Experimental music in music education: Promises and conflicts

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Abstract: This paper focuses on the ideological and aesthetic underpinnings of the meeting between experimental music and music education that took place during the 1960s. It is an exercise in tracing the intellectual and cultural trajectories that inform creative music education, organized around 6 themes which might be seen as describing both core tenets and unresolved contradictions of the relationship between experimental music and creative music education: (1) Experimental-ism vs. avant-garde-ism: Confusion between avant-garde progressivism and experimentalism. (2) Within and without history: Universalism. Fostering experimentation and novelty in a non-foundational sense, while at the same time wishing to get to the essential core of what music is about. (3) Piercing vs. opening: Experiments and the experimental. Adopting an ambiguous position regarding the relationship between art and intention. This can be traced back to a central tension between the notions of experiment and the experimental (see Goehr, 2008). (4) Against commodification. Experimental music entered music education as means of radical emancipation of music from commercialism. Murray-Schafer’s notion of ‘Ear cleaning’ points directly to a process of getting away from the burden of everyday culture. (5) Locality and the neglect of the local. Encouraging freedom of expression of individual children and at the same time silencing children’s own musical cultures. It is argued that this rests on a transcendentual view of the universality of childhood as a moment of recovery of the lost innocence of humanity. (6) Creativity on demand: openness and predictability. The creation of a link between children’s creativity and the compositional processes employed by avant-garde composers became possible because of rise of a new conception of creativity that replaced the old dominant link between divine inspiration, greatness and musical creation.

This paper focuses on the relationships between experimental and avant-garde music and music education. It wishes to look back to the days of the 60s and the 70s when the music and ideas of experimental and avant-garde composers began to create links with music classrooms, and became a source of inspiration for music educators (see Pitts, 2000; Paynter and Aston, 1970; Paynter 1972, 1976, 1992, 1997, 2000, 2002; Dennis, 1970, 1975; Self, 1967, 1975; Walker, 1976; Dwyer, 1971; Murray Schafer, 1975, 1976, 1986).

The study of the rise of creative music education movement that flourished from the mid 1960s well through the 1970s has been given a rather sparse treatment, as one can see by looking at the historical accounts that make reference to the issue at hand. For example Gordon Cox (2006) has, according to my view, offered a partial and rather misleading view of this movement, overemphasizing the role of recapitulation theory in the thinking of those music educators associated with the emphasis in children’s creative engagement with music, at the expense of other important aspects of this educational movement. Stephanie Pitts’ (2000) A Century of Change in Music Education contains an excessively balanced description of ‘the use of noise to make music’, which ends with the assertion that ‘the classroom-based discovery and evolution was to have a limited life’ (2000, 95). George Odam holds a rather different view, stating that “[t]he ideas developed through this work [the York Project, initiated by composer and music educator John Paynter] were profoundly influential on a whole generation of music teachers and represented what I have chosen to call the ’Creative Dream”’ (2000, 110). While waiting for the historians to pursue these issues further, music educators interested in developing socio-historically informed understandings of their practice and of those musical education trends that influence this practice, might begin to critically examine the ideological currents, aesthetic positions and educational assumptions of that music education movement whose prime feature has been the use of contemporary (avant-
garde and experimental) music and music-making within classroom contexts. This paper is a small contribution towards this direction.

A core premise of this essay is that musical trends are not just developments of new musical styles but signal the emergence of new socio-cultural musical practices, which extend well beyond the concert hall or the composer’s mind. A second premise is that children always make music in social contexts that are influenced by a variety of larger societal discourses, created and sustained through institutionalized practices and informal social interactions, which are informed, at different points of time and in different places, by particular discourses concerning a variety of important issues (What is a child? Which is the conceptual rationale that informs our position with respect to the relationship between processes of music making and children? How is learning produced? Which are the best teaching practices and for what purposes?). Music education stands in an inherently ambiguous position, in the sense that it constitutes a meeting point of a multiplicity of musical and educational discourses, which create particular music education practices that, in turn, ‘produce’ particular ‘readings’ of the different ways in which children are or should be immersed in music-making (see also Kingsbury, 1988, 1997; Martin 1995, 2006).

