

LECTORATE

LIFELONG LEARNING IN MUSIC

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LIFELONG LEARNING FOR MUSICIANS

**CRITICAL ISSUES ARISING FROM A CASE STUDY OF
*CONNECT***

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of the lectorate *Lifelong Learning in Music*

The lectorate, *Lifelong Learning in Music*, comprises a four-year research project examining the concept of 'lifelong learning' and its likely consequences for professional musicians. Based in the North Netherlands Conservatoire, Groningen and in the Royal Conservatoire, The Hague, the project is addressing the challenges arising from a rapidly changing workplace in which musicians are increasingly expected to shape their own flexible portfolio career in response to new creative and performing contexts and to new opportunities provided by cross-arts, cross-cultural and cross-sector work. The aim of the project is "to create adaptive learning environments in which conservatoire students can be trained to function effectively in a continuously changing professional practice (p.5)". (For details of the research approach see Smilde, 2004.)

By the end of the project it is intended that the following outcomes will have been achieved:

- Greater employability through the acquisition of leadership skills, interdisciplinary skills, practical research skills and those generic skills necessary for the musician as a lifelong learner. For example:
 - basic skills in literacy, numeracy and the use of technology;
 - interpersonal skills including communication, teamwork and client-centred entrepreneurship;
 - conceptual/thinking skills such as the collation and organisation of information, problem-solving, planning and organising, learning-to-learn, thinking innovatively and creatively, and systems thinking;
 - personal skills and attitudes such as being responsible, resourceful, flexible, being able to manage one's own time and having strong self-esteem;
 - business skills such as innovative and enterprise skills;
 - social skills and an informed cultural awareness necessary for working in the wider community.
- The creation of well-trained musicians whose practice is underpinned by key supportive skills and attitudes. For example:
 - self-knowledge, knowing one's strengths and weaknesses;
 - having the imagination, flexibility and initiative to explore new avenues and possibilities in the musical, cultural and educational domains;
 - having a reflective and pro-active attitude to one's own practice and to the needs of the market;
 - having the motivation to renew one's skills through a coherent, structured system of professional development that is relevant to the changing needs of the music industry.

The project is exploring the ways in which several key aspects of lifelong learning can be applied to conservatoire training. For example:

- formal and informal learning in non-formal music contexts;
- different approaches to learning, including 'on-the-job' and 'context-based' learning;
- the relationship between professional and personal development;
- diversity in learning activities and learning cultures;
- different forms of work-related and context-based assessment.

Lifelong learning is seen as a dynamic concept centrally concerned with establishing different ways of responding to change (see Smilde, 2004, p.7). The implications for a conservatoire are far-reaching and they open up new opportunities for development in such areas as the curriculum, modes of learning, forms of assessment, approaches to research and the formation of context-related partnerships.

It is recognised that any form of effective change will be dependent on shifting the culture and mind-set of the institution. This constitutes a major challenge to leadership both within the training sector and in the music industry.

Connect as a case study

One important dimension of the lectorate is an examination of several theory-generating case studies with the aim of exploring how far their principles and procedures might be applied in different contexts. With this end in view, the *Connect* project was selected as one of the case studies (see Smilde, 2004, p.9).

Early in 2004 I was commissioned by The Paul Hamlyn Foundation to write a report on *Connect* as part of its ambitious special project, *Musical Futures* (see Renshaw, 2005). The Report, *Simply Connect: best musical practice in non-formal learning contexts*, describes the rich possibilities that can accrue from young people making and performing music in non-formal learning contexts. It highlights the many different pathways that can be created when professional musicians, teachers, music students and parents work together with young people whose common passion is making music.

Connect has grown out of 20 years developmental work in collaborative arts practice at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London. Its roots go back to 1984 when I initiated an embryonic project in Performance and Communication Skills with Peter Wiegold as Artistic Director. What was then a radical innovation has constantly adapted itself and evolved in response to changing circumstances. Now under the artistic and strategic leadership of Sean Gregory (Head of Professional Development at the Guildhall School), *Connect* has extended its reach to include education, the community, the music industry and the wider cultural domain.

