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# Imagination And Musical Understanding: A Theoretical Perspective With Implications For Music Education

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**I**s the cultivation of imagination necessary for developing greater musical understanding? The musical symbol presents realities that cannot be fully understood through linguistic assertion, but require the functioning of imagination.<sup>1</sup> Imagination, as John Dewey writes, translates symbols into meaning.<sup>2</sup> The musical experience itself is a form of knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Swanwick states that we *think* musically.<sup>4</sup> Musical understanding, then, involves cognitive processes that function as various facets of imagination.<sup>5</sup> Imagination is an active, constructive mode of inquiry; it is the mind fully engaged. Developing imagination through music is developing the mind.

An approach to music education as cultivating imagination, then, is necessary for musical understanding. Warnock states that the chief aim of education is the cultivation of imagination. Ferguson suggests that the imaginatively unawakened person may have difficulty finding meaning. Casey also attests to the educability of the imagination, and Dewey suggests a kind of reciprocal or mutually enriching relationship between imagination and education. He writes that imagination is a way of working with subject matter that enlivens and illumines the topic at

hand, but in so doing, the very process or experience itself cultivates imagination.<sup>6</sup>

Despite many attestations to the importance of imagination in musical understanding, however, there is a paucity of theoretical research underpinning these statements. The present study addresses eight theoretical considerations and several resulting practical implications regarding the development of this mutually enriching relationship, about which Dewey writes, that cultivates imagination and at the same time leads to musical understanding. Imagination functions cognitively in the musical experience.

This study suggests that in comprehending meaning in the musical experience, imagination effects several epistemological continuities: linguistic and musical; ambiguity and certitude; literal and figurative; the intuitive and, reasoned, including synthesis and analysis; the holistic and atomistic; thinking and feeling; theory and practice; and social and individual.<sup>7</sup> Each of these continuities is discussed along with resulting implications for music education.

## Linguistic and Musical

Clearly, other modes of knowing beyond the linguistic are acknowledged by philosophers, psychologists, and educators.<sup>8</sup> The musical symbol presents realities that are not known linguistically. This view offers a rationale for music education and suggests that through music, students encounter another

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of music are consequently deprived of the knowledge and experience of an entire symbol system.<sup>9</sup>

Imagination is the fundamental way in which we come to understand the meanings expressed by the musical symbol. It is difficult to conceive of meanings directly given to imagination without the mediation of language. The sonorous image, rather than words, provides meaning. We think in terms of images instead of propositions, and understanding these images means grasping ideas.<sup>10</sup> It follows that as music educators, we resist thinking in language when imagining music. Interestingly, Ihde states that thinking in language as a kind of inner speech is not compatible with the sonorous imaginative activity occurring when one listens to music.<sup>11</sup>

Teaching strategies might be developed to address thinking in images. Consider a parallel that can be drawn with the visual arts. One often hears the expression: "A picture is worth a thousands words." Equally, in the music classroom or studio, a sonorous image may provide greater understanding of music than a lecture. Outside of formal education, the function of concert halls can hardly be considered educational if teachers focus exclusively on the verbal as ends or means. Goodman writes that words can intrude on nonlinguistic symbols.<sup>12</sup> Teachers might ask themselves if they continue to talk about a work while the music is sounding, distracting and dividing the students' attention, rather than allowing the sonorous images to "speak" for themselves.

If not all thinking with respect to the musical symbol is done in words, it is important to acknowledge that the knowing which is occurring is of a different order. Gardner comes close to the issue in suggesting that music is a separate intelligence. But even

view without criticism, because musical intelligence is not all of a piece. Yet many secondary schools present music solely through performance groups. Not only does this eliminate a majority of students who cannot or do not want to perform, but also it acknowledges only one way in which students might learn. Options and alternatives to performance are important, and include music appreciation courses, introduction to musical skills, and the like.<sup>13</sup> When we acknowledge

that music is a unique symbol system, further implications result. Is the average classroom teacher sufficiently knowledgeable in this symbol system, or might music education be better served by music specialists? In addition, interdisciplinary courses in the arts might be more meaningful to students after they have been initiated into the various symbol systems of each of the arts, rather than as an introductory course in the arts.

This is not to say that the linguistic is totally absent in teaching about music. The use of linguistic metaphors, lecture-demonstrations, lecture-performances, and other teaching strategies that aid in bridging movement between the linguistic and the musical might be cultivated. The linguistic

emphasizes linear thinking at the expense of more expansive, imaginative thought processes that do not involve logical reasoning, such as the intuitive and analogical. The musical symbol is first encountered through sonorous images, not through verbalizing about the symbol. Legitimacy needs to be attached to nonlinguistic modes of knowing if musical understanding is to be complete. Torrance suggests that the imagination does function cognitively in understanding music and needs development through guided practice,

"Musical notation as a symbol system provides certitude. But through imagination, the clear and certain elements in the score combine with the ambiguous, expressive, and sonorous features that cannot be precisely notated."