**Experimental music and creative music education practice**

An initial observation I would like to make is that the ideas and practices that relate to the use of contemporary music in music education do not follow a linear development. Yet one could argue that certain threads running through the thinking and practice of this movement could be detected. Creative music education constructed a particular interpretation of a musical, educational and ideological context to which it was connected, and at the same time created a particular apparatus of values and ideological positions that underpinned the educational practices advanced. Thus, the paper is organized around six themes which might be seen as describing both core tenets and unresolved contradictions of experimental music education movement. These are the following: (1) Experimental-ism vs. avant-garde-ism. (2) Within and without history: Universalism. (3) Piercing vs. opening: Experiments and the experimental. (4) Against commodification. (5) Locality and the neglect of the local. (6) Creativity ‘on demand’: openness and predictability.

**Experimental-ism vs. avant-garde-ism**

Creative music education attempted to create a space for open experimentation. At the same time it tried to create links between classroom experimentation and the avant-garde and experimental musics of its day. This implies a conflation of avant-garde progressivism and experimentalism in ways that are not always clear. Its effort seems to embody “the antinomies of modernism: wishing to encompass both rupture and continuity of tradition” (Born and Hesmondhalgh, 2000, 12). It seems to believe both in the value of the moment of experimentation and in the value of a permanent process of achieving novelty, which is sine qua non of the avant-garde. But these may not always be complementary positions. In the words of Michael Nyman “the experimental composer is interested not in the uniqueness of permanence but in the uniqueness of the moment” (Nyman, 1974/1999, 9), whereas “the avant-garde composer wants to freeze the moment, to make its uniqueness un-natural, a jealously guarded position” (ibid.). This is a crucial distinction that was not made explicit by creative music education advocates.

The latter seemed to be using starting points for letting students create compositions that use indeterminate elements in a way that sometimes shows affinities with the openness and the anti-narrative tendencies of experimental music, and sometimes is an expression of the modernist zeal to create new and unique works that focus on integration, balance and large-
structure design. Letting the sounds be themselves is very different from experimenting with sounds with the aim to fashion them “into a unified piece of music” (Paynter, 1972, 14). Paynter’s (1997, 2000) attempts to propose a mode of engagement with the making of music which would unfold naturally and relate automatically to both contemporary and traditional forms of making music, betrays a reified view of contemporary music, which does not take into account the internal tensions between avant-garde and experimental music, and their different ways in which they related to canonized facets of the musical tradition.

A consequence of this ambiguous way in which the experimental/avant-garde tension was experienced is a, at first glance, strange separation made by Murray-Schafer. Schafer says:

“Music as a complex discipline embracing theory and performance must be taught only by those qualified to do so. No compromises . . . Only the student with high musical qualifications and aptitudes should be encouraged to undertake the extensive training programme necessary for the teaching of music in the traditional sense” (1975: 27).

This passage induces a number of issues, of which I would like to raise only one: we are in need of talking about ‘compromises’ and resisting to them only when we have pre-decided that conservatory education should be left intact, that the music education vision that was beginning to emerge was not meant to have an impact in the training of the music specialist. In this way, the possibility for dialogue between what Paynter called ”music in education” and ”musical education” (1976, 4) was precluded. And I argue that what underpins this, is an unresolved tension between avant-garde and experimental aesthetic positions. Schafer regards conservatory education as a closed system exactly because he is committed to the avant-garde modernist project. Experimental approaches to music as envisaged by C. Wolff, J. Cage, and C. Cardew potentially subverts the integrity of conservatory education – necessary for the continuing existence of a musical field which constituted the main professional space of many teachers/composers that where associated which the movement – not least because they unsettle the traditional division between composing, performing and listening, and delineate ways of being in the music that problematise and potentially re-define the notion of ‘skill’.

**Within and without history: Universalism**

Paynter succinctly expresses one of the fundamental assumptions of creative music education in the following manner:

“At root it [music] means the same thing to everyone: we assume that all music will behave musically. Does not this underlying universal sensitivity to music as music suggest very strongly that composing and performing are, jointly, the true basis of musical education?” (2000, 25).

Brian Dennis expresses another core assumption:

“Experimentation with sound satisfies one of the most fundamental drives in a young person – namely curiosity and the desire to explore” (1970, 3).

