

SOME CHALLENGES FOR MUSIC EDUCATION: WHAT ARE MUSIC TEACHERS TO DO?

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Abstract

Western democracies that aspire to be civil and free are under attack, confronted by authoritarian leaders and regimes. Massive technological shifts, population migrations, economic dislocations caused by the forces of globalism, resistance to these forces from people who feel adrift from their home traditions and cultures, evidence of abuse especially of young and old in religious, political, and educational institutions, bullying and corruption in public life, violence and terrorism, de-valuing of the contributions of educators in society-at-large, and the corporatization of educational institutions are among the forces that impact music education in specific ways. What are music teachers to do in facing these challenges? I address four principal areas of action that relate to a humane approach to teaching and learning, the preservation of the best of musical traditions, the creation of spaces for individual and collective action toward the good, and the cultivation of skills for improving culture and society.

Keywords

Music education, challenges, humane, teaching, learning, preservation, music traditions, action, good, skills, social change

Western societies are experiencing a time of change, unsettlement, darkness, and fear. Although the specific causes of our present predicament may differ from those in the past, there have been many such moments in history when societies and cultures have confronted massive changes that upended tradition and dislocated people.¹ Today, taken-for-granted norms are under attack, commonly held assumptions are challenged, and there is growing unrest among those who do not enjoy the promises of peace, prosperity, health, safety, employment, and justice that should be their human right. The Pax Americana that from the mid-twentieth century has supported democratic governance and embraced Enlightenment values of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in the West is under assault from within and without. Technological advances remove work opportunities for people through automation as they also create different, often high-skilled and creative work. Uncritical approaches to globalism undermine local, regional, and national interests and contribute to economic dislocation internationally. The long-term effects of European colonialism and white supremacy play out around the world. Unbridled capitalism and corruption impact all aspects of public life and wealth flows to the uber-rich. Many people live in poverty, working menial jobs with little hope of improving their lot and resentful at the wealthy and their governments for failing to improve their situation. Military adventurism, proxy wars between great powers, tribalism and ancient ethnic, religious, and racial hatreds, commercial exploitation of workers by multi-national corporations and governments, the explosion of virulent religious extremism, an international trade in drugs and weapons of mass destruction, the trafficking of people, especially women and girls, and disruptive climatic changes contribute to terrorism, violence, war, and massive population migration on a global scale. Tensions between East and West are exacerbated by clashes between North and South. In Western democracies, autocrats and authoritarians pose as the saviors of the people, fuel divisive, populist, and extreme nationalistic political movements and give permission to racists, homophobes, misogynists, and bigots to spew hatred and seek violent and inhumane ends. Mass communication renders these developments instantaneously apparent to people around the world. Social media amplify extremist movements and public spaces shrink as people are increasingly isolated in groups of those with whom

they agree. Notwithstanding the possibility and even inevitability of resistance and backlash against these forces, it may seem that the barbarians are at the gate, and liberty, equality, decency, and humanity are at risk.

These global, national, and local societal and cultural forces play out, to some extent, in education internationally. In Western democracies, longstanding commitments to public education from pre-school to advanced university instruction are unraveling. Free and decent societies rely on education to promote humane ideals, yet education is driven by corporate values, greed, and desire for personal power and supremacy. Schools at all levels find themselves squeezed by lack of financial support, their work too often measured by material ends that can be seen, counted, and valued in economic terms. Few educational systems are governed democratically and teachers are often powerless to change the realities of insufficient resources and support to do their work effectively. Cooperative international arrangements between educational organizations are undermined by nationalistic and tribal political agendas. Where education is funded locally as it is in the United States, inequities in financial support for schools, teachers, and educational resources are exacerbated. Stark differences exist between schools located in wealthy areas and those in poverty-stricken areas and attendance at universities and colleges remain out of the reach of poor students. Lack of public funding for American higher education and its high cost increasingly leave people saddled with heavy debt loads throughout their lives. In some countries that can least afford it, the number of refugees and immigrants is so great as to make it difficult for host countries to absorb them without severely disrupting society. These newcomers burden educational, health, and social systems of host countries already stressed by changing demographic, ideological, and political realities. Testing and score-keeping of teacher and student work broaden the array of instructional expectations and reduce the time available for teaching and learning. Teachers' modest salaries too often leave them impoverished and require taking on additional part-time work to make a living. The stresses of teaching as a caring profession take a psychological toll over the long term and contribute to churning as new teachers depart for other more lucrative positions in which their work is valued more highly by the public. Some of the best teachers move upwards in the

system to teach at higher levels of primary and secondary schools or in colleges and universities, leaving the most devoted or those who cannot move to something else at the lower levels. Cultural multiplicities and pluralities necessitate that music teachers include a wide array of cultural perspectives in their curricula thereby expanding the musical and pedagogical demands upon them.