“Those who are deprived of music are consequently deprived of the knowledge and experience of an entire symbol system. Imagination is the fundamental way in which we come to understand the meanings expressed by the musical symbol.”

just as we develop logical reasoning and judgment.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps music educators rely too much on the written modality in music education for both assignments and testing. Assessment processes that are totally linguistic fail to tap certain understandings associated with the musical symbol. Visual artists use a portfolio, for example, as an important part of assessment. Music educators, if they hold that music possesses meanings which defy linguistic articulation, are called upon to devise evaluative procedures that parallel other modes of knowing. Gardner criticizes tests that use “bricks and paper clips” as measures of creative ability and finds multiple-choice irrelevant in the arts. Eisner points out that traditional testing is decontextualized; understanding in the arts is far richer than the linguistic alone.<sup>15</sup> But neither writer offers alternatives to music educators who are faced with the question of how to assess, if we value assessment, and challenged to find new ways and means of accomplishing it.

While the linguistic is certainly not excluded in music education, the nature of the musical symbol demands that the linguistic is insufficient. Modes of knowing beyond the linguistic, which are grasped imaginatively, are necessary for musical understanding. Imagination mediates these modes of knowing in understanding the musical symbol.

### Ambiguity and Certitude

As a consequence of recognizing understanding through sonorous images or means other than the linguistic, we may be admitting ambiguity while precluding precision. This is exactly what Langer claims is the musical symbol's strength. Similarly, Goodman writes that the multiplicity of meanings that ambiguity allows is actually the positive and vital feature of the art symbol. The concept of symbolic transformation that occurs through imaginative activity makes it impossible to articulate

precisely what the symbol might encompass. In the visual arts, one might consider a circle as an example of reference bearing multiple meanings. The circle may suggest eternity, omnipotence, power, the gods; or on the other hand, it may refer to the sun, warmth, life, growth, sustenance, and joy.<sup>16</sup> Consider, for example, Rachmaninov's *Isle of the Dead*, Op. 29, which represents Boeklin's painting. This work may metaphorically exemplify restlessness and calm, and further, through a chain of reference, death and eternity, spirituality or God. Through the almost limitless meanings that imagination may find for it, ambiguity provides depth, breadth, and scope to the musical symbol.

The implications for music education are numerous and far reaching. If we allow ambiguity of meaning, we also recognize that there is no one correct interpretation, no one right answer, and that understanding is not an all-or-nothing matter. Black and white give way to shades of gray in teaching, learning, performing, and judging music. The burden of providing answers is lifted from teacher and student, who instead become able to explore ideas and options, allowing fantasy and the free play of imagination. Teachers and students can value many vantage points, multiple perspectives, and come to realize that questions may be more important than answers, and that there may never be a finished and complete response or interpretation.<sup>17</sup>

In such a learning environment, imagination is cultivated through the multiple possibilities of musical meaning. Ambiguity challenges imagination to discover and to discern meaning and, as a result, to come to understand the symbol in some way. The difficulty encountered in trying to make meaning specific at the verbal level becomes irrelevant and even counterproductive to musical understanding. Further, test questions generally exact *one* correct answer; ambiguity permits several correct answers.

But as Eisner points out, tolerance for ambiguity is not a national characteristic, let alone an educational one. The writings of Alan Bloom and E. D. Hirsch, *A Nation at Risk*, and similar documents show little approbation for ambiguity.<sup>18</sup> Curriculum content as well as teaching methodologies in music might be examined to see what place they give to the development of individual imagination, and what allowance they make for open-ended assignments.<sup>19</sup> Some music textbooks for classroom teachers grant little attention to ambiguity in either content or method. Instead, the teacher is provided with step-by-step directives to carry out clear-cut objectives.

While reference through representation and exemplification provides ambiguity, the matter of meaning is not totally relative. We move from ambiguity to greater specificity or certitude along the modes of reference from musical symbol as figurative; to the score, the literal, and the denotative. Musical notation as a symbol system provides certitude. But through imagination, the clear and certain elements in the score combine with the ambiguous, expressive, and sonorous features that cannot be precisely notated. In studying music as a concept, elements of certitude are present, such as rhythm and pitch. Yet even in harmonic analysis, there may be more than one way to view chord function. Other sources of ambiguity or certitude may include cultural context and performance practice in historical context.