The idea that the experimental attitude of the contemporary composer is not only what is natural for the child to do, but also has been at the core of all composers’ practice throughout history is not as unproblematic as it may seem at the beginning. An inherent contradiction within which this movement has lived was that it fostered experimentation and novelty in a non-foundational sense, while at the same time wished to get to the essential core of what music is about. For the creative music educators, abstraction leads to essence: thus the core
ideas related to their work on composition are those of ‘sound’, ‘silence’, ‘material’, ‘selection’, ‘rejection’, ‘recessive’ and ‘progressive elements’ which lead to stasis and development. Listen to Paynter: “The true ‘rudiments of music’, are to be found in an exploration of its materials – sound and silence” (Paynter and Aston, 1970, 8).

But the very conception of sound as ‘material’, as ‘raw’ material and the subsequent attempt to ‘clean’ up this material from cultural delineations is a notion virtually invented by the avant-garde. Neither Buxtehude, nor Duke Ellington, nor Oum Kalthoum or Markos Vamvakaris could even begin to think in these terms because these are terms used in a very specific music and cultural context. But within the conceptual context created by creative music education practice and thought, they acquire a kind of a-historical permanence and validity, as the essential constituents of composition, as the keys for the development of an open and creative engagement with all music. And of course the idea that musical progress consists of a series of ruptures that ultimately ‘belong’ to a unified whole, the modernist notion of producing novelty that disrupts tradition but ultimately is considered as part of it, lead to the emphatic reinstatement of the role of coherence:

“all the elements in a composition interact to produce what we feel as a ‘rightness’ of form which complements the character of the musical materials and is confirmed by the varying strengths of progression or recession at different points in the musical flow” (Paynter, 2000, 17).

This is what allowed Paynter to travel easily between tones, rows, the blues, and tripartite harmony. Thus, the concept of control of musical material becomes an abstracted principle that is applicable to all compositions. Work on materials is seen as detached from learning historically constituted ways of composing, performing and listening. The problematic of the historical and cultural particularity of musics and practices is therefore not addressed. And history of music becomes a collection of loving memories: “music is nothing but a collection of the most fascinating and beautiful sounds made by men with good ears and affectionately remembered by society” (Murray-Schafer, 1975, 17).

**Piercing vs. opening: experiments and the experimental**

As noted earlier, within the experimental music education attitude towards music and its making a confusion can be detected between the highly modernist fervour of the avant-garde to break away towards hitherto unexplored territories and the post-historicist attitude of experimentalism towards negation of progress and the liberation of art from intention (Goehr, 2008, Nyman, 1974/1999). It is argued that this conflation rests on the ambiguity with which creative music education apprehended the relationship between art and intention. In turn, this can be traced back to a central tension between the notions of experiment and the experimental.

This problem is tight to the ambiguity that inheres in the very notions of the ‘experiment’ and the ‘experimental’ since their inception: is experimental an element of openness and discovery, or is it a way of subjecting nature to torturous tests, which render nature “as something into which . . . [scientists] could pierce their experimental knives” (Goehr, 2008, 115) with the aim of total control? Should experimentalism be viewed as exclusively related to art and its presumed openness? Is the concept of experiment to be left solely within the responsibility of science? For Lydia Goehr “it would be mistaken to conclude that the experiment always takes the side of science and society and experimentalism always the side of art” (2008, 127). And, in a certain sense, much contemporary music-making began to operate in ways which resembled certain features of lab science: ‘objective’ stance towards material, excessive calculations, trial and error procedures.
“It is significant that this word “experiment,” which belongs to the laboratory of the scientist, has been transferred to the artists’ studio. It is not a casual metaphor: for although artists today understand far less of science than they did in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, their imagination seems haunted by a desire to mimic scientific procedures” (Wind, 1963, 20-21 in Goehr, 2008, 116).

The experimental composers and educators of the 1960s and 70s seem to have held a notion of the experimental that delineates an attitude of open-endedness, incompleteness, delving into the unknown and exploring unexpected possibilities. In this sense they would dissociate their work from the violence inherent in scientific experimentation. In a similar way, John Cage, by removing intention from his music, believed that he had succeeded to detach his work from “the controlling character of the experiment” (Goehr, 2008, 119).