Faced with these and other realities, what is a music teacher to do? In a world of practice where these challenges manifest differently in specific times, places, and ways, a teacher needs to translate general ideas to the instructional situations in which teaching and learning occur. Joseph Schwab refers to this pedagogical challenge as the "arts of eclectic."² By this term, he means that there is ambiguity in moving between generality and specific reality and vice versa. Theories do not play out perfectly in my lived world any more than I can trace my practices to specific theories that influence them. Herein lies the rub. If I am to teach and learn effectively, I must negotiate this ambiguous and eclectic terrain between the general and the specific, between principles and practice. My present focus is upon suggesting four practical principles that can serve as guideposts in assisting music teachers to act in response to the challenges facing society and education. These principles are consistent with what I have been suggesting over a working lifetime.

Making humanity central to music teaching and learning

At a time of rampant inhumanity, the most powerful rebuke I can offer to that inhumanity is to embody humanity in my life and work as a musician, teacher, and student. What does this mean? To be humane means to place the people and their individual needs, concerns, and interests at the heart of my instruction, to treat others as fellow subjects worthy of honor, mutual respect, dignity, and affection. Martin Buber refers to this mutuality and integrity as a relationship of *I and Thou*.³ I see this interrelationship exemplified in a masterclass I witnessed in which the Japanese master musician instructing the student face-to-face bows to the student as the student also bows to the teacher before and after instruction. This commitment to our mutual humanity suggests that all

my students and teachers are precious, of infinite value, and I need to begin my instruction with these specific people at the very heart and soul of what we do together. I need to be honest about what I know and do not know, trust my students as they need to trust me, and teach and learn with them and from them as a community of fellow learners gathered in the presence of what Parker Palmer calls "a subject of great worth."⁴ For Iris Yob, "there is no Other" in such an education.⁵ All are included in this instruction and no one is beyond its embrace. It is as if teachers and students dwell together on sacred ground, in sacred space, and in sacred time. Or, as Alfred North Whitehead puts it, "The essence of education is that it be religious," that is, "it cultivates duty and reverence."⁶ When musicians regard the traditions of which they are heirs and exponents as crucial, there is a sense in which these musics are likewise precious expressions of human beings that have much to add to our lives individually and collectively.

Finding this subject matter of great worth around which my students and I gather is my crucial pedagogical task. Entrusted with caring for these students, the onus is on me to exercise leadership regarding what I teach and what my students and I study together. Yet, in many situations, the teacher is given a mandated curriculum to follow and the subject matter is dictated by others. As a young teacher, I believed that I must follow this curriculum scrupulously, irrespective of whether it met my students' needs, aspirations, or interests. After I discovered that this approach failed to engage them as I had hoped, experience taught me the wisdom of constructive subversion. Reorienting my teaching to begin with my students rather than a prescribed curriculum meant a sea-change in my approach to the subject matter and my whole manner of teaching. I found that one way in which I could meet their interests, aptitudes, and desires was to begin with their questions. In a conversational approach to teaching, I might honor the subject matter by first honoring my students. My students often strayed beyond the prescribed subject matter, and sometimes wished to focus on material that might, at first glance, seem irrelevant to that curriculum but which, to them, was important. Many times, they were my teachers. Although we often strayed from what I should have taught, I was surprised when we came to see the subjects we were studying as immediate, vibrant, enjoyable, sometimes exciting, and to

intuit it as inherently significant. I discovered that what I might teach as a “subject of great worth” was about the “remainder”—what might stay with these students for a lifetime after they had forgotten most of the details of our instruction.⁷ In a world filled with too much didactic instruction and unceasing talk and noise, in which the young too often feel like widgets in a large machine, such student-centered instruction that embraces the silences and the music is humane and deeply spiritual. It begins with a recognition of the significance of existential questions asked by young and old—“Why am I here?” “What should I be doing?” “Where am I going?” When left to explore these questions musically, I realized that a student-centered approach that challenges and often subverts received curricula and is grounded in students’ impulses, interests, and questions is much more able to captivate young and old. This being the case, if a music teacher and her students are to discover a subject of great worth, she may need to trust her students more than she has been taught to do and practice the art of musical and pedagogical questioning rather than constant telling. She may need to bend mandated curricula to her and her students’ desires, interests, and needs.