The capacity to redefine itself, a hallmark of reflective practice, has been critical to the sustainability of *Connect*, but its continuing development would never have been possible without the willingness of the Guildhall to embrace change. Shifting the cultural perspective of any institution is a major challenge and *Connect* has benefited from a gradual process of integrating its work into the philosophy and practice of the Guildhall. This has helped to give *Connect* its distinctive musical personality.

The work of *Connect* has been acknowledged widely both in the UK and overseas. At a Symposium mounted by *Connect* in January 2004, Tessa Jowell, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, made the following supportive statement:

This government is committed to widening musical opportunities for young people and the *Connect* programme is an exemplar project. What is so special about *Connect* is that everyone benefits: young people from the local community are encouraged to explore their creativity in places where they feel comfortable and with a supporting team of experienced musicians; Guildhall students and tutors have the chance to gain valuable experience in passing their musical skills on to others; and the Guildhall benefits by widening access to its courses.
(Symposium. *Compare and Contrast: sharing knowledge within a collaborative framework*. Held in LSO St. Luke's on 30 January 2004.)

This article intends to focus on those critical issues arising from the *Connect* case study (Renshaw, 2005) that have wider applicability in contemporary professional practice in terms of lifelong learning. Special attention will be given to the following areas:

- formal, non-formal and informal learning;
- musical leadership;
- quality;
- self-assessment and reflective practice;
- professional development of musicians.

FORMAL, NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

In a Research Report written for the lectorate, Peter Mak (2004), a member of the team of knowledge experts, explores definitions of formal, non-formal and informal learning in international music practice. With respect to formal education, learning is defined as an intentional activity leading to predetermined ends in an organized and structured context such as a school or university. Within the parameters of this kind of formal learning, scant acknowledgement is given to incidental or implicit learning.

Non-formal education, on the other hand, refers to any organised educational activity that takes place outside the established formal system. As the emphasis is on developing a sense of ownership and shared responsibility, learning activities tend to be participatory and highly contextualised, with due respect given to the importance of tacit or implicit forms of understanding (see Rogers, 2004).

One of the most authoritative accounts of informal music learning can be found in *How Popular Musicians Learn* by Lucy Green (2002). She defines the informal as "a variety of approaches to acquiring musical skills and knowledge outside formal educational settings (p.16)". The emphasis is on musical practices that can be both conscious (i.e., focused and goal-directed) and unconscious. Learning can also be intentional (but not teacher-directed) as well as incidental, where the knowledge gained is both implicit and explicit.

The *Connect* case study focuses on non-formal learning contexts – that is, those organised music activities that occur outside school hours (e.g., in the evenings, at weekends, during the holidays). Some of these might take place in a school building, whilst others will be found in youth clubs, centres for young offenders, prisons, community centres and hospitals. Basically, *Connect* is committed to fostering informal ways of learning within a non-formal musical context, where the approach to creating and performing music is organised and goal-directed.

MUSICAL LEADERSHIP

Drawing on the experience of *Connect*, an effective workshop leader has to be a multi-skilled musician who can perform many diverse roles, including those of composer, arranger, facilitator, improviser, performer, conductor, teacher and catalyst. But fundamental to those workshop contexts that embrace a wide social, cultural and musical perspective is having an artistic leader who can speak a number of musical 'languages' simultaneously.

Both the skill and eclectic taste of the leader become critical to the way in which they draw out and develop the ideas and responses of the group. The relationship between tutor intervention and non-intervention is extremely subtle in collaborative forms of music-making. Individual and collective decisions are constantly taking place, but the crucial issue is how the leader uses these decisions for the benefit of the whole ensemble.