Ambiguity almost guarantees success for the student. It removes fear of failure in that one cannot fail to imagine in some sense. Imagination may need development in facility and scope, but one can never say for sure that a person's imaginative capacity or powers have been exhausted. Ambiguity, particularly with respect to figurative reference, admits no logical limits, although success may be postponed for a time.<sup>20</sup>

### **Literal and Figurative**

This continuity has already been suggested in the preceding discussion. The figurative tends to be more ambiguous in meaning, while the literal inclines toward greater specificity and certitude. Here again, imagination

mediates the tension in the experience of music. The literal seems to associate more with analytic and reflective thought processes, while the figurative appears to connect with the analogical and intuitive.

Music educators are well advised to be mindful of both the literal and the figurative in teaching music as concept as well as in music making. Goodman writes that understanding a symbol generally requires that we know what it exemplifies, both metaphorically and literally, to grasp its full meaning.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps some professional musicians and music educators stress the literal to the detriment of the metaphorical, especially among more advanced students, when students might understand the symbol more easily by moving from the metaphorical to the literal. Among young children, teachers may err in the opposite direction, even to the point of suggesting metaphorical references that have nothing to do with the symbol, such as asking children to draw pictures showing how the music makes them feel.

The metaphorical suggests a kind of direct, immediate apprehension that precedes reflective thought and analysis. Symbolic transformation begins with a grasp of the work as a whole. Then may follow an analysis of parts directed toward finer and more subtle perceptual discriminations, the symbols *in art* as Langer suggests.<sup>22</sup> Movement proceeds back to the whole again but with increased perceptual awareness and richer understanding.

Analysis of literal and denotative reference is more comfortable, less ambiguous, and more easily planned in the lesson. The metaphorical always includes the element of surprise, a basic characteristic of metaphor, as well as a kind of risk-taking on the teacher's part. The figurative goes beyond the evidence assembled to new images and ideas. The latter demands that teachers expect and welcome the unexpected and the divergent, and that they be ready and willing to deviate from the planned lesson as circumstances dictate.

Metaphorical thinking can be taught. These relations may be very concrete or at a high level of abstraction. For example, a research study was undertaken on the assumption that we cannot expect a high level of

performance ability unless a person has some experience with musical notation. But when subjects, including children, adolescents, and adults, were asked to notate *Happy Birthday*, those who had no training in musical notation devised representations that effectively captured structure, rhythm, numbers of notes, contour, and so forth.<sup>23</sup> Certainly this demonstrates musical understanding, although through nonlinguistic, self-devised, and imaginative means rather than standard notation.

Goodman writes that understanding a symbol generally requires that one knows what it exemplifies both metaphorically and literally to grasp its full meaning.<sup>24</sup> Imagination as a mode of inquiry mediates literal and figurative reference in comprehending the full meaning of the musical symbol.

### Intuitive and Reasoned

The literal and figurative serve as a springboard to the intuitive and reasoned. Above we observed a link between the intuitive and figurative, and between the literal and reasoned. Throughout, the various continuities are interconnected. In the present discussion, related polarities are included: the holistic and atomistic, and the synthetic and analytic. In general, in music study one may question if more expansive and connected intuitive, holistic, and synthetic processes are sacrificed to reasoned, atomistic, and analytic approaches.<sup>25</sup> Dewey, Langer, and Howard all attest to the importance of grasping the whole in understanding the art symbol.

The intuitive or immediate apprehension occurs first, state Dewey and Langer; discrimination of parts may follow. One might examine current teaching procedures, both classroom and studio, to determine if students' first acquaintance with music is through listening to or performing a particular work as a whole. Apprehending the whole occurs with imagination forming a compressed or synoptic image of the work and precedes analysis. After students have caught the pervasive, unifying quality, as Dewey characterizes this sense of the whole, or the feeling as Langer describes it, analytical procedures, discrimination of parts, reasoning, and reflecting may occur.

Analysis is certainly not omitted, but its purpose is to improve subtle perceptual discriminations which lead back again to a richer understanding of the whole. As imagination mediates these two processes, parts to whole and whole to parts, new connections, relations, and meanings may be discovered within a work. The study of technique emerges from the music as a means rather than an end. As Dewey states: "A mode of expression separated from something to express is empty and artificial." This also suggests that the teaching of music history and theory begins with an understanding of the work as a unified whole and organizes it in imagination before moving to analysis of style or musical elements. The function of analysis also emerges as a means rather than an end in itself: It is analysis in context.<sup>26</sup>