Focusing on our common humanity is not simply an educational task but a profoundly musical one. Plato said that “rhythm and harmony sink more deeply into the mind than anything else.”⁸ The ancients understood that one may sing one’s way into certain beliefs and attitudes. For this reason, they taught precepts through songs. From the beginning of music in publicly supported schools, music educators believed that the texts of the songs that we teach are consequential. In a time of industrial revolution, squalor, and inhumanity, nineteenth-century music teachers taught songs with texts filled with hope, light, and beauty of the natural world.⁹ Johann Pestalozzi’s music teacher, Josef Neef, taught music as he and his students sang while walking in the Swiss countryside.¹⁰ While they sang, children might imagine a different and more wonderful world than the poverty, squalor, and disease they too often experienced. In the mid-twentieth century, Zoltán Kodály believed that only the best music and songs were suitable for the very young; song texts should honor the culture and the traditional songs of their country. In his view, one might teach the ground of music and its centrality in humanity in expressing joy, sorrow, encouragement, solace, among all the aspects of life through

54 well-chosen songs.¹¹ In times of unease, fear, and darkness such as our own, teachers can select texts full of inspiration, inclusion, mutual respect, decency, and curiosity. Jane Roland Martin writes about her experience as a child growing up in such a school in which the musical texts spoke of intriguing, imaginative, and hopeful things that stuck like “molasses” in her memory.¹² Seventy years later, her classmates still remember these songs and the humanity and decency that infused the school. The openness to the difference of others, the quirkiness of much of life, and the humor that sparks enjoyment in the songs and poems they learned in school fostered humane values that profoundly impacted Martin and her classmates. Rather than reducing music to learned concepts or “school music”—too-often second-rate and uninspiring repertoire composed to teach these concepts—the music spoke for itself.¹³ Martin remembers playing the piano for her classmates as they sang. I see a piano still sitting in her living room in the retirement center where she presently lives, a witness to a lifetime of music making. Along with many musicians and music teachers throughout history, Martin knows the self-same truth that such inspirational and enjoyable music and music making can challenge the inhumanity of our own time and open a lifetime of musical experience to our students. It can be life-changing.

In thinking about music and humanity, I need to emphasize one more point that would seem so self-evident as not to be worthy of mention. Yet it is important to remember this powerful principle: a music teacher must first be a musician. Were he here today, I imagine Martin Luther going even further to say, and I paraphrase more inclusively in English, “School teachers must be able to sing otherwise I will hear nothing of them.”¹⁴ In the face of today’s challenges, I can study the art of making music in the tradition(s) to which I am heir so that I may be an exemplary practitioner. It is striking that many music educational courses and conferences are filled with talk rather than music making: sometimes, I scarcely hear a note of music and it is memorable when musician-teachers sing or make music together. Yet nothing could be more helpful to music teachers than acts of collective singing, jamming, performing, and listening to music. Some of the most outstanding music teachers I know are first and foremost musicians. Their musical skills enable them to inspire and enthrall their students

with the power and deep sense of community in singing or playing instruments together. They can make music that is exquisite and moving to musicians and audiences alike. In such a time as this, a music teacher can aspire to create music that touches the soul, impacts one's very being, and transcends the cares of life. For a while, at least, one can forget oneself and focus on experiencing this precious music. At such moments, one simply plays. Abraham Maslow would call this state of being "self-actualization" and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi might term it "flow."¹⁵ Irrespective of what one calls such musical experiences, as Martin illustrates, they live in memory for a lifetime. As a musician-teacher, I long to be able to inspire such musicking and bring it into being.

Preserving the best of musical traditions in a changing world

Technological changes have had a powerful impact on the experience of music. Some musical futurists, such as the Indian tech mogul, Vinod Khosla, have suggested that within a decade or so, music will no longer be listened to and it will be replaced by individualized electronically-generated sonic environments. One might also imagine live multi-media experiences of electronically- and computer-generated and manipulated sights and sounds in which people may participate along with holograms, robots, and other manifestations of artificial intelligence. Without emphasizing the sense of community generated by musical events, Anya Wassenberg reports, there is no reason for live music making.¹⁶ This technologically-driven view of music seems to underestimate the resilience of musical traditions and the power of live acoustic music making even at a time in which machines increasingly assume the roles people have played since antiquity. Still, the possibility of machines and computer algorithms supplanting musicians (already possible in such ways as sound samplings of instruments that no longer necessitate acoustic musicians performing for music and film recordings) alerts us to the importance of rethinking the importance of social aspects of music and the communitarian nature of musical experience from antiquity.

