as grandiose projects leading nowhere, as is the

case in some other publications. They should encourage pupils to listen and to think, although some of the exercises require more skill than might be found among pupils in this age group. Almost any of these exercises will provide a useful start to a lesson, offering clear aims and enjoyable activities.

'Beginner's luck' is a less convincing section because it strays too far from the reality of most classrooms. The purpose is to introduce pupils to the workings and techniques of different kinds of instruments, classified here as exploring wind-sounds, string-sounds, percussion, keyboards and piano. Some pupils might find a measure of success and pleasure in exploring the kazoo or prepared piano, but most will be daunted by suggestions that they can just 'pick up' circular breathing on the didgeridoo, play *spiccato* on a violin or master a 'double stroke roll' on a side drum. Although failure seems to be built in to some of these proposals, the principle of pupils exploring all the instruments available is thoroughly appropriate. The sights need to be lowered, however, for example by showing pupils how to play the four open strings of the violin *pizzicato*, holding it in the style of a banjo. Interestingly, 'exploring the voice', which might be the most fertile field, is not included.

The main projects develop many of the techniques explored in the earlier sections. The aim for each project is offered as 'the idea', and the practicalities are explained under the headings: 'what you need', 'getting it together', and 'performing the music'. Most of the projects are accompanied by notated or graphic scores, and the musical examples on the two CDs offer extra support. The 'main projects' are followed by 'style projects', covering Classical music from the West, Popular 20th century music from the West, Music from South America, African rhythms, Music from Asia (China, Thailand and South India), and Music from Eastern Europe. Each project includes ample advice on using the techniques within lessons.

The description above provides only a taste of the riches within the package. The two CDs comprise eighty-three tracks, nearly all of which are very well recorded. However, the examples fail to complement the vitality of the written sections. Apart from a few examples of non-western music, the tracks are generated electronically, even the vocal parts in places. The rhythmic rigidity and anaemic timbres are wearing. I would far prefer to hear real pupils performing enthusiastically, if somewhat erratically, than endure the robotic and inexpressive offerings of a computer. This is the serious weakness of the package. Because virtually no 'live' music is offered, one might begin to doubt whether the exercises and projects can be done by real pupils in real classrooms. The misjudgement is compounded further by the inclusion of synthesized arrangements of music by Monteverdi, Purcell and Mozart. Anyone who loves and respects western classical music will be absolutely repelled by these travesties. When compared against the introduction to the package, which dwells so appropriately on the need for sensitivity and musical discrimination, such crass offerings appear all the more obnoxious and shocking.

As a compendium of ideas *Performing Matters* could inspire many teachers and their pupils, but be warned. The author clearly expects high standards and genuine progress in lessons because most of the exercises and projects are exceptionally challenging. Instant gratification and success are not on the menu. Pupils will have to listen hard, work hard and use their brains to master cross-rhythms, develop musical motifs and sustain their concentration in longer performances. If they succeed, interest in continuing their musical studies into Key Stage 4 (ages fourteen to sixteen) may well increase.

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**The Bach Companion, CD-Rom**, issued by Harmonia Mundi, 2000 to accompany the following boxed sets of CDs:  
*Mass in B minor* and *Magnificat*, performed by Collegium Vocale, directed by Philippe Herreweghe, HMX 2908110.12, £25.99.  
Cantatas BWV 21, 42, 56, 78, 82, 158, performed by Collegium Vocale, directed by Philippe Herreweghe, HMX 2908116.18, £34.49.  
*Christmas Oratorio* and Motets BWV 525–30, performed by the Rias Chamber Choir and the Berlin Akademie für Alte Music, directed by René Jacobs, HMX 2908113.15, £25.99.

This disc is issued as a companion to boxed sets of recordings of Bach's choral works produced by Harmonia Mundi. Each boxed set contains an identical CD-Rom, the *Bach Companion*, which can be used for both Windows and Macintosh platforms.

The *Bach Companion* contains a wealth of information about the historical, geographical and religious background to Bach's working life. It covers issues such as the changing political map of Europe and the philosophical and religious currents of the era such as the Enlightenment and the consolidation of the Protestant faith. Luther's reforms had, by Bach's time, led to the wide dissemination of the Bible in the vernacular, and to the active participation of congregations in church services, of which the singing of chorales in cantatas and Passions are the clearest example. The disc is organized into accessible sections that include a chronicle of the composer's life and an exploration of the elements that make up the Baroque style. A section entitled 'The Composing Machine' allows the reader to explore some of Bach's composing techniques and the disc concludes with a general knowledge quiz. The text is illustrated with some nicely reproduced examples of

contemporary eighteenth-century art, including portraits of the composer and some handsome looking maps. However, some of the computer-generated visual backgrounds are rather dark and gloomy, making them curiously at odds with the life-enhancing sounds of the music.

The CD-Rom is at its best in setting the context in which Bach's art flourished. The texts and spoken commentaries show how the eclectic mix of influences on German Music (French and Italian currents featured strongly in Bach's output) made a contribution to the cultural healing of a country torn apart by years of strife. The concept of 'measured time' originated in the Baroque era and its influence persists today not only in music, but in the way we conduct our lives. This is interestingly explained, but not as explicitly illustrated as it might be through examples from the music itself.

Indeed, the disc is at its weakest when tackling the aural side of things. There's no getting away from the fact that, despite the advent of the soundcard, the computer remains an essentially visual medium. Despite the high quality of the recordings, one has to hear them through the rumble of the machine's cooling fan. The music is beautifully performed, but little thought has gone into presenting it with the purpose of enhancing a *listener's* awareness of how it works. For example, to illustrate the idea of 'canon', the 'Musical Concepts' section presents a piece from the *Musical Offering*, where the upper two parts move in contrary motion against an independent bass. I found real difficulty in perceiving this as a *canon* from simply hearing the recording, and I wonder why a more straightforward example was not chosen? Another puzzling mismatch occurs when the concept of the 'Da Capo' aria is

illustrated by the chorale 'O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden'.

It would have been more useful for the CD-Rom facility to explore techniques that can be clearly heard, such as the different kinds of ornamentation found in music of the eighteenth century. I would have liked to hear illustrations of how ideas of pitch and temperament developed during this era. But there were no sounds to support the rather wordy exposition of these fascinating topics. Such illustrations would surely not have taken up much space on the disc?

The section entitled 'The Composing Machine', an attempt to involve the reader in an exploration of Bach's musical techniques, comes over as feeble and patronizing. When I was a music student, one of the joys of working a harmonization of a Bach chorale was the challenge it gave to one's own inventiveness and imagination. It was a musically liberating rather than inhibiting experience. But here, the 'composing' seems to be the musical equivalent of assembling ready-made furniture. The purpose seems mainly to expose the reader's inadequacy in comparison to Bach's. But I don't need a CD-Rom to tell me that my modest talents pale into insignificance in comparison with his! Added to this, the perpetually sombre colouring of the backgrounds means that the details on the screens (particularly words in small print and musical notation) are often hard to read.

The CD-Rom could be a fruitful medium for getting to grips with musical detail. I am sorry to say that, informative as it is on extra-musical matters, as a piece of *musical* teaching this one fails to succeed.

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