Examples of artistic leadership skills

- Having the skill and judgement to create and frame a project that will work (e.g., making artistic decisions about the musical language and structure of the project; delineation of roles and responsibilities; managing people within a collaborative context).
- Knowing how to enable the participants to hear, see, feel and understand the connections that are integral to the creative process. Encouraging people to 'get inside' musical experience. Engaging their aural, bodily and emotional memory in order to internalise sound, rhythm and musical structure. Creating a sense of shared ownership that generates an energy and spirit which are vital to a convincing performance.

- Establishing a sense of high expectation for the group and individual participants, by presenting a clear indication of the musical quality that might be achieved. To this end the leader and supporting musicians must be seen as musical exemplars and effective role models.
- Creating a balance of 'pace' that allows time and space for artistic development and creative momentum, but does not promote boredom.

Examples of generic leadership skills

- Creating an inspiring, enabling environment that encourages participants to build on their strengths and acquire the confidence and skills to explore new challenges and extend their musical skills.
- Having the skill and understanding of being able to work effectively in different teams. This is critical to collaborative arts practice as its aim is to foster collective problem-solving through working together in a spirit of mutual trust and respect. Knowing when to intervene within the context of shared decision-making is a subtle process for the workshop leader (see Gregory, 2004, p.46).
- Having the capacity to respect, listen to and act on other points of view. Although leadership needs to be strong and clear, there is no place for inflexible assertiveness within collaborative ways of working. It is important to have the openness and generosity to go with the flow of the musical material being generated by the whole group. The challenge is to ensure that artistic integrity is maintained throughout this collective process.
- Having the interpersonal and organisational skills to be able to work collaboratively with differing teams and project managers, on the basis of equality, playing to individual strengths and acknowledging different roles and responsibilities. Any project is strengthened by artistic leaders and management working closely together, combining a mixture of skills and attitudes. For example:
 - having strong listening and communication skills both within the team of musicians and outside with the wider community;
 - having a pragmatic overview of the project that is inclusive and agenda-free when liaising with different organisations and individuals;
 - having a clear conception of individual projects and being able to facilitate their successful delivery;
 - having the confidence and knowledge to be able to shape different projects along with the management team and strategic partners in the community.
- Together with the project management, knowing how to create appropriate practical preconditions for generating quality music experience. For example:
 - being able to choose and manage the physical space and aural environment;
 - having a realistic timescale for allowing developmental work;
 - having a pragmatic approach towards logistics;
 - ensuring the availability of musical instruments and technical equipment;
 - having an experienced team of workshop leaders and supporting musicians;
 - creating opportunities for presenting high quality performances;
 - ensuring adequate sustained funding.

Leadership and tacit ways of knowing

In the Introduction to the *Connect* case study (see Renshaw, 2005), David Price (Project Leader of *Musical Futures*) stresses that questions connected to leadership are highly complex, especially as they are dependent upon "knowledge and skills which are implicit, not explicit (p.2)". This section intends to explore the tacit or implicit dimension of knowing and to illustrate its importance in artistic leadership.

In his seminal work *The Tacit Dimension*, Michael Polanyi (1966) opens his analysis of knowledge by claiming that “we can know more than we can tell (p.4)”. He highlights the point that practical knowledge, the kind of knowledge that is central to arts practice, relies on “the pupil’s intelligent co-operation for catching the meaning of the demonstration (p.5)”. Basically, some knowledge cannot be put into words.

Tacit knowledge, that is hidden or latent knowledge, is central to the process of coming to know experientially. Echoing Polanyi, the creative energy or spirit embedded in tacit knowledge can only be caught and not taught. In effective workshop practice the leader creates space in which all the musicians become totally engaged in the spirit of the music in the moment. This is caught through the act of doing and it remains unspoken.