Keeping humanity at the center of music requires preserving the diverse musical traditions that have enriched human life since the beginning of time and enabling their transformation into the future. My argument for doing this is an ecological one.¹⁷ Many species of flora and fauna have become extinct during the Anthropocene—the geological age in which we are presently living—and we now recognize the danger of destroying the environment upon which we depend to survive and thrive.¹⁸ The challenge people confront today is to preserve this diversity of life forms on the planet in order that the earth will provide a sustainable environment for life including humans to flourish in the future. Likewise, musics are in danger of disappearing due to mass mediated technological and commercial interests in popular culture. Kodály worried about the impact of mass-mediated commercialized music on the formation of musical taste and the indigenous folk and classical traditions of his time, and now, these forces are even more powerful.¹⁹ Were he alive today, I imagine him railing even more strenuously against the power of electronically generated and for-profit mass-mediated musics; I see him prodding music educators to espouse live music making with acoustic instruments, conserve the musical traditions of the past even as they are transformed in the process, and embrace the power of communal music making by fostering choirs, bands, orchestras, among other ensembles. Such musicking offers a counterpoint to the electronically generated music of our time, an approach that Neil Postman would term "isomorphic" in the sense that education offers what is otherwise lacking in society.²⁰

Still, I would not want to overlook the potential of technology and mass media in music education. In the messy middle ground between a full-throated and uncritical embrace of mass-mediated musics on the one hand and their repudiation on the other, my sense is that music educators can focus on live music making in differing musical traditions while also incorporating aspects of mass-mediated music in their instruction. For me, it is important to critique and even subvert both the musical traditions and the technologies that might supplant them. Music teachers can act as correctives or counter-weights against the worst excesses of a music industry driven by profit and dominated by multinational corporations as they introduce their students to musical traditions with a rich heritage and otherwise beyond their present

experience. Knowing musics from the past as well as from worlds different from my own provides a means of building community and understanding different others. Greater understanding of these differences opens the possibility of sympathizing and empathizing with these others, extending compassion toward, and learning from, them. Such musical bridge-building can be the stuff of peace making in a troubled world and a corrective to hegemonic forces that would otherwise suppress, stifle, and silence imagination, individuality, and difference.²¹

For me, classical traditions that lie beyond the experience of too many young people and that would “wow” them if they could only hear them need to be a focus of music education.²² Lately, I have been writing and talking about classical music because I sense that it has too often been marginalized in school music education. By classical music, I include the classical traditions of East and West. Still, I go further to recognize that this term can also be used by other traditions such as jazz and rock music. It is common for musicians in these traditions that have been around for several generations to refer to exemplary and seminal works as classics. My catholic and elastic definition of classical refers to those pieces and performances that comprise the canon of exemplary works that have accreted during the past, that are practiced with a high level of skill, and that are taken to be authoritative expressions of a musical tradition. These exemplary instances are worthy of musical study that hopes to grasp the characteristics of this tradition and understand something of its rules, expectations, and values. Dignifying every music whether popular, vernacular, or classical by studying it carefully in the sense of seeking to grasp and experience its ideas and practices contextually, systematically, and deeply in its own terms and according to its own values is, for me, a comparative pedagogical approach that music teachers can take in valuing every music and those who make and experience it. A teacher may fear that in his efforts to render his instruction accessible and enticing while also challenging to students, he may set his expectations too high or too low. He fears because he does not possess perfect foresight. Throughout my teaching life, I have often been surprised by students who, when confronted by the challenges of mastering a musical piece, genre, or tradition, either do not do as well or go beyond what I or they may have expected. Yet, in the end, if I am to

approach all the musics I need to teach in a comparative and careful manner, I need to acknowledge my fallibility and the limits of what I can and should teach, seek to do my best, and when my expectations are not realized, adjust course. For this reason, as I seek the best for and from myself and my students, I also need humility and the company of fellow music teachers who do things differently than I do, value different beliefs and practices, and are exponents of different musical traditions. With this mindset, I can contribute to and foster the musical communities of which I am a part. Acting together, music teachers can preserve, enrich, and transform musics in the face of pervasive technological change, contribute to maintaining the diversity of musical and cultural practices in our own places and countries throughout the world. As we do this, we may be surprised and often joyful at the unexpected successes of our work.

Creating spaces for individual and collective action toward the good

From time immemorial, music has constituted an agent of power. In his short history of the various ways in which music has served powerful purposes, Jacques Attali reveals that music is political and economic—a means whereby powerful interests of religion, state, and commerce are served.²³ It can channel violence, silence, and otherwise oppress those who are unable or unwilling to make it, and give voice to those who wish to express themselves musically and change music, culture, and society. As Attali notes, music has served as a simulacrum of sacrifice, a representation of desired world order, its repetition has constituted the means of its commodification and devaluation, and its composition enables new possibilities that subvert or overturn past practices and values. Viewed in political and economic terms, rather than as an unmitigated good, as Martin Luther saw it, music potentially serves the purposes of good and evil.²⁴ The challenge for a music teacher is to put music to purposes that are good, enrich culture, foster individual growth, contribute to decent societies, and bring life and happiness in its wake. Music education cannot be ethically and politically neutral. It necessarily expresses and fosters one value or another. My task as a music teacher is to create the spaces for activities that tend toward the good.