Recognizing the primacy of the intuitive, holistic, and synthetic over the analytic, atomistic, and reasoned has broader implications for music education. It calls for re-examination of mechanistic, production-oriented, or behaviorist models of music education. The behaviorist approach finds its demise in these facets of imagination because imaginative activity does not necessarily provide the observable.<sup>27</sup> If we follow Anderson, Swanwick, Elliot, and especially, Dewey, Langer, and Howard, we are inevitably led to conclude that students should first encounter the musical symbol in total, as a whole, and without talk or analysis. This precludes models of music education that specify discrete tasks at a level of particularity where bits and pieces of information are held to somehow add up to an understanding of the whole.<sup>28</sup> But how is such synthesis achieved? Certainly not intuitively, for these models do not recognize intuition as a way of knowing. The problem with concentrating on this approach is what it excludes: imagination, intuition, and exploration of possibilities.<sup>29</sup> Reasoning alone or knowledge *about* is not enough and cannot replace the experience of the whole. Such experience is participatory and imaginative, through music listening and music making.

Goodman offers an example directed to the visual arts that is helpful to illustrate these points. I adapt his illustration to a mu-

"If we allow ambiguity of meaning, . . . the burden of providing answers is lifted from teacher and student, who instead become able to explore ideas and options, allowing fantasy and the free play of imagination. Teachers and students can value many vantage points, multiple perspectives, and come to realize that questions may be more important than answers, and that there may never be a finished and complete response or interpretation."

sical context. Students might listen to a work performed by two different orchestras under two different conductors and be asked to compare their understanding of the music through each of these performances. Such an assignment is open-ended, requires fine and subtle perceptual discriminations, calls upon previous knowledge and experience, and requires "the comparisons and contrasts to be made in imagination, and the relevant associations to be brought to bear."<sup>30</sup> This example illustrates the correlative or complementary functioning of synthesis and analysis, intuition and reasoning. Further, aesthetic judgment may also be developed through this process.

In addition, emphasis on the sense of connectedness, hearing relationships, and synthesizing has implications for the kinds of assignments and tests that students are given. Acquiring facts, as Hirsch proposes with his list of "What Literate Americans Know," is not sufficient.<sup>31</sup> Bartholomew reminds us that there are different types of wholes: aggregate and continuous.<sup>32</sup> Music as a concept to be taught represents an aggregate whole, while music as process exemplifies a continuous whole. Music is both participatory and content centered; it is understood intuitively as well as through reasoning processes that meet in imagination.

### Thinking and Feeling

Here, emphasis is on thought as a whole and its relationship to feeling, as a kind of felt thought or cognitive emotion.<sup>33</sup> Because emotions participate in knowing does not mean they are not felt.<sup>34</sup> Stimulation of emotion, however, is not essential to understanding the meaning of the symbol, and the emotion felt is not always the feeling conveyed

by the symbol. There is a distinction between feeling functioning cognitively through imagination and feeling stimulated. The latter suggests a mechanistic image of a person as a reactive automaton whose responses are controlled by stimuli. Whereas when imagination is functioning, the person is active and self-directed in the experience of feeling.<sup>35</sup>

This view of emotion as cognitive and centered in the symbol frees music educators. On the one hand, feeling is not ignored in favor of rationality; on the other, the moral or ethical dilemma is avoided. With respect to the latter, music education is not about the manipulation of personal emotion, a position to which it becomes vulnerable when developing responsiveness or feelingfulness is the goal. The cognitive and affective domains merge in imagination.

Like Langer, Warnock writes that the imaginative emotion is an *idea* vividly conceived. She holds that "children cannot be taught to feel deeply; but they can be taught to look and listen in such a way that the imaginative emotion follows."<sup>36</sup> It seems that this comes close to describing what music educators might be about when they state that music educates feeling. Music educators might carefully consider the kinds of questions they ask students: What feeling do you think this work exemplifies? How do you feel when you listen to (or perform) this work? It is the first question that focuses on the meaning of the symbol.

Further, Warnock advises that children not be told what interpretation to give to their experience of a work of art. "In so far as they begin to feel the significance [meaning] of the forms they perceive, they will make their own attempts to interpret this signifi-

“[T]eachers may err [in] suggesting metaphorical references that have nothing to do with the symbol, such as asking children to draw pictures showing how the music makes them feel.”

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cance.” She particularly includes listening in such experience, as well as music making, and holds that imagination ascribes meaning in this context.<sup>37</sup> Warnock maintains that feeling can be cultivated through imagination. Again music educators might be mindful that they encourage students to provide their own interpretations; offer guidance, certainly, but resist imposing a particular viewpoint. The feeling is the student’s own imaginative idea discovered in comprehending the symbol.

One might recall Langer’s definition that feeling encompasses a cognitive dimension. She does not limit feeling to emotion but includes feelings of time, space, movement, and the like.<sup>38</sup> Some works may have little if any emotive content but nonetheless express feeling; compare, for example, the feelings expressed by a Bach fugue and a Tchaikovsky symphony.

