

2021

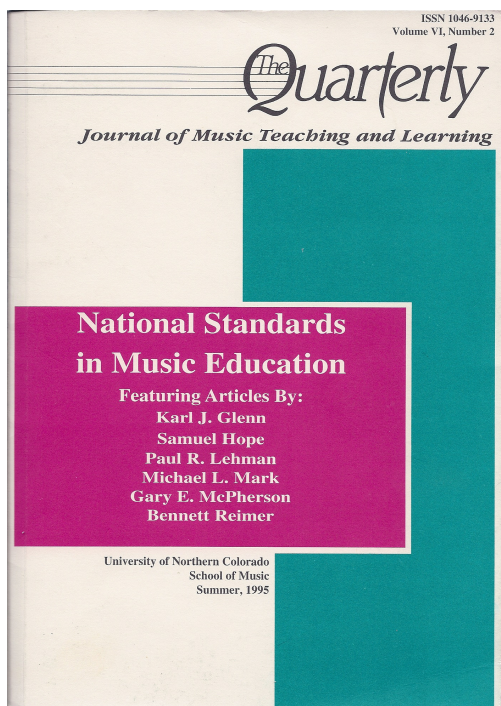
Beyond Performing: The Promise Of The New National Standards in Music Education

Bennett Reimer
Northwestern University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://opencommons.uconn.edu/vrme>

Recommended Citation

Reimer, Bennett (2021) "Beyond Performing: The Promise Of The New National Standards in Music Education," *Visions of Research in Music Education*: Vol. 16 , Article 12.
Available at: <https://opencommons.uconn.edu/vrme/vol16/iss6/12>



Title: Beyond Performing: The Promise of the New National Standards in Music Education

Author(s): Bennett Reimer

Source: Reimer, B. (1995, Summer). Beyond performing: The promise of the new national standards in music education. *The Quarterly*, 6(2), pp. 23-32. (Reprinted with permission in *Visions of Research in Music Education*, 16(6), Autumn, 2010). Retrieved from <http://www-usr.rider.edu/~vrme/>

Visions of Research in Music Education is a fully refereed critical journal appearing exclusively on the Internet. Its publication is offered as a public service to the profession by the New Jersey Music Educators Association, the state affiliate of MENC: The National Association for Music Education. The publication of VRME is made possible through the facilities of Westminster Choir College of Rider University Princeton, New Jersey. Frank Abrahams is the senior editor. Jason D. Vodicka is editor of the *Quarterly* historical reprint series. Chad Keilman is the production coordinator. The *Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning* is reprinted with permission of Richard Colwell, who was senior consulting editor of the original series.

Beyond Performing: The Promise Of The New National Standards In Music Education

By Bennett Reimer

Northwestern University

Readers familiar with the dramatic changes that have occurred in the field of visual arts education over the past decade, as a result of the pervasive influence of the Getty Center for Education in the Arts and its “Discipline-Based Art Education” (DBAE) program, will recognize that the first two words of my title are a variation of the title of the seminal Getty publication that got its DBAE program going — *Beyond Creating: The Place for Art in America’s Schools*.¹

Those two words, “beyond creating,” caused a firestorm in visual arts education — a debate of such intensity (and often rancor), and changes in philosophy and practice so far-reaching, as to be fairly called a revolution.² It is safe to say that the field of visual arts education will never be quite the same: a corner has been turned and there is probably no going back, much as some within that profession wish that were possible.

Bennett Reimer holds the John W. Beattie endowed chair in Music at Northwestern University, where he is Director of the Ph.D. program in Music Education and of the Center for the Study of Education and the Musical Experience.

The corner has everything to do with those two fighting words — “beyond creating.” Art education has been, throughout its history, so monolithically and thoroughly devoted to creating art as the major if not exclusive thing one does with art in teaching it, that to suggest that other learnings and involvements were even possible, let alone essential, was shocking. Art education historically carried out its work under the seldom-questioned assumption that it existed to develop the visual art creative capacities of every child — to make every child into as much of an artist as was possible. “Beyond creating,” a phrase calculated to directly challenge that entrenched assumption, “asserts not only that content and procedures for teaching art should be derived from

[music educators]
...can no longer
rely entirely or
dominantly on
performance as the
be-all and end-all of
music education.
The national standards make starkly
clear the fact that
we have also
turned a significant
new corner, and
there is no going
back.

a number of key disciplines but also that the understanding and appreciation of works of art are as educationally valuable as creating art...that experiencing works of art aesthetically is as significant as producing them.”³ Talk about heresy!