Since I do not see any one good ruling all the others like Gyges' ring of power, I need to trust myself and others to arrive at our own concepts of what is good for us, our students, the situations in which we teach and learn, the musical traditions of which we are exponents, and the societies of which we are a part.²⁵

How does music acquire and exercise this power? As a human expression, those with and for whom music is made and taken recognize this expression in the sights and sounds that comprise what counts as music. Private, subjective, and personal expressions are manifested publicly and communicated to others who are moved intellectually, emotionally, and physically as they experience this music. This, so much so, that Kodály asks rhetorically, "Is there anything more demonstrative of social solidarity than a choir?"²⁶ In live musical events that are the basis of all musical traditions from antiquity, this musical experience is both personal and communal. Throughout recorded history, the belief in music's spiritual and social power is so resilient and compelling as to cause it to be censored, controlled, and otherwise constrained. For Plato, only two modes point toward the good, and it is essential that the republic censor music and musicians to ensure that the good remains a societal objective.²⁷ North Indian classical musicians have sophisticated theoretical, moral, and practical understandings about the practice and performance of their music. Traditionally, certain ragas are associated with myths and those who practice and hear them believe they carry spiritual power and can impact the course of events.²⁸ Music's power inheres not only in the psychological effects of music on performers or listeners, but in its expression through sounds, sights, and events that have socially constructed meanings. For these reasons, Lucy Green distinguishes between music's inherent power and its delineated power.²⁹ In all the societies with which I am familiar, music is associated with communal events that mark life rituals, religious and political ceremonies. The power of the emotions and ideas conveyed through music are evocative in their imaginative character, joyous expression, and inspirational value.

I also want to address specifically the darkness that some see as characteristic of our age, the fear that old certainties are crumbling, violence is increasing, and individual and social liberties are threatened. At the 12th

International Symposium on the Philosophy of Music Education held in London, Ontario, Canada in June 2019, I heard paper presentations and panels on this darkness and the ways in which music teachers might respond to it and on the trauma of immigrants, asylum seekers, victims of sexual violence, displacement caused by armed conflicts and wars.³⁰ Many musicians express their rage in rap, they resist grinding poverty and social inequality, authoritarian and dictatorial regimes in their texts, and they sing and play their instruments in the hope of overcoming their present oppression and evoking solidarity with others who join them in their protest. This is the case, for example, in the Estonian song celebrations (*Laulupidu*) and dance festivals that provided a sense of identity and solace during a time when the population resisted the Soviet occupation of the country.³¹ Music is full of the sense of loss, loneliness, grief, and the despair of abandonment. It also affords healing through the courage, catharsis, and balm it offers those in distress.³² On the one hand, it can be used during revolutionary moments to whip up public sentiment that leads to hatred of different others and may eventually end in the murder and genocide of those to whom this hatred is directed.³³ On the other, it may evoke solidarity, inclusion, peace, hope, love, courage, and joy. The very ambiguity of these purposes requires musician-teachers to deliberately weigh them, choose specific repertoire, and balance the multiplicity of ends that music serves. Devising ways in which music teachers can create safe spaces for the musical expression of trauma, enabling students to work through their distress and rage in musical ways, and providing for the healing and wellness through musical expression advocated by June Boyce-Tillman foster the humanity so important in an inhumane world.³⁴

Opening spaces for individual and collective action toward the good is the project of authors of the essay collection, *Humane Music Education for the Common Good*, that constitutes a response to the UNESCO report, *Rethinking Education: Towards a Global Common Good?*³⁵ Rather than a monolithic notion of the good, the book's authors are in search of modest goods as the means/ends of humane music education. Various theoretical and practical ways are suggested for how music educators might exemplify a search for the common good and a humane approach to music and education. Writers are careful to notice the challenges entailed in awakening music

teachers to their responsibilities, the need for modesty and moderation in envisaging what music education can achieve, and the importance of balancing the claims of individual music teacher preparation with the collectivity or community of music education. They provide practical and international examples of approaches in which music educators can work humanely toward the common good including: music's use as a means of resistance; inquiry-based learning as a means of fostering humane values; individual instrumental lessons that exemplify humane psychological approaches; instances of pedagogies for the common good; principles of humane music teacher education; music's use as a vehicle for friendship, solidarity, mutuality, and positive identity development; ecological approaches to music education in sacred communities; hospitality towards transgender students. Other possibilities for what music educators might do to open spaces for the individual and collective pursuit of humanity in music and education include: responding to post-secondary students' hunger for musical experience; dissociating and reintegrating musical and literary sensibilities; exploring critical international perspectives on music education; and valuing trust and intimacy in music education.³⁶ In providing these perspectives, authors in this collection offer ways forward for music teachers to pursue humane means and ends in their instruction.