Although Polanyi is not writing in the context of music and the performing arts, he observes that in the area of tacit knowing “we incorporate it in our body – or extend our body to include it – so that we come to dwell in it (p.16)”. Through our direct engagement with music, through really getting on the inside of musical experience, we internalise the collective energy of the music-making, we absorb the subtle nuances of the music and we feel the music through our whole being. What Louis Arnaud Reid (1969) calls a deeply felt “personally-embodied experience of meaning (p.149)” in the music. Without this enriched feeling of tacit knowledge, the musician is disconnected from his or her creative source and has little to say to an audience or to fellow musicians.

Experienced musical leaders are well aware that they have to create an environment that is conducive to fostering tacit forms of learning. Leading by example between people at all levels of experience, becomes critical in an effective learning process. Learning will then take place through watching, listening, imitating, responding, absorbing, reflecting and connecting within that particular musical context. Guy Wood, one of the *Connect* musicians, described the process of ‘picking up’ these tacit ways of knowing as rather like a “subliminal transfer of information”. However one describes the process, it is clear that it results in a strong form of knowing and understanding. Chris Branch, another *Connect* musician, expresses it this way:

There comes a point when you are trying to explain a technical process to a young person You then stop and say “just listen to me”. And then you do it and they listen and this wakes up some kind of tacit knowledge in them. Just by watching and listening, the visual and sonic stimuli can enable someone to play the music themselves.

The comments provided by music leaders engaged in workshop practice illustrate the importance they attach to fostering tacit ways of knowing. They recognise that leaders need to understand the crucial relationship between explicit knowledge, in which targets can be measured in quantifiable, mechanistic terms, and tacit knowledge, which is more intuitive, reflexive and learned in very particular situations (see Renshaw, 2005). The Animarts’ investigation into the skills and insights required by artists to work effectively in schools and communities provides a useful analysis of the kinds of implicit knowledge used by the workshop leader in practice (see Animarts, 2003, pp.38-44).

QUALITY

Quality music experience in different contexts

The current shift in interest towards non-formal learning sharpens up the need for music leaders and teachers to develop a coherent framework for evaluating quality in their respective fields of responsibility. Such an analysis would help to inform and ensure effective practice within non-formal learning contexts. In *Creating a Land with Music*, the Report for Youth Music (2002), Rick Rogers observed that:

It is increasingly recognised in the professional arts community that no single immutable standard of excellence can exist. Any valid view of excellence has to be defined in relation to context and fitness for purpose. All musical activities must strive for excellence, but the criteria used to judge this will vary depending on the aim and context (p.11, para.4.3).

An urgent task, therefore, is to produce a common framework for evaluating and assessing quality that accords with diversity of need and purpose across all music genres (p.11, para.4.4).

To reiterate, the two over-riding principles for determining quality music experience are:

- **fitness for purpose;**
- **relevance to context.**

Music activities can only be judged fairly by the appropriateness of their aims and the way in which they make meaningful connections to their particular context. For example, qualitatively different judgements would be wholly valid in the following cases:

- a music therapist working with an autistic child in a special language unit;
- a violinist performing a concerto in a concert hall;
- a master drummer leading a drumming workshop in a community context;
- a collaborative arts workshop in a young offenders' unit;
- an open-access ensemble performing a genre-free collaborative composition in a club for young people;
- the experimental work of a sound and image lab for young musicians, visual artists, singers, DJs and programmers.

Although there are similarities when judging quality at the level of the form of various music experiences, differences have to be taken into account when regarding the aim, content and context of the particular activity. For instance, the criteria used for evaluating a creative project in a non-formal setting are determined as much by the workshop/performance context (e.g., school classroom, hospital ward, prison, youth club, shopping mall) as by the shared values and expectations of the participants and their leader. As Sean Gregory (2004) points out, "even conventional terms such as playing (or singing) 'in tune' or 'in time', have different connotations according to the physical and human resources at hand (p.44)".

For the purpose of this analysis, a distinction will be drawn between:

- generic criteria that apply to judging quality across all forms of music experience;
- specific criteria that apply to quality music-making (including process, project and performance) in particular contexts.