For many music educators the assertion that we, too, must go beyond creating — in

our case beyond performing — will also be seen as heretical. This will occur despite our awareness of the DBAE program and its many implications for music education, and the important movements over the past several decades to make music education more “comprehensive” and more of an “aesthetic education” than solely performing allows.⁴ Even though some music educators might be uncomfortable with the heresy, we can no longer rely entirely or dominantly on performance as the be-all and end-all of music education. The national standards make starkly clear the fact that we have also turned a significant new corner, and there is no going back.

It is possible for the standards to be understood, under one interpretation of them, as inherently conservative: as preserving the traditional, entrenched form of music education that has characterized our field in the United States since the Colonies. After all, the very first two of the nine standards, dealing with 1) singing and 2) playing, are precisely what one would expect to come first in a hierarchical listing — they are the old music education “basics.” These are followed by the inevitable “other” music creating involvements: 3) improvising, and 4) composing, and then by the equally inevitable matter of 5) using notation as it relates to singing, playing and composing. These first five, of nine, standards situate us squarely within traditional territory on the issue of what music education is supposed to accomplish — making all children musicians, just as visual arts education historically assumed it existed to make all children artists. While improvising and composing are now included, historically the vast majority of students have chosen the most obvious and accessible way one can be a musician — by performing, and in our culture that overwhelmingly means performing notated music.

The final four standards areas: 6) listening, analyzing, and describing, 7) evaluating, 8) understanding how music relates to other fields, and 9) viewing music in historical and cultural contexts, can all be easily construed as supportive of the initial five. These four, after all, give performers some needed perspective, to avoid a too narrow, technical bias. We have long claimed that musicians

should also be knowledgeable about musical matters surrounding their actual performance skills: the final four can easily be conceived as fulfilling that honorable function. So we can conclude, in this reading of the standards, that they can be understood as preserving the status quo — as a license to continue business as usual. I have little doubt that some music educators will construe the standards this way.

If music educators react in this way, it would be a major mistake, not only in regard to what the standards intend but for the health and future of music education as a field. I believe the standards suggest, even require, a goal for music education far different from the traditional one of making all people musicians (primarily performing musicians). The standards, I would argue, stipulate that our goal as a professional field should now be to prepare all people in our culture to take fullest possible advantage of all the musical opportunities afforded them. This would enrich both their own musical lives and the musical viability of their culture. Nothing less than turning this corner will fulfill the promise and demand of the standards and of our profession at this time in its history. A major reason we have been marginalized in education is because we have clung to a goal no longer viable for all people or for even more than very few people. It is time we recognized that a more inclusive, relevant, and challenging goal would reposition us at the center of the educational enterprise rather than at its periphery. The standards provide helpful and specific directions for moving toward a more valid and expansive professional mission.

An examination of the nine standards from the perspective of this larger mission for music education will clarify how they can help us change toward serving our culture more effectively than we have done during the latter part of this century. The standards require us to focus our efforts on the needs and realities of the musical world in which we actually live, rather than on our own perspectives and preferences as people who have been trained to be performing musicians, who place unrealistically high value on that particular musical role.

The standards, I would argue, stipulate that our goal as a professional field should now be to prepare all people in our culture to take fullest possible advantage of all the musical opportunities afforded them.

Standards one and two, which detail expectations for singing and playing involvements, are listed first because of their familiarity and dominance. Given the need for the standards to be accepted and supported wholeheartedly by the profession if they are to become a reality in our practices, it would have been impolitic to start anywhere else. “Be comforted,” this tells us. “We’re not out to scuttle what we now regard to be important in music education.”

Indeed the standards do not. Singing and playing remain essential ingredients in any concept of music education with which I am familiar. I know of no position along the philosophical, psychological, sociological, or educational spectrum that would argue that performing should be abandoned or not play a significant role in musical education in our culture. This is certainly not a position I have ever taken or can imagine myself to take, and I would be surprised (and dismayed) to discover that anyone in our profession has seriously argued it. Performing, after all, has been a requirement of music in all cultures throughout all of history. Even in those cultures which employ notation (cultures in which musical composition became a separate function from musical performance), the notated music is considered to be “music” in an incipient sense: what people experience as music is not signs on paper but musical sounds themselves. Performers make musical sounds — they are the direct providers of musical experience even when significant contents of that experience have been stipulated by composers in the notations they have provided. Performance has been, and remains today, a musical essential.