Cultivating skills for improving culture and society

What are the skills needed to improve culture and society toward the good? Iris Yob has developed a conceptual model of dispositions needed to undertake social change toward the good.³⁷ She categorizes these dispositions into three domains as follows: the knowledge domain that includes scholarship, systematic thinking, and reflection; the skills domain that includes application, advocacy, collaboration, and political engagement; the affective domain that includes ethics, commitment, and courage. Applying her model to music education that works toward social, cultural, and societal change, music educators require at least these disposition sets. This taxonomy makes it possible for music educators to tailor curricula that systematically generate competencies in all these respective domains and skill-sets. In short,

Yob argues, after educators identify the specific social changes needed in society, it is then possible to prepare teachers and students to make these changes. For example, if the objective is to work toward the common good and proceed in a humane way, music teachers can be prepared and assisted in taking a multi-pronged approach to implementing this change. Scholarship, systematic and critical thinking, and reflection concerning the objectives and approaches to such education are obvious aspects of knowledge that music teachers and students need to possess. Beyond this, application, advocacy, collaboration, and political engagement skills are required to turn theoretical objectives into practical approaches. Notice the role of advocacy, collaboration, and political engagement in forging change. Teachers need to know how to advocate for their programs, how to collaborate with others who might join them in their quest for change, and how to engage with educational, musical, and political power brokers to gain support for the changes they seek. Lowell Mason, one of the founders of school music in Boston in the early part of the nineteenth century, understood how to advocate, collaborate, and engage with the political architects of the emerging common school. He utilized lectures of William Woodbridge on the importance of singing in general education accompanied by acapella choral performances by children.³⁸ Words and music combined to sway a public to the view that vocal music should be an important aspect of general education. To these approaches, Yob adds the affective skills of ethics, commitment, and courage that help drive the other skill sets toward enacting change. Values such as equality, mutuality, devotion, persistence, and courage help to steer the process of social change toward the common good. Cultivating these dispositions provides the impulse toward realizing these ideals. For Yob, if these skill sets are exemplified in every course of instruction, there is a greater likelihood that teachers and their students will not merely assent to principles but will go the important step further toward implementing them in practice. In these and other ways, this conceptual model can be useful to teachers as they build and evaluate programs and courses to cultivate the various skills involved in social change.³⁹

It is also important for music teachers and their students to cultivate and practice the skills needed to sustain democratic thought and practice. Democracies provide opportunities for differing perspectives to be contested

and these differences resolved civilly. If democratic societies are to be sustained in the face of authoritarianism and extremism, they need to be conserved through democratic education.⁴⁰ In our time, especially given the socially mediated speech that in its anonymity and impulsiveness can be inhumane and devastating in its impact, it is necessary to emphasize and practice the kinds of speech and action required to meet these challenges. As music teachers, our words need to be measured and thoughtful, our conduct restrained, and in our classes, it is essential to unmask the problems of social media as we also employ technologies to our advantage. Democracies rely on facts, information that is tested and validated, the disposition of critical thinking, the capacity to perceive untruths and lies and repudiate them, and an ability to converse with others who have differing perspectives. Debate about different values that are often deeply seated needs to be conducted civilly in the hope of persuading those who hold to different values. Sometimes, civil debate and conversation do not suffice, especially when the forces of localism clash with those of globalism, and laws are needed to insist upon appropriate rules of conduct.⁴¹ Tensions between competing musical traditions and the values underlying them are central to music education, and music teachers can cultivate the skills that enable students to see the complexities of comparing different traditions and the wisdom of repudiating extremist ideologies. In doing this, I find Aristotle's notion of the "mean" that avoids too much or too little of a good thing to be useful in working through the middle ground between extremes.⁴² Music education offers an important environment for enhancing the skills of cooperation that are essential to working together in democracy, of treating all with respect and valuing the differences between people and their musics. It is grounded in rules that underlie its practice, and musical practice can cultivate respect for rules whether they be musical or otherwise. It also offers the space to develop a love of those experiences that are spiritual rather than material and to come to see how precious the arts are as manifestations of human creativity in the profusion of its diversity. These skills are deeply conservative as they are also potentially transformative of culture and society.