Generic criteria

Examples of the criteria that might be used for judging quality across all forms of music experience would include:

- focused listening to the music and other musicians in the group;
- openness to the spirit of the music and the performance;
- capturing an authenticity of sound, where the sound reflects the connection between a person's inner listening, musical intention and past musical experience;
- conveying the meaning of the music by showing an understanding of its inner construction (this is relevant to both interpreting and creating music);
- demonstrating strength of conviction, inner confidence, engagement, risk-taking and an independent spirit in performance;
- displaying an approach to music-making that reveals curiosity, integrity, honesty, humility and a clear musical intention.

Specific criteria

In a conservatoire, for example, where the emphasis is on striving for excellence in the context of performance within the Western 'classical' tradition, judgements regarding quality would refer to the above generic criteria, but they would also include the following specific criteria that are especially pertinent to assessing high level instrumental performance. For example:

- mastery of the instrument, achieving a balance between technical and interpretative skill;
- technical control of the instrument and medium in order to convey the expressive elements, emotional content, power and passion of the music to an audience (e.g., balance and focus of sound production, intonation, dynamics, tautness of rhythm and groove);
- having something to say and having the technical ability to sustain freedom of expression and a creative response to the music;
- accepting personal responsibility for one's artistic position.

This is by no means an exhaustive list, but it is clear that these specific criteria make sense in certain performance contexts rather than in others.

In non-formal learning contexts on the other hand, in addition to the generic criteria, different specific criteria need to be adhered to when judging quality music-making. Also, any framework for making judgements has to make a distinction between the work of the participants and that of the music leaders. For the purpose of illustration, the following frame of reference applies to judging quality in the area of collaborative creative workshop practice.

Participants

- demonstrating a practical understanding of the knowledge and skills entailed in being a resourceful musician through improvising, composing and performing;
- communicating the 'feel' of the music by demonstrating an understanding of how its structures and layers work through the direct experience of making the piece;
- presenting a strong convincing performance that conveys an engagement in the music due to an aural, physical and emotional understanding of the creative process;
- displaying a sense of individual and collective ownership in which the voices of the participants are heard and acknowledged.

Music leaders

- the effectiveness of the leader in managing and understanding the variables arising from the profile of the participants (e.g., age, numbers, experience, range of instruments, materials generated) and from the social and cultural context;
- the effectiveness of the leader in planning, structuring and providing the artistic leadership in all the interconnected elements of a creative workshop – i.e., warm-ups; interpretation; instrumental skills; composition; arranging; improvisation; performance; listening; evaluation;
- the effectiveness of the leader in having a broad, informed social, cultural and musical perspective and in being able to speak a number of musical 'languages' simultaneously;

- the effectiveness of the leader in being able to perform the diverse roles of composer, arranger, facilitator, improviser, performer, conductor, teacher and catalyst;
- the effectiveness of the leader in being able to demonstrate the generic and artistic leadership skills referred to earlier.

Again, this frame of reference is not exhaustive. What this analysis indicates is that if all these generic and specific criteria are adhered to, high quality creative workshop practice is a complex artistic activity that can hardly be accused of 'dumbing down' traditional views of musical excellence. It is just qualitatively different. Basically, 'like has to be compared with like'.

SELF – ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

The need for self-assessment

Music leaders, like teachers, are now operating within a system of public accountability that is increasingly shaped by benchmarks, targets, performance indicators and the whole apparatus of Quality Assurance. These mechanistic approaches to controlling and managing knowledge may succeed in erecting a model for assuring that Quality systems are in operation, but at worst, they effectively fail to **ensure** that quality music-making is taking place. Within this current system it is only too easy for cultural and educational institutions to become disconnected from the heart of their artistic life.

In the light of these growing demands it is imperative for music leaders to have a clear, informed understanding of what counts as quality music experience in the different contexts in which they function. The previous section aimed to sketch an embryonic map for defining quality in non-formal contexts. But by itself, an external frame of reference is insufficient. It has to be underpinned by a commitment to reflective practice in which each music leader engages in a continuing process of self-assessment.