Music educators might consider how to teach music from the notion that thinking and feeling function together, rather than from the prevailing aesthetic articulated by the Tanglewood Symposium: “The first component in the aesthetic experience deals with the experience of perceiving...the musical composition, and of responding to its immediately sensed qualities. The second component, which conveys inferred meanings, analogies, and symbolisms, together with theoretical elements, is primarily scientific and intellectual in contrast to the predominantly emotional nature of the first component.”<sup>39</sup> A regrettable dichotomy results for music education.

If one brings to mind Langer’s statement that music sounds like emotions feel, and Goodman’s view that it is possible to feel how a painting looks, we come closer to developing a way to join these two domains at the practical level as well as at the conceptual level. Goodman states that “Emotion in aesthetic experience is a means of discerning what properties a work has and expresses.” How then does one do this in teaching music? I suggest that the emotions are felt

through the function of imagination, so that they actually may occur. As Goodman holds, they must occur if they are to be used cognitively since “the work of art is apprehended through the feeling as well as through the senses.” The “cognitive use [of emotions] involves discriminating and relating them in order to gauge and grasp the work and integrate it” with students’ experiences.<sup>40</sup>

In response to the question, then, Goodman suggests that the context of such learning is one of inquiry rather than of indulgence in or incitement of emotion. Such inquiry, I add, is the function of imagination. The emotion felt by the listener may not be the emotion expressed by the work, yet that emotion functions cognitively and can help the student to understand the work, even though it is not the same feeling as that which the work expresses.<sup>41</sup> For example, one may feel disgust for the character in a play who displays greed; or admiration for courage. These ideas represent only some of the implications for music education that follow from dislodging the dichotomous view and espousing the perspective that emotions function cognitively in the experience of music with thinking and feeling being melded by imagination.

## Theory and Practice

Both Dewey and Howard give considerable attention to the integration of theory and practice in education and in musical experience and to the importance of imagination in these processes. Teachers integrate theory and practice in knowing *how* and knowing *that*. This suggests that if one teaches elementary music methods, one should at some point be an elementary school teacher. Further, it is important that evaluation procedures also reflect both theoretical and practical concerns, and any overemphasis on one or the other is to the detriment of music education. Performers, for example, may find courses of a theoretical nature somewhat suspect; those more con-

“Through the almost limitless meanings that imagination may find for it, ambiguity provides depth, breadth, and scope to the musical symbol.”

cerned with theoretical matters, on the other hand, may view performance as unnecessary. But I suggest that both are important, and that those concerned about music education and its future direction take care lest the current “praxialist” position become divisive. Those who advocate music education as founded exclusively in the practice of music threaten to drive a wedge between knowledge about music and music itself.<sup>42</sup>

But how might music educators integrate theory and practice in their teaching? In a sense, teachers are performers too; they offer an accountable knowing *how* as well as possessing theoretical knowledge about their subject. Specifically, some strategies that bridge theory and practice in the classroom or studio include the use of metaphors, neologisms, lecture-performance, lecture-demonstrations, models, coaching, exemplars, diagrams, gestures, and so forth. While many of these ideas come from the studio, they bear closer examination to determine their application in the classroom. Dewey reminds us that example is more potent than precept.<sup>43</sup> Teacher preparation programs might cultivate some of these teaching strategies, if they do not already do so, in methods courses.

On the other hand, research in music education is primarily descriptive and experimental. Music education as a profession might benefit from increased attention to theoretical and historical concerns. This is not to suggest that one or the other—practical concerns or theoretical issues—has greater value or importance, but that both are necessary. Further, in keeping with the holistic approach suggested throughout, various kinds of research are interdependent. Although one or the other may be more appropriate to a given question, both theory and practice could benefit from more extensive integration than is currently the case.

### Social and Individual

The social and individual are two poles of a continuum that represents another way of

knowing, through interaction with society, through self-reflection, and combination and integration of these at various points where they intersect to greater or lesser degrees. Imaginative development cannot exclude them, and in turn, imagination mediates them as is evident in the musical experience. Dewey writes that if culture is to be more than superficial polish, it must include “the growth of the imagination in flexibility, in scope, and in symphony, till the life which the individual lives is informed with the life of nature and of society.”<sup>44</sup>

Musical performance is particularly relational. Even the presence of another person in a practice room makes a difference for the person practicing. Music is also participatory. The research of Blacking and Small, among others, shows that entire societies participate in music making, and that learning in these contexts is not simply a preparation for future living, but a basic experience of life itself.<sup>45</sup> Music education is increasingly sensitive to the music of other cultures and often includes the study of other musics in the curriculum, but one wonders what kind of kinship is established, if aesthetic education, primarily defined as developing responsiveness, remains the prevailing philosophical stance. Responsiveness emphasizes the individual and suggests isolation from contextual concerns.