In sum, in the face of contemporary challenges, there is much music teachers can do to make humanity central to teaching and learning, preserve the best of the musical

traditions in a changing world, create spaces for individual and collective action toward the good, and cultivate skills for improving culture and society. Not all change is dramatic. Oftentimes, the effects ripple out into the lives of our colleagues, students, and their families. As musicians and teachers, we live in hope that the world will be better for our having been here.

Notes

- 1 The notion that societies swing cyclically between tradition and change (ideational and sensate phases respectively) is posited, for example, by Pitirim Sorokin in his *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, vol. 1 (New York: Bedminster, 1937).
- 2 Joseph J. Schwab, "The Practical: Arts of Eclectic," *The School Review* 79, no. 4 (August 1971): 493-542. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/442998>.
- 3 Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans., Walter Kaufmann (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970).
- 4 Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of A Teacher's Life* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998).
- 5 Iris M. Yob, "There is No Other." In Iris M. Yob and Estelle R. Jorgensen, eds., *Humane Music Education for the Common Good* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, in press).
- 6 Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1929), 14.
- 7 On finding the "subject of great worth," see Estelle R. Jorgensen, *The Art of Teaching Music* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008), 202-203.
- 8 Plato, *Republic*, trans., Robin Waterfield (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1993), Book 3, §401d, 100.
- 9 For an early study of American school songbooks, see Robert W. John, "A History of School Vocal Instruction Books in the United States," Dissertation, Indiana University, 1953. On the songs led by Lowell Mason as a means of convincing the public to include vocal music in common schools, see Estelle R. Jorgensen, "William Channing Woodbridge's Lecture, 'On Vocal Music as a Branch of Common Education', Revisited," *Studies in Music* (University of Western Australia) 18 (1984): 1-32. Reprinted in *Visions of Music Education* 14 (June 2009) at <http://www-usr.rider.edu/~vrme/>.
- 10 On Joseph Neef, see Jorgensen, "William Channing Woodbridge's Lecture, 'On Vocal Music as a Branch of Common Education', Revisited."
- 11 Zoltán Kodály, *The Selected Writings of Zoltán Kodály*, ed., Ferenc Bónis, trans., Lili Halápy and Fred Macnicol (London, UK: Boosey and Hawkes, 1964), 122, 125, 140.
- 12 Jane Roland Martin, *School Was Our Life: Remembering Progressive Education* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2018).
- 13 Martin, *School Was Our Life*, 59, on the "tuneless songs" and the emphasis on solfege that she hoped to subvert as a music teacher.
- 14 Martin Luther, "Luther on Education: Studies and Methods," in Michael L. Mark, *Music Education Source Readings from Ancient Greece to Today*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 35.
- 15 Abraham H. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: D. Van Nostrand, 1968); Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1990).

- 16 Anya Wassenberg, "Feature: Tech Mogul Predicts People Will No Longer Listen to Music in 10 Years," *Ludwig Van Toronto*, June 15, 2019, https://www.ludwig-van.com/toronto/2019/06/15/feature-tech-mogul-predicts-people-will-no-longer-listen-to-music-in-10-years/?utm_source=LUDWIG+VAN+TORONTO+Email+Subscribers&utm_campaign=1c2d5b04d6-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_57cdb68eac-1c2d5b04d6-186573881, accessed June 28, 2019, discusses Vinod Khosla's ideas on the impact of technology on music.
- 17 This argument resonates with the efforts by Huib Schippers and Catherine Grant, eds., *Sustainable Futures for Musical Cultures: An Ecological Perspective* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016).
- 18 On the Anthropocene, see Elizabeth Kolbert, *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (New York, NY: Henry Holt, 2014).
- 19 For Kodály, *The Selected Writings of Zoltán Kodály*, 20, "bad taste in art is a veritable sickness of the soul," 120.
- 20 Neil Postman, *Teaching as a Conservative Activity* (New York, NY: Dell, 1979), especially chapter 1.
- 21 Neil Postman, *Building a Bridge to the 18th Century: How the Past Can Improve Our Future* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1999), chapter 1, employs the metaphor of the educational bridge-building.
- 22 "Child Who Yelled 'Wow' at Mozart Concert Charms Boston Audience," *Morning Edition, NPR*, May 9, 2019, 6:57 AM ET, <https://www.npr.org/2019/05/09/721685232/child-who-yelled-wow-at-mozart-concert-charms-boston-audience>; Steve Annear, "We Have Found the 'Wow' Child!" *Handel and Haydn Society Tracks Down Enthusiastic Concertgoer*, May 10, 2019, at <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2019/05/10/boy-who-captured-hearts-for-saying-wow-after-boston-symphony-hall-performance-identified/klaLugQTDN2LJ9KVtb930L/story.html>.
- 23 Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, transl., Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1985).
- 24 Martin Luther, "Preface to Georg Rhau's *Symphoniae incundae*." In Michael L. Mark, ed., *Music Education Source Readings from Ancient Greece to Today*, 3rd edition (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 36-37.
- 25 Plato, *Republic*, book 2, §§359d—360b, 47, tells the story of an ancestor of Gyges of Lydia who acquired a ring that could make him invisible and brought him to power.
- 26 Kodály, *The Selected Writings of Zoltán Kodály*, 121.
- 27 See Plato, *Republic*, book 3, §§398—403, on his theory of music in education.
- 28 On a comparative view of Indian musical aesthetic, see Lewis Rowell, *Thinking About Music: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Music* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1983). Daniel M. Neuman, *The Life of Music in North India: The Organization of an Artistic Tradition* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1980), 66, 219, notes that some ragas have stricter rules about their performance than others, although changing traditions, even more than three decades ago, meant that they were performed less strictly than they may have been in the past.
- 29 Lucy Green, *Music on Deaf Ears: Musical Meaning, Ideology, Education* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1988), chapters 2, 3.
- 30 12th International Symposium on the Philosophy of Music Education program in London, Ontario, June 2019, program.