A framework for a self-assessment profile

The following categories could act as a basic frame of reference for a self-assessment profile. The priorities placed on different elements within each category are likely to vary depending on the aim and context of the project. For example:

- quality of process, project and performance – using generic and specific criteria for judging quality;
- quality of leadership skills – artistic, generic and those skills that foster tacit ways of knowing;
- quality of communication skills;
- quality of interpersonal skills;
- quality of management skills;
- quality of creative skills – improvising, composing and arranging;
- quality of performing skills;
- quality of evaluation skills;
- quality of own personal development.

Self-assessment processes

What might this look like in practice? Not surprisingly, there is no one template for framing self-assessment because the way it is approached must be determined by the purpose and nature of the particular activity. Nevertheless, three procedural principles might act as a useful guide:

- **recording:** keeping a diary, for example, to describe and record the thoughts, reflections, observations, feelings and responses experienced by the leader during the project or activity;
- **self-assessment:** at the end of each project to complete a profile that reflects on the effectiveness of the process and product;

- **collaborative assessment:** a sharing of the self-assessment observations and comments with colleagues, mentors, co-workers and participants involved in the project.

These processes not only help to determine the effectiveness of one's own practice, but they also provide an opportunity to reflect on the quality of the project and on the ways in which observations might help to inform the conception, preparation and execution of any subsequent project. This feedback loop is central to enhancing the quality of future practice.

Such an approach to self-assessment would only be effective in practice if music leaders are provided with the appropriate conditions for their own musical, personal and professional development. Opportunities have to be created for different forms of continuing support and development that will challenge the leaders both artistically and professionally with the aim of raising the effectiveness of workshop practice in non-formal contexts. The key to the future lies in the quality and provision of professional development for musicians.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF MUSICIANS

The need for professional development

The issues identified in the previous sections demonstrate only too clearly that music leaders need to engage in continuing professional, artistic and personal development if they are to produce work that is effective and of a high standard. The challenges confronting musicians working in non-formal contexts are increasingly complex, whilst the growing demands arising from cross-sector collaborations are opening up new possibilities. By widening the scope of music leaders, opportunities for their ongoing development have to be built into their career portfolio.

The seriousness of this need was recognised by Sound Sense (2003) in its professional development and research programme, *Towards a Youth Music Makers' Network*. One of the key outcomes of the research was acknowledging the need to strengthen collaboration between the formal and non-formal sectors.

Yet, although the need for the continuing professional development of artists is now more widely accepted (as is reflected in the purpose of this Lectorate), there is still a long way to go before arts organisations and higher arts education institutions begin to develop training programmes that substantially affect the quality of professional arts practice in education and the wider community. There is an urgent need for musicians to be given the opportunity, support and funding to participate in training programmes that extend them artistically and personally, as well as pedagogically. A more developmental approach, in which there is an emphasis on creating and making music together in an environment that encourages critical reflection, would be one way of guarding against the trap of musicians falling back on well-worn recipes and formulae.

A practice-based model for professional development

By common consent the biggest challenge arising from the growth of non-formal music-making is in ensuring that there is an adequate supply of high-quality music leaders to meet the demand. Within *Connect* a professional development framework has been designed for the Professional Apprentices working on the *Connect* programme. The scheme is aimed at music leaders interested in developing creative approaches to performance and communication across all music genres. Experienced *Connect* tutors mentor the apprentices whose needs and interests are taken into account when shaping their programme. Practical workshop experience, underpinned by structured tutorial support, aims at enabling all participants to acquire the fundamental skills for sustained personal, artistic and professional development.