One could argue that avant-garde composers (by emphasising invention of new ways to control musical material) positioned themselves with regard to the notions of experiment and the experimental in a way that brings them closer to the scientific conception of the experiment. In contrast with that, Cage and the experimentalists would invite us to problematise the boundaries between art and life, intention and control, listener and maker, work and its surroundings; they would invite us initiate open-ended situations, therefore leading us to create a new way of perceiving the world through art. For Cage,

“To ‘give up’ on traditional music is to turn psychologically to ‘the world of nature,’ (...) where, gradually or suddenly, one sees that ‘humanity and nature, not separate, are in this world together; that nothing [is] lost when nothing [is] given away [of our determinations]. In fact everything is gained. In musical terms, any sounds may occur in any combination and in any continuity’” (1961, 8, in Goehr, 2008, 121).

Yet, the release “from intention and attachment” (Goehr, 2008, 126) from models and preconceived patterns of development is not, as Goehr argues, that far removed from “Bacon’s argument for cleansing the mind of its prejudices or ‘idols,’ (...) idols that subverted the truthful observation of nature” (2008, 126). Thus experimental and avant-garde music cannot that easily distance themselves from notions of objectivity and detachment, which have accompanied the notion of scientific experiment from the very start.

At the same time, the experimental composers/educators, by trying to discover, along with their students, new ways of exploring composing and listening, were getting close to the Adornian view that “all genuinely New Art is experimental” (Goehr, 2008, 130). For Adorno, “The avant-garde . . . calls for the music which takes the composer by surprise . . . it should also be music whose end cannot be foreseen in the course of production” (2002, 302-303, in Goehr, 132).

It seems that a pervasive and unresolved tension with regard to the role of experimentation in music education can be detected. This tension was the result of the conflict that emerged in post-war contemporary music: on the one hand there is experimentation in ways that resembled the ideas of Cage and the composers associated with him – “see what happens when the ideas control themselves” (Paynter, 1992, 157). This perspective sought to problematise the notion of musical expression through the emphasis on aleatoric or indeterminate compositional exercises. On the other hand, there was the limit-less search of the avant-garde composer for the production of un-orthodoxies, which was regarded as a way of responding to the chaotic complexity of contemporary life while trying to subvert it by creating bounded, yet surprising universes of meaning that would free people from alienation.
Against commodification

The music education practice that emphasized intimate and intense sound exploration in ways that resembled processes of sound exploration used by radical avant-garde of the postwar period seems to be the result of a commitment to a view of music education as a counterforce to the widespread commodification of music. In this respect, it could be argued that creative music education movement attempted to materialize an Adornian conception of radical music. It seems to share with Adorno the belief that “music is separated . . . [from contemporary] society by the deepest of all flaws produced by this society itself. . . . The role of music in the social process is exclusively that of a commodity; its value is that determined by the market” (Adorno, 1932/2002, 391). And it sought to subvert this state of affairs, based on the belief that only music that has been exiled from society is able to escape the rules of commercialism. In that respect, the radical power of avant-garde music derives exactly from this position of exile, from the very attempt to be rendered silent. Experimental music educators were committed to the liberatory potential of the avant-garde and of the creative attitude that may spring from children’s involvement with this music. That this is a ‘world apart’ is eloquently expressed in Murray Schafer’s words:

“Before ear training it should be recognized that we require ear cleaning. Before we train a surgeon to perform delicate operations we first ask him to get into the habit of washing his hands. Ears also perform delicate operations, and therefore ear cleanliness is an important prerequisite for all music listening and music playing” (1967/1986: 46, emphasis added).

Ear cleaning is here understood as a process of liberation from imposed habits of relating to sound, as a process of getting away from the burden of everyday culture. Its Adornian ramifications are indeed very clear. Thus, the credo of creative music education practices of the 60s and the 70s, according to which its prime purpose was to let children ‘relate music-making directly to the sound environment of today’ (Self, 1976, vi), implies a very specific ‘environment’, and this despite the generality of its claim. “Children who have experimented in this way would certainly be better equipped to approach the work of contemporary artists” (Paynter and Aston, 1970, 6), whose music had been pushed to the margins. In this sense, music education was transformed into a site of resistance to the ‘rules’ of the market.