As we are all aware, the prospect of music without performers has now arisen due to technologies that allow composers to make the sounds they want electronically and to

have their completed, sounded compositions directly available to listeners with no need for performers to intervene. This marks a revolutionary turning point in the history of music. We who are devoted to music education, and to performance as one of the essential components of music education, had better pay serious attention to the implications of this situation if we are to ensure the preservation of the values of performance as it goes through inevitable changes as a result of this threat to it. I have argued elsewhere that to lose performance would be to lose a unique and precious intelligence among the relatively few that humans possess, an intelligence combining the mind, body, and feelings — the major dimensions of the human condition — in a unity of experience at the highest reaches of human potential.⁵ At the moment the threat of that loss, or of significant changes in the status of the role of performance in music, remains in the future, however inevitable the threat may be. We must now continue to reap the benefits of involving students in performing, both as an integral part of general music education for all students and as a specialized elective involvement for as many students as possible.

The issue, then, is not in any sense performance or not performance. It is whether music education, continuing to rely on performance as an essential component, can also go beyond it to include a variety of learnings heretofore greatly neglected because of the overwhelming predominance of performing activities and all the requisites such activities entail. “Beyond” means “in addition to” — not “the elimination of.” But it also means that if we add, in serious ways, dimensions of learning we have neglected, as the standards require, the balance of involvements will have to shift significantly. *That* is the rub. *That* is the challenge the standards present.

That challenge will be responded to, I sus-

The issue...is whether music education, continuing to rely on performance as an essential component, can also go beyond it to include a variety of learnings heretofore greatly neglected...

pect, along a continuum of beliefs. On one side, some will be only too happy to minimize or even neglect performance in favor of activities they happen to prefer — criticism, or cultural studies, or arts appreciation, or music studied as a component of learnings in the non-arts subjects. We will have to be very careful and critical in our response to such programs, asking the basic questions of whether musical thinking and doing, musical experience, musical sensitivity and understanding, are being pursued authentically and being heightened as a result; or whether they are being weakened by the neglect of the immediacy of musical involvement such as can be obtained only through focused study including listening, performing, improvising, and composing as essential ingredients. That is, we can so “academicize” our programs as to enfeeble the musical “knowing within” and “knowing how” that our art uniquely provides. That, I believe, would be tragic.

On the other end of the continuum is an equally tragic potential being vociferously argued by some — that we should focus even more than we have in the past on performance as the be-all and end-all of music education, because performance is the only true, valid, appropriate way to experience music. “Performance-based music education,” with “praxialism” as its philosophical basis, represents the fundamentalist right wing in music education. It so elevates the virtues of performance as to deify it. Under this performance-obsessed view, music education would center upon the development of performance craft, all other learnings being aimed toward assisting in this outcome. The success of music education would be judged by how well every child can be led to be a performer — a return (or regression) to the traditional and now antiquated music education posture, but with a vengeance.⁶

I believe this would also be deeply unfor-

tunate for music education. The widespread involvement in and acceptance of the standards by the music education profession, as representing a reasonable breadth of learnings in music, leads me to trust that most music educators share the belief that the extremism of a fundamentalist praxial view is precisely wrong for our profession at this time in its history. The standards embody the profession's recognition that we must go beyond our historical dependence on performing as our dominant reason for being. To buy into a reactionary position now would be disastrous.

Between the extremes of a musical academicism that can enervate musical experience, and a performance obsessiveness that can restrict musical experience, we will have to be wise enough to find some middle ground, in which learnings about music relevant to the vast majority of people in our culture, who are not and will not become performers, and the powerful benefits of the experience of performing (along with the other direct involvements in music — listening, improvising, and composing) find their place as focal program components. This is likely to take time and a lot of critical care. The remaining seven standards provide a solid basis for addressing the challenge facing us.