Whilst the model presented here is not put forward as a template, there are a number of principles underlying this particular approach to professional development for music leaders which should inform training development in both the formal and non-formal sectors. They can be summarised as follows:

- **the need to focus on artistic, personal and professional development;**
- **an emphasis on creating, making and performing music in different educational and community contexts;**
- **a commitment to developing generic, artistic and tacit leadership skills;**
- **a belief in self-assessment and critical reflection as tools for raising the quality of artistic and educational practice;**
- **an understanding of the centrality of collaborative practice – e.g., cross-arts, cross-cultural, cross-sector, formal and non-formal contexts;**
- **the need to establish informed dialogue through mentoring circles involving music leaders, teachers, co-workers, students and apprentices;**
- **an increasing commitment to working towards a laboratory approach to collaborative arts practice and professional development.**

New development programmes could include the following elements:

Skills training

- Voice, body and percussion;
- Improvisation;
- Ensemble work: group composition and creative practice;
- Performance and communication skills;
- Leadership: introduction to workshop-leading skills, including project co-ordination and administrative skills.

Practical implementation

Trainees should be expected to plan and lead the following activities, mentored by either peers or more senior music leaders:

- Workshops;
- Informal presentations;
- Seminars;
- Project or curriculum planning;
- Rehearsals;
- Performances.

As part of the mentoring programme, trainees could be asked to identify what areas and skills they would like, or feel the need, to develop as in the self-assessment framework outlined in the previous section.

It is hoped that these principles and processes may serve as a 'check-list' for those seeking to change their approaches to professional development in order to encourage the informalising of music learning.

Widening opportunities for the further development of teachers

This is not the forum for discussing the initial training of music teachers, but all the principles articulated above are equally applicable to the continuing development of instrumental and classroom teachers. If they were put into practice, this would help to strengthen the links between the non-formal and formal music education sectors, and provide greater coherence between the ways of working of music leaders, class teachers and instrumental tutors. In this way, all the elements of the **non-formal**, that are the backbone of *Connect*, would interact with the **formal**.

The success of such an approach is dependent on establishing effective partnerships between the training sector, schools and appropriate community organisations. The challenge is to bring potential partners together and for them to devise long-term creative programmes that are committed to fostering the artistic, personal and professional development of music leaders, class teachers and instrumental tutors. By providing conditions that would enable them to work together in an artistic laboratory, the emphasis would be on their development and not circumscribed by the demands of pedagogy and the formal curriculum. Because the focus is on artistic and personal development, it would generate a creative energy that would feed back into their teaching and artistic practice.

Connect provides a useful model for this approach to professional development. One of its strengths is that all its ensembles include musicians with different levels of experience and background. *Connect* tutors, supporting musicians, Professional Apprentices, Young Apprentices and young musicians work together to create, make and perform music. It is my view that teachers and instrumental tutors would benefit enormously by participating in this kind of collaborative music-making with experienced music leaders and young people. This laboratory approach would provide a crucible for engaging in creative processes and different forms of performance practice.

The framework underlying such a developmental programme could be based on the principles that guide the *Connect* ensembles. For example:

Key elements include:

- knowing how to work musically in a group that incorporates any instrument brought to an ensemble by the young musicians;
- knowing how to work effectively in mixed groups varying in size, age, technical ability and musical experience;
- knowing how to make music in a genre-free ensemble, where its musical material reflects the shared interests of the leaders and the participants;
- knowing how to engage in music-making virtually without notation;
- knowing how to create music collaboratively.

Key activities include:

- composing and improvising;
- experimenting with different sound worlds;
- exploring the relationship between acoustic sounds and technology;
- examining the purpose of using circle-based activities away from the instrument for developing concentration, group awareness, self-awareness, confidence and spontaneity; demonstrating the connections between these exercises and music learning;
- monitoring individual progress through one-to-one coaching and mentoring;
- collaborating with visiting performing artists;
- performing in a variety of venues;
- building up an archive of musical material and recordings;
- providing a seedbed for practical research;
- developing leadership skills e.g.,
 - knowing how to allocate roles within an ensemble at the appropriate level of skill;
 - knowing how to 'read' the participants' musical interests;