Locality and neglect of the local

Paynter argued that the proposed down-top process not only aimed at allowing children to naturally relate to what were seen as the fundamental generative processes of sound organization, not only permitted children to engage with the new music of their day, but also it created the necessary structures for linking music education to other parts of children’s everyday school life:

“We’re really concerned with something that’s basic to all education. We’re concerned with the relevance of what we do; with involving these youngsters in a totally related process. This is why the music lesson should overflow into other areas” (Paynter, 1972, 11)

This entailed an antinomy. Experimental music education encouraged freedom of expression but at the same time silenced children’s own musical cultures. Emphasis on hands-on experience attributed grave importance upon the intimate work of the teacher with the pupils. Creative music education believed in children’s ability of take their musical education in their hands, to act creatively from the very start, and therefore constructed an admirably democratic form of music education. The teacher renounced monolithic didactic attitudes of the past, becoming instead a collaborator, a listener, a commentator. The teacher would let
the children take over the control of how things are to proceed, for, at least ideally, the initial starting point of the lesson would lead to experimentation which in turn would result into an extensive period of group compositional activity, where things cannot by definition be controlled by the teacher.

This stance was rooted in a firm belief to children’s natural inclination towards the joy of creation. In that respect creative/experimental music educators followed the tradition initiated by Herbert Read and those art educators that celebrated children’s artistic originality. As Herbert Read wrote in 1944, children’s art expresses “something universal, international and creative” (p. 16, in Malvern, 1995, 265). This approach apprehended child art through a particular perspective, defined by its “transcendental claims to universalism” (Malvern, 1995, 263) and its desire for recovering the lost innocence of humanity. Experimental music educators began for the first time to give children the space to create music of their own that would fulfill the modernist dictum for a music that is fresh, unconventional, open, and ‘naturally’ convincing. This approach to music making would be the stringboard for the creation of a natural link between children and the radical music of the day. As Paynter has argued,

“It is not the purpose of musical education to make children musical: they are already musical, since that is part of their human nature. Our questions draw attention to what they know intuitively that musical material has potential to go on so that, by taking stock of what they have made up already, the imagination can begin to explore in new directions” (Paynter, 2000, 21).

However, this emphasis on the child’s artistic originality and on close collaboration between children and teachers goes hand in hand with a neglect of the everyday musical experiences of children. The process of ‘ear cleaning’ led to the silence of the local musical cultures that formed children’s everyday musical environments. In those cases where when pop and rock music was addressed, this was done in the context of presenting different ways of using the musical material, and was put into practice via a mode of action that derived from that of the contemporary composer. Reference to pop and rock music was made only in order to show its relations with the avant-garde (e.g. I am the Walrus, A day in a life, by the Beatles). This is not dissimilar to a situation described by Lucy Green, referring to teachers’ subjection of pop music to the procrustean logic of the autonomous ideology of classical music. As Green states,

“amongst the teachers who used and valued this music, and in the orientations of the textbooks, there was nonetheless a tendency to assume that the music’s value rested fundamentally on the very same claims as those upon which the value of classical music rested. That is to say, many teachers stated that, for example, popular music had ‘universal’ appeal or lasting value; that much popular music was ‘complex’ or ‘original’; or that there was a distinction between different kinds of popular music, some of which was implicitly assumed to be ‘autonomous’ (such as progressive rock), as distinct from other types which were described as ‘commercial’ (such as charts pop)” (2003, 12).

Creativity ‘on demand’: openness and predictability

The creation of a link between children’s creativity and the work of the contemporary composer has its roots in a new conception of creativity that replaced the old and for a very long time dominant link between divine inspiration, greatness and musical creation. This new conception of creativity was also the basis on which the use of indeterminate elements in certain contemporary pieces was justified. In such works the composer/performer boundaries were blurred, allowing the performer to take compositional decisions during performance. According to this line of thinking, indeterminacy was clearly distinguished from improvisation.
This distinction was based on the perception of indeterminate scores as stimuli for the performer to get beyond habitual responses towards a creative approach which transcended the stylistic boundaries usually associated with jazz improvised solos (Reynolds, 1965, Foss, 1962, Kutschke, 1999). “The composers prepared the general conditions of the performance because they aimed to provoke new and unique sounds and new social behavior through spontaneous processes” (Kutschke, 1999, 150). In music education the traditional separation between performance and composition and the emphasis on reproduction could be problematised by recourse to that contemporary musical situation where the spontaneous compositional creativity of the performer began to gain currency.