- 31 The Estonian Song Celebration (Laulupidu) is held every five years and involves choirs numbering over 20,000 and large audiences. These celebrations have formed a basis not only for Estonian identity but an important means of solace and resistance to foreign occupation and “a singing revolution” that helped Estonia break free of Soviet control. See The Associated Press, “Massive Choir a Place for Estonians to Find Identity, Solace,” *New York Times* July 7, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2019/07/07/world/europe/ap-eu-estonia-music-celebration.html>; Maris Hellrand, “Estonian Song Celebration timeline,” *Estonian World* at <https://estonianworld.com/culture/estonian-song-celebration-timeline/> Estonian Song Celebration timeline, July 5, 2019, accessed July 11, 2019; <https://www.apnews.com/96487d4eb-1f54530b722a65892dfa230/gallery/2f7c67fae4d947fd8704465e48b8dd17>; <https://estonianworld.com/culture/gallery-more-than-10000-dancers-participate-in-estonian-dance-celebration-2019/>.
- 32 I think back to Paul S. Minear’s analysis in his *Death Set to Music: Masterworks by Bach, Brahms, Penderecki, Bernstein* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987) of how four composers deal with death musically.
- 33 The use of music as an agent of international power in social processes is discussed in Estelle R. Jorgensen, “Music and International Relations.” In Jongsuk Chay, ed., *Culture and International Relations* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1990), 56-71.
- 34 See June Boyce-Tillman, *Constructing Musical Healing: The Wounds that Sing* (London, UK: Jessica Kingsley, 2000), and her *Experiencing Music – Restoring the Spiritual: Music as Well-being* (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2016).
- 35 See Yob and Jorgensen, eds., *Humane Music Education for the Common Good; Rethinking Education: Towards a Global Common Good?* (New York, NY: UNESCO Publishing, 2015).
- 36 Estelle R. Jorgensen, “On Making Music Education Humane and Good: Gathering Threads,” in Yob and Jorgensen, eds., *Humane Music Education for the Common Good*.
- 37 Iris M. Yob, with Steven Danver, Sheryl Kristensen, William Schulz, Kathy Simmons, Henry Brashen, Rebecca Sidler, Linda Kiltz, Linda Gatlin, Suzanne Wesson, and Diane Penland, “Curriculum Alignment with a Mission of Social Change in Higher Education,” in *Innovative Higher Education* (Oct 2015). DOI: 10.1007/s10755-015-9344-5.
- 38 See Jorgensen, “William Channing Woodbridge’s Lecture, ‘On Vocal Music as a Branch of Common Education’, Revisited.” Mason’s and Woodbridge’s work was developed in a political strategy to introduce vocal music into the common school curriculum. See Estelle R. Jorgensen, “Engineering Change in Music Education: A Model of the Political Process Underlying the Boston School Music Movement (1829-1838),” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 31 (1983): 67-75.
- 39 Yob, et. al., “Curriculum Alignment with a Mission of Social Change in Higher Education.”
- 40 John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Music Education* ([1916]; reprint, New York, NY: Free Press, 1944) sought to imbue general education with democratic principles.
- 41 See Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).
- 42 See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated Roger Crisp (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), §§1106a-1107a, 1108b-1109a, 1127a, pp. 29-31, 34-35, 76. I take my cue from Aristotle in Estelle R. Jorgensen, *Values, Music, and Education* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, under contract.)