Standard three, dealing with improvisational involvements with music, will be, I fear, more difficult to accomplish to any significant degree than we might suspect, important as it is for us to try. We now exist musically in a culture of notational literacy, with the major viable alternative from non-notational culture — oral culture — being jazz. The differences in human thinking and doing between literate cultures (or “chirographic” cultures, those having a written language system, one instance of which is musical notation) and oral cultures (those unfamiliar with written language systems) is

Improvisational engagements in music education would be a powerful way to keep alive the kind of musical body/thought/feeling-in-action characteristic of, and required for, the oral musical mentality. These are too precious to lose, even though we can not and would not return to being a pre-notational culture.

profound. Recent scholarship in this area reveals the depths of mind influenced and even transformed when written language systems replace oral traditions. As Walter J. Ong points out in his penetrating study of this phenomenon,

In recent years certain basic differences have been discovered between the ways of managing knowledge and verbalization in primary oral cultures (cultures with no knowledge at all of writing) and in cultures deeply affected by the use of writing. The implications of the new discoveries have been startling. Many of the features we have taken for granted in thought and expression in literature, philosophy and science, and even in oral discourse among literates, are not directly native to human existence as such but have come into being because of the resources which the technology of writing makes available to human consciousness. We have had to revise our understanding of human identity.⁷

Written language and written music do not operate in culture in the same way. Being able to read language is a requirement for functional literacy because written language yields its meanings directly from being read. Music yields its meanings directly from being heard. Notation is needed only for those who need a system to record their musical ideas (composers) and for those responsible for producing the notated sounds so they can be heard (performers). The analogy between written language and musical notation on the one hand, and oral cultures on the other, is helpful in clarifying that both oral and written traditions are capable of producing deeply powerful and satisfying creations of aesthetic value. Literate cultures often devalue products of oral cultures as being naive, simple, and even “primitive.” Oral cultures, recognizing the enormous gains in human mentality that can be made only by

adopting written systems, want very much to become “literate” but fear the changes such literacy causes. Ong expresses this poignant dilemma, applicable in large degree to musical notational literacy, as follows:

There is hardly an oral culture or a predominantly oral culture left in the world today that is not somehow aware of the vast complex of powers forever inaccessible without literacy. This awareness is agony for persons rooted in primary orality, who want literacy passionately but who also know very well that moving into the exciting world of literacy means leaving behind much that is exciting and deeply loved in the earlier oral world. We have to die to continue living.⁸

Improvisational engagements in music education would be a powerful way to keep alive the kind of musical body/thought/feeling-in-action characteristic of, and required for, the oral musical mentality. These are too precious to lose, even though we can not and would not return to being a pre-notational culture.⁹ I strongly suspect that we could achieve more of the characteristic musical benefits of improvisational orality if we began such activities as early as possible in the pre-school years and kept many and diverse such activities going throughout all our programs in the school years. The big mistake, I think, is to presume that improvisation is something we can add later to an assumedly required “basis” of notational functionality. One example is that of placing high school instrumentalists into jazz groups after they are “ready” by virtue of their traditional training in notated music. Our past experience indicates how difficult this is, and scholarship is making clear why. Paying serious attention to improvisational engagements for all children at all levels would force us to make some changes in the bal-

I strongly suspect we have lost or bored more people, or have seemed more irrelevant, narrow, and technically preoccupied to more people, by our concentration on notation instruction than by any other single thing we have done.

ance of what we presently do. The gains, I believe, would be substantial.

The technological revolution mentioned earlier, allowing people to become involved in musical composition at levels of complexity and immediacy never before possible, has already begun to revolutionize music education. Who would have thought, only a decade or so ago, that composing could soon appeal to and engage as many if not more people than performing? That reality is becoming ever more likely, as the accessibility and user-friendliness of equipment increases and the immensely satisfying challenges of the primary form of musical creation in Western culture — composing — become experienced and shared by more and more people. Standard four recognizes the enormous potential for all students to be offered the opportunity to discover their compositional gifts and proclivities, which can provide them with a life-long involvement in creating music and sharing their music with others, pleasures so immensely satisfying, yet, until now, so difficult for more than a very few to ever attain. Technology has democratized composition, and has presented music education with an unprecedented opportunity to be of renewed service to its culture.

We have much to learn in order to be able to do so as expertly as we now do for performing. I have every confidence however, that we will learn very quickly. As we develop our know-how, both about composition and the teaching of it, and as we adapt our infrastructure — teacher education, research, professional organization, school staffing and programming, etc. — to the new demands, we will, I hope, not only become more useful to our clientele but also rejuvenated in our sense of the importance of our contribution to a growing, changing musical culture. We will be less locked in to the traditional culture of bands, orchestras, and

choruses, and at the forefront of an emerging musical opportunity with horizons we cannot yet glimpse. We need this challenge.

Part of it will be to reconceptualize the function of notation in music — standard five. Notation has always been tied directly to its functionality for performance. Because of our historical fixation on performance we have magnified the importance of notational skills far beyond what is relevant for most people in our society. This has been the case especially since the invention of recording technologies over a century ago, which made musical experience immediately available to all people whether or not they could read notation and perform, as relatively few choose to do. Since performers have needed high levels of notational skill, and we have concentrated our efforts so strongly on developing performance abilities, we have tended to saturate all music instruction, even in less performance-oriented settings such as general music classes, with a notation focus. I strongly suspect we have lost or bored more people, or have seemed more irrelevant, narrow, and technically preoccupied to more people, by our concentration on notation instruction than by any other single thing we have done.

Now, as new modes of composing have raised many issues about the role of notation, we have an opportunity to reconsider the larger issue of its role in music education generally. As with performance, I cannot conceive of school music instruction without some significant involvement in understanding the functions of notation and in some practical experience with how it works. But I can certainly conceive of a reassessment as to what that involvement consists of and for what purposes, especially in light of what we will inevitably learn about it through the uses and nonuses of it in composing. Better clarity and more relevant instruction in notation

Genuine, attentive, active musical listening is a creative endeavor, in which meaning is co-constructed by composers, performers and listeners within a cultural belief system. That is why listening is so deeply satisfying, and why all of us continually crave it....

will be a welcome bonus of our becoming educated about how to teach composition. This can lead to important improvements in how we involve students with notation in every aspect of our programs.

The final four standards stake out the territory most challenging to our traditional beliefs and practices. These standards affirm forthrightly that we are ready to address the reality of the musical culture in which we exist, rather than ignoring or denigrating that reality. The fact of the matter is that ours is — (hold on, now, this is going to be ugly) — largely a consumer culture. All people in our culture, including the relatively few who are engaged in ongoing performance and composition activities, are consumers of music composed and performed by others. They consume this music by listening to it, in and through a great variety of settings and media. (The Recording Industry Association of America reported that more money was spent in 1994 — \$12 billion — on recorded music and music videos than ever before in history.)¹⁰ We are a music-saturated culture. It is just about impossible to escape it even if one yearns, sometimes, to do so. The variety of music available to be heard is astonishing; its quality is often superb; its range in depth and breadth is unlimited; its ubiquity is testament to the powerful need all people have for music and their determination to have that need met abundantly.

The public will meet that need with us or without us. The sad fact is that, because of our elitist, narrowly focused posture about what is “worthy” in our musical culture, the musical needs of our populace have been met largely without us. We have, I believe, abdicated our responsibility to our general culture in favor of our single-minded devotion to a very small minority within it, however much that minority deserves all the at-

tention and loving care we can give it. Now we have to expand from our limited base of serving the needs of the few (magnificently well, I believe) to serving the needs of all. If we do not, we will become perhaps deservedly even more marginal in our culture than we already are.

Standards six through nine give us the basis for offering our essential musical service which is to help every person become an active, educated, expansive, participant-appreciator of music. These four standards are directly relevant to the needs of all people in our culture (including those who elect to perform or compose) because they directly address how all people experience music in our culture. Standard areas one through five deepen and enrich these four: they continue to play an essential role in supporting the learnings achieved. They are not, in this setting of general education for all, the focal or dominant learnings, as they are in our elective programs.

Rebalancing our priorities to serve the needs of our culture as it exists, rather than as our own fantasies desire it to exist, will not be easy. We have been very self-centered for a very long time. We have regarded listening (the foundational interaction with music) with suspicion if not disdain. We constantly deride listening as being passive and insignificant, the lazy way out for musical couch potatoes who haven't got the gumption to do what “real” music lovers do — *create* music. We have not yet, despite a growing literature on the cognitive nature of listening, absorbed the fact that *listening to music is creating music*. Because listening does not involve overt motor skills, we confuse it with passivity, under the mistaken assumption that active involvement necessarily requires physical movement. What determines active engagement, however, is the depth and quality of mental/affective energy

What we need to provide is a “sound-centered” music education — an education focused toward musical sounds themselves as a source of infinite musical satisfactions.

expended in what one is doing. One can be a passive performer and one can be an active listener: the salient ingredient is the concentration of energies one brings to each involvement. Genuine, attentive, active musical listening is a creative endeavor, in which meaning is co-constructed by composers, performers and listeners within a cultural belief system. That is why listening is so deeply satisfying, and why all of us continually crave it — yes, even those of us who still manage to perform now and then.

Our hypocrisy in this matter knows no bounds. I have listened to well-known music educators who specialize in philosophy (and who haven't performed much since they were in college) ridicule all those people who listen to recordings and go to concerts (who even go to art galleries and museums, for heaven's sake) as being beneath our contempt. This insufferable, superior attitude, unfortunately, is not limited to a few of our intellectual elite. It pervades our profession and leaks out, inevitably, to our public. We deserve, perhaps, our public's dismissal of our self-serving agenda for them. Until we are ready to recognize, honor, and devote ourselves to the enhancement of the fundamental musical behavior in our culture, to create music by listening to it, we will continue to be separated from our cultural mainstream, and suffer greatly as a result.

Music educators should be playing the major leadership role in expanding and improving the musical meanings available to all in our culture. Our obligation is to clarify what active, educated, expansive consumership in music consists of, and to build programs that help people pursue it effectively. This will require us to make judgments about musical pieces and performances across the wide spectrum of musics now so easily available in our culture. This is the point and purpose of standard seven, which affirms that criteria for judging musical value need to be applied

so our approach to music is not simply indiscriminate.

This is no easy task, given the enormous diversity of styles, types and functions of music in our world. It will challenge our best musical thinkers to help us develop our understandings about ways we can make musical judgments relevantly and helpfully. Rather than retreating to the safety (and absurdity) of a value-free musical egalitarianism, we will have to be wise enough to help our students accomplish what standard seven requires in applying reasonable criteria of musical quality in exploring the wide world of music. I have suggested that criteria such as musical craftsmanship, sensitivity, imagination, and authenticity can be used as guidelines for judgment-making across all musics, when applied within the expectation-system of each particular music.¹¹ These criteria have been employed usefully by tens of thousands of music educators over the years. Surely we can continue to refine our understandings of how such criteria, and other pertinent conceptualizations of musical merit, can be applied in ways that do not misrepresent the diverse world of music, but which help our students to be more discerning about the musical experiences in which they can choose to become engaged.

Standards eight and nine are meant to develop contexts of clear understanding about how music relates to the family of arts and to the larger domain of human cognitive activity (standard eight), and how music exists as historically and culturally situated (standard nine.) The musical needs of all people will be served directly and powerfully by our focus on these final four standards as the basis for our general education programs, richly supplemented, as has been mentioned, by involvements in the previous five.

The standards, then, require the music education profession to go beyond performing in four specific ways.

1. For general education in music — our basic and most important contribution to our musical culture — we must balance our programs toward standards six through nine, with performing, improvising, composing, and notation serving important supplementary functions. This will require a change in our old mentality that making and doing in music consist primarily of performing (with a nod to improvising and composing), all other involvements and learnings being inferior if not dispensable. As the distinguished visual art educator Harlan Hoffa said recently in regard to the implications of the standards for needed change in the attitudes of the arts education profession,

The first step will involve a long-term campaign to subtly change the ways that arts teachers think about the goals and purposes of arts education and perhaps to dissuade them from the tired old notion that the only way to learn anything worthwhile in the arts is through the making and doing of arts.¹²

I suggest that our understanding of “making and doing music” must go significantly beyond performing. A major educational goal must be the development of every person’s capacity to be an informed, discerning, creative percipient; that is, an active, intelligent participant in musical consumership.

2. We must add, both in general education settings and in specialized electives, the kind of performance intelligence called for by improvisational orality. This is still performance, of course, but it goes beyond our traditional dependence on notational literacy as the “real” way to perform, opening a new (but, ironically, older) way for our students to experience music.