One implication for music education that follows from including music of other cultures in the curriculum is the contradiction of a single or universal aesthetic stance in support of pluralism. In valuing diversity, we argue in favor of the individual as well as the many.<sup>46</sup> Different cultures value different things. To date, no single aesthetic theory seems to encompass all of these dimensions. This perspective challenges the primacy as well as the content of the canon of traditional European Art Music.<sup>47</sup> Music education, in its concern for all musics, needs new standards for valuing. In effect, this is an argument for relativism with respect to aesthetic theory.

In addition, music teacher preparation programs might better prepare future teachers by emphasizing aesthetic literacy and cultural understanding over educational methodology. Aesthetic theory, in this view, is inclusive of a multicultural approach based upon various processes of music making and the meaning and value of music making within societies and cultures. Current music teacher education programs might be examined to determine if this global perspective is present to support the directive that "music of all periods, styles, forms and cultures belongs in the curriculum."<sup>48</sup> Teachers cannot teach what they do not know.

Finally, Dewey writes that "to engage in it [the world] is to exercise the imagination in constructing an experience of wider value than any the child has yet mastered." Teachers might encourage students to participate in various musical processes, through composing, performing, or listening, to enable students to expand imaginatively their understanding of the meaning of the musical symbol. In so doing, music can take us to places we have never been and give us experiences we have never had; music goes beyond empirical imagination.<sup>49</sup> Students can connect with other cultures, past civilizations, minorities, and in a sense, participate in the life cycle of the symbol, and by extension, the life cycle of a culture.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, at the individual level, the musical symbol may also initiate us into our own culture.

The pluralistic aesthetic stance, which results from the melding of social and individual factors, also suggests that music educators focus less on the elitist and competitive aspects of music education often found at the secondary level, such as band and choral competitions, and more on its cooperative and egalitarian qualities. Competition has been a part of musical experience from ancient Greek times to the present, including such events as the *Prix de Rome* and the Tchaikovsky Piano Competition. All competitive events have winners and losers; some people must fail. An egalitarian approach suggests that music educators refrain from classifying students according to the same scale, both individually and socially. This does not mean that we have no standards. On the contrary, as Goodman points

out, exposure to cultural diversity in the arts frees students from standards that may have imprisoned them without suggesting that excellence does not matter. Instead, there are many kinds of excellence; no one standard need prevail, nor must we surrender hope of evaluating our own work.<sup>51</sup>

In summary then, the relationship between imagination and music is a mutually enriching one. Imagination is essential to understanding the musical symbol; music, in turn, cultivates imagination. In this process, imagination effects several epistemological continuities: linguistic and musical; ambiguity and certitude; literal and figurative; intuitive and reasoned; thinking and feeling; theory and practice; and social and individual. Like Dewey's metaphor of the spider's web, or Langer's fabric metaphor, imagination is a complex activity of the mind with several facets. It functions cognitively so that in developing imagination, music educators are developing the mind. Imagination is central to both music making and study about music.

## Notes

1. See for example, Aaron Copland, *Music and Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952); Nicholas Cook, *Music, Imagination, and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); Vernon Howard, *Artistry: The Work of Artists* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1982) and *Learning by All Means: Lessons from the Arts* (New York: Peter Lang, forthcoming); Estelle Jorgensen, "In Search of Music Education" (Unpublished paper available from the author, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 1991); Susanne Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979); Roger Sessions, *The Musical Experience of Composer, Performer, Listener* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974).
2. John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, The Free Press, 1966), 237.
3. Lewis Rowell, *Thinking About Music: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Music* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1983), 149.
4. Keith Swanwick, *Music, Mind, and Education*, (London: Routledge, 1988), 105.
5. Mary J. Reichling, "Images of Imagination," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 38 (Winter 1990): 282-93.
6. Mary Warnock, *Imagination* (Berkeley:

University of California Press, 1978). 9. Donald Ferguson, *Music as Metaphor: The Elements of Expression* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1960), 163; Edward Casey, *Imagining: A Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), 83-84; John Dewey, *The School and Society* in combined edition with *The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1956), 144.

7. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Music Educators National Conference, New Orleans, April 1992. The findings are drawn from chapter 5 of the author's dissertation, "Images of Imagination: A Philosophical Study of Imagination in Music with Application to Music Education," D.M.E. diss., Indiana University, 1991. The notion of "continuities" follows Dewey's use of the word in *Democracy and Education*. See his chapter titled "Theories of Knowledge," 333-60. Dewey distinguishes between continuity and dualism. Dualisms identify divisions, separation, or antitheses. Dewey considers a conception of learning founded on opposition to be untenable. In education, one is looking for connections, generalities, and totalities from which advances the notion of continuities. I suggest that imagination effects continuity between these various polarities that seem to be in tension with each other.

8. Philip Alperson, ed., *What is Music? An Introduction to the Philosophy of Music* (New York: Haven, 1986); Jose Arcaya, "A Phenomenological Inquiry into the Musical Imagination: The Experience of Orchestra Conducting," in *In Search of Musical Method*, ed. F. J. Smith (London: Gordon and Breach, 1976), 99-116; Elliot Eisner, "Aesthetic Modes of Knowing," in *Learning and Teaching the Ways of Knowing*, ed. Elliot Eisner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), part 2, 23-36; Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); Paul Hirst, *Knowledge and the Curriculum: A Collection of Philosophical Papers* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974; reprint, 1980); William J. Moody, ed., *Artistic Intelligences: Implications for Education*, (New York: Teachers College Press, 1990); Michael J. Parsons, *How We Understand Art: A Cognitive Developmental Account of Aesthetic Experience* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1987, reprint, 1990); Roger Scruton, *Art and Imagination: A Study of the Philosophy of Mind* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974; reprint, Southampton: Camelot Press, 1982).

9. The Report of the National Commission on Music Education, *Growing Up Complete: The Imperative for Music Education* (Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference, 1991), mentions music as a way of learning to use sym-

bols in new contexts and as an "intelligence," but does not go far enough or give sufficient attention to music as a mode of knowing in its rationale for music in education. See especially 17-20.

10. Nelson Goodman, for example, maintains this position concerning the visual arts. He writes that in understanding pictures, one is grasping ideas. See *Of Mind and Other Matters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 173.

11. Don Ihde, *Listening and Voice: A Phenomenology of Sound* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976), 137.

12. Goodman, *Mind and Matters*, 173, 183.

13. Charles Hoffer supports this view in his criticism of Gardner and warns that musical intelligence is not monolithic. The example is drawn from Hoffer's discussion. See "Artistic Intelligences and Music Education" in *Artistic Intelligences*, ed. Moody, 135.

14. David W. Anderson, "Imagination Running Wild," in *New Directions in Education: Selections from Holistic Education Review*, ed. Ron Miller (Brandon, Vermont: Holistic Education Press, 1991), 240, 252; E. Paul Torrance, *Encouraging Creativity in the Classroom* (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company, 1970), 47. Torrance recommends play with analogies, fantasy, and magic; all have their place in developing imagination and musical understanding.

15. At the Indiana University Measurement and Evaluation Symposium, June 1991, Lyle Davidson and Larry Scripp from Harvard Project Zero reported on current testing of a portfolio assessment model for music used with selected high school choral groups. Gardner, "Multiple Intelligences," 18. Elliot Eisner, "Response to [Warren Bennett] Newman's Presentation," on "The Effect of Standardized Testing on Education in the Arts" in *Artistic Intelligences*, 59.

16. Nelson Goodman and Catherine Z. Elgin, *Reconceptions in Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988), 55. This example is taken from Edward L. Murray, *Imaginative Thinking and Human Existence* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1986), 134.

17. Maxine Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1988), 128, 134. On this point see also Goodman, *Mind and Matters*, in which he argues that in nonlinguistic symbol schemes nothing is absolutely fixed and fully determinate, 18.

18. Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987); E. D. Hirsch, *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987); National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983), Stock No. 065-000-00177-2.