As stated above, this has its roots in a new conception of creativity, which rejected the apprehension of creative acts as irrational and unpredictable, as the result of a miraculous visit of the divine inspiration. It rejected in other words the romantic ideology of the romantic genius, so succinctly captured in the following words: “A thought flashes us like lightning, with necessity, unalteringly formed – I have never had any choice” (Nietzsche, 1979, 102-3, in Kutschke, 1999, 147). This gift was not bestowed upon any one and could not be available on demand. The radical change came when a new conception of creativity (Weisberg, 1993) gained currency and gradually became the dominant concept that was to guide educational policy. Creativity “became a mastered aspect of everybody’s intelligence” (Kutschke, 1999, 151). This ordinary view of creativity emerged from psychology at the time when the latter began to dominate educational thinking, becoming a source of legitimation of particular educational decisions. It was Guilford who proposed a conception of creativity as a mental ability (Guilford, 1968). “The reason for Guilford to treat creativity as part of intelligence, generally considered to be grounded on rational, objective, and thus intersubjectively valid principles, was that, in order to instrumentalize creativity in the Cold War, he needed to restrict its features of irrationality and randomness” (Kutschke, 1999, 151).

This view of creativity, as an everyday problem-solving process, used by all people in a variety of contexts and in varying degrees (and which can be located, measured and developed) entered education via both a hands-on teaching of science and an experiential turn in the teaching of the arts. Although no explicit connection is made, its presence can be seen through the lines of one of the most important theoretical texts which was used as a justification of creative music education: Robert Witkin’s The Intelligence of Feeling (1974). For Witkin, the arts constituted the medium through which feeling, as a particular kind of intelligence, can be cultivated. In his words, “The expressive act consists of the projection of sensate impulse through an expressive medium, the outcome of which is a feeling-form” (1974, 44). But the link between Witkin’s theoretical orientation and the new conception of creativity can be made when we read this thesis in relationship to the following:

“The creative arts provide instances of highly developed uses of subject-reflective action. They stand in relation to the intelligence of feeling as the sciences do to logical reasoning” (ibid., 30, emphasis added).

It is here that the link between creativity-as-part of intelligence and the arts as a way of developing this intelligence is being made. But Witkin does not talk about any form of artistic engagement but about an ‘inside-out’ engagement with the artistic medium:

“It is inside the creative process that the expression grows, and involvement from the outside can often distort and inhibit the very expression that the teacher seeks to facilitate” (ibid., 44).

This perspective on the educational significance of creativity and its relationship to the arts could not have been sustained had the new conception of creativity not given emphasis to the creative process as everyday problem solving, potentially available to everyone.
But the essential antinomy through which creativity has lived its life within the creative music education movement, is that on the one hand it fosters an egalitarian view, allowing for openness and emphasizing that composing is something that every and any child should be involved, but, on the other, this became possible exactly because of a scientific view of creativity that aimed at instrumentalization of creative abilities, at prediction and control, so as creative behavior can be used more productively in school and beyond it, according to societal needs. But who decides about the content of these needs? In other words, creative music education appropriated, and in some ways subverted a conception of creativity that was developed during the same period, and which was based on a particular agenda: “the assessment of the intellectual resources of man can now take on features of a psychoengineering” declared Guilford after his first successful attempts to define and measure creative abilities (Guilford and Hoepfner, 1971, 361, in Kutschke, 1999, 151-152).

Concluding remarks

I should emphasise that the arguments expressed in this paper should neither be perceived as light-hearted criticism, nor as an attempt to diminish the importance of creative music education movement. For all of us who sought inspiration in the work and words of the creative dream of music education, it is important that its underpinnings are addressed, put in context, and understood. For the music education vision that has been the subject of this paper, sought to bring the issue of creative freedom at the heart of our teaching practice, thus connecting music education to the wider efforts of opening school to democratic and critical modes of action, that philosophers like Hannah Arendt and Alain Renaut have seen as the result of the death of authority (Arendt, 2006/1968a, 2006/1968b; Renaut, 2004). Herein lies its tremendous importance.

I would say that the issues which emerged from this exploration are especially relevant today, at a time when exhaustive monitoring and measurement of performance exhausts the process of education itself to such an extent that preference for educational technology which successfully produces instant results leads to an increasing exclusion of experimental practices and a preference for ‘institutionally-safe’ musical practices. We urgently need to re-address the issue of how we can form modes of musical practice that resist this brain-deadening ‘safety’. We also need to resist the violence that arises out of the imposition of anachronistic modes of institutionalized practices. Recourse to past assurances will not do. But maybe Paynter’s passion for “Music as a model of possibility” (2000: 24) is still valuable.

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