3. We must take full advantage of the new opportunity to involve our students in composing (again, both in general education and in electives). This is a step beyond performing that has added an entirely new dimension to the musical possibilities available to all.

4. In performing involvements themselves, whether as part of general education or in specialized electives, our instruction must go beyond the sheer act of sound-producing to include far more serious attention to the learnings stipulated in standards six through nine. This is partly, but importantly, because the great majority of students involved in

school performance activities will not continue to perform after they graduate from high school. Their school performance experience needs to serve their needs to become active appreciators for the rest of their lives. In addition, a more concentrated focus on the six through nine learnings will add much-needed musical dimensionality for the few who will continue to pursue performance, whether as professionals or amateurs. In both cases, learnings beyond performing itself will enhance the quality and carry-over of the experience to the active audienceship we hope all people in our culture will enjoy.

The standards provide the best structure we have presently been able to devise within which our present and future mission can be pursued. That mission requires us to go further, and in different directions, than our zealotry for performing has allowed. The future will require that we take on new roles and opportunities being presented both by advances in music itself and by societal changes occurring all around us, with a renewed and expanded dedication to helping people share the many ways that musical sounds produce musical meaning. What we need to provide is a “sound-centered” music education — an education focused toward musical sounds themselves as a source of infinite musical satisfactions. When we involve our students with sounds as heard (listening), sounds as imagined (composing), sounds as produced (performing), sounds as imagined and produced (improvising), we are helping them participate in music, validly and authentically. When we help them bring to such involvements the many learnings that directly influence the quality of listening, composing, performing, and improvising, such as the standards delineate — analyzing, describing, evaluating, understanding relations and contexts — we are providing a valid and authentic musical education. That education includes performing, of course, but is no longer limited to or restricted by that single orientation. We will have finally transcended the narrow vision from which we have traditionally suffered. We will have finally acknowledged, rather than disregarded, the actually existing musical culture in which we should be playing a more vital role.

Notes

1. *Beyond Creating: The Place for Art in American Schools*. (Los Angeles: The Getty Center for Education in the Arts, 1985).

2. For a thorough discussion of the influences of the DBAE program, see the *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 21:2 (Summer, 1987), a special issue devoted to the program, its historical roots, and its controversies, subsequently published as *Discipline-Based Arts Education: Origins, Meaning, and Development*, ed. Ralph A. Smith (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989).

3. Ralph A. Smith, "Antecedents of Discipline-Based Art Education," *Journal of Aesthetic Education*. Ibid. p. 5.

4. A more extended discussion than can be given here of the implications of DBAE for music education is presented in Bennett Reimer, "Would Discipline-Based Music Education Make Sense?," *Music Educators Journal* (May, 1991): 21-28. For an excellent overview of the major DBME program now in operation, see *Discipline-Based Music Education: A Conceptual Framework for the Teaching of Music* (Chattanooga, TN: The Southwest Center for Education in the Arts, 1994).

5. Bennett Reimer, "Is Musical Performance Worth Saving?" *Arts Education Policy Review*, 95:3 (January/February, 1994): 2-13.

6. The clearest example of the extremes to which the praxialist philosophy can be taken is David J. Elliott, *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).


7. Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Routledge, 1982): 1.

8. Ibid., 15.

9. Ong offers a fascinating delineation of the thought and expression in oral cultures as being additive, aggregative, redundant or "copious," conservative, close to lived experience, involved in struggle, empathetic and participatory, present-oriented, and situational; Ibid., 37-57.

10. *Chicago Tribune*, February 17, 1995, Section 1, 2.

11. See, for example, Bennett Reimer, "Choosing Art for Education: Criteria for Quality," *Design for the Arts in Education*, 85:6 (July/August, 1984): 5-10, and the discussion in Bennett Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education*, 2nd Edition (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989): 133-146.

12. Harlan Hoffa, "National Standards: The Whys and What Fors," *Arts Education Policy Review*, 96:2 (November/December, 1994): 18. 

Moving?

If so, let us know!
Don't miss a single issue of
*The Quarterly Journal
of Music Teaching
and Learning*.

Call (970) 351-2254

or

Mail your change-of-address
card to:

The Quarterly
University of Northern
Colorado
School of Music
123 Frasier Hall
Greeley, CO 80639