19. Anderson, 251.
20. Casey writes at length about success and failure in the imaginative experience. Although his applications are for the educability of imagination in general, they are pertinent to imagination in the experience of music. *Imagining*, 83-85.
21. Goodman, *Reconstruction*, 20.
22. Susanne Langer makes a distinction between the art symbol which she conceives holistically as the expressive form, and the symbol in art which may be singular or plural, discrete, and refer to things beyond the music itself. See *Problems of Art* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), 124-39.
23. Lyle Davidson, Larry Scripp, and Patricia Welsh, "Happy Birthday: Evidence for Conflicts of Perceptual Knowledge and Conceptual Understanding," in *Art, Mind and Education: Research from Project Zero*, eds. Howard Gardner and David Perkins, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 65-74.
24. Goodman and Elgin, *Reconceptions*, 20.
25. The notion of connectedness represents a feminist perspective according to Greene, 120.
26. Dewey, "Imagination and Expression,"
27. See also *How We Think* for further discussion of the relation between analysis and synthesis which he defines as "correlative," (Boston: H. C. Heath and Company, 1910), 114-15. Blacking holds that analysis must remain context sensitive. He uses "context" broadly, not only in relation to the work itself, but also in connection with historical and cultural factors. He writes: "Even the discoveries of systematic musicology may apply only to the musical traditions of systematic musicologist and to perceptual faculties that have been developed in their own cultures." See Blacking, 90, 98, 30.
27. Goodman, *Languages*, 67. Dewey writes that engaging imagination is the only way we have of making activity more than mechanical. An adequate recognition of the play of imagination as the medium of realization of every kind of thing which lies beyond the scope of direct physical response is the sole way of escape from mechanical methods in teaching." *Democracy and Education*, 236.
28. An example of this atomistic approach may be found in *Accompaniment to Analytical Anthology of Music*, by Ralph Turek (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984). This workbook provides a question-and-answer approach to the analysis of selected musical compositions. I present two representative tasks that illustrate the "bits and pieces" approach. "Approximately what percentage [emphasis added] of the development is given over to harmonic preparation of the recapitulation?" 191. Elsewhere, Turek pro-
- Reichling: *Imagination and Musical* of the number of times various intervals occur within a row, 235.
29. Greene, 119, 126. Dewey characterizes such an approach to pedagogy as mechanical, offering a "cast-iron external scheme [in place of] the personal mental movement of the individual." Dewey, *How We Think*, 60-61.
30. My purpose in using this example differs from Goodman's; his is to show how a viewer might distinguish an original work of art from a forgery. Goodman, *Languages*, 104-05.
31. Hirsch, 152-215.
32. Douglas Bartholomew, "Whole/Part Relations in Music," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 25, no. 3 (Fall 1991): 175-191.
33. Israel Scheffler, "In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions," *Inquiries: Philosophical Studies of Language, Science and Learning* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1986), 347-62.
34. For further discussion of this point see Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols*, 2nd ed., (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1976), 248.
35. Harold Rugg, *Imagination* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), 291-92.
36. Warnock, 206-207.
37. Ibid.
38. On this, see also Scheffler, *Inquiries*, 60.
39. William C. Hartshorn, "The Role of the Arts in a Changing Society," in *Documentary Report of the Tanglewood Symposium*, ed. Robert A. Choate, (Washington, D. C.: Music Educators National Conference, 1968), 17. Hartshorn's position is founded upon F.S.C. Northrop's earlier presentation, "The Theoretic and Aesthetic Components in Western Civilization," 4-8.
40. Goodman, *Languages*, 248-49.
41. Ibid., 249-50. In addition to Goodman and Warnock, Scruton describes emotion functioning cognitively and offers an example illustrating how emotions can be taught within this context. See *The Aesthetic Understanding: Essays in the Philosophy of Art and Culture* (New York: Methuen, 1983), 142-44.
42. On this point see also Jorgensen, "In Search of Music Education." She discusses the distinction between *musica theoretica* and *musica practica* and suggests that emphasis on the latter arises out of a preoccupation with concepts of training to which the praxialist position lends itself.
43. Dewey, *How We Think*, 47.
44. Dewey, *The School and Society*, 61-62.
45. John Blacking, *How Musical Is Man?* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983), xi-xii, 30, 98; Christopher Small, *Music, Society, Education*, 2nd rev. ed., (London: John Calder, 1980), 211.
46. Blacking writes that "the function of mu-

sis is to enhance in some way quality of individual experiences and of human relationships. See "The Value of Music in Human Experience," (repr. from Alexander L. Ringer, ed., *1969 Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council* (n.p., 1969), 59.

47. Austin Caswell, "An Historical Basis for a Functional Aesthetic," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 25, no. 3 (Fall 1991): 129-45.

48. Abraham A. Schwadron, "Music Education and Teacher Preparation: Perspectives from the Aesthetics of Music," *Journal of Musicological Research* 4 (October 1982): 186; Coate, *Tanglewood Symposium*, 139.

49. John Dewey, *How We Think*, 165; Casey, *Imagining*, 84.

50. The idea that symbols possess a life cycle is one that Iris Yob presents in her analysis of the ideas of Paul Tillich. "The Arts as Ways of Understanding: Reflections on the Ideas of Paul Tillich—Theologian, Philosopher, and Art Lover," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 25, no.3 (Fall 1991): 5-20. See also Peter Fletcher, *Education and Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), xv, 198.

51. Eisner, "Responses to Newman's Presentation," 37. Nelson Goodman, David Perkins, and Howard Gardner, *Basic Abilities Required for Understanding and Creation in the Arts* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1972), 79, ERIC ED 071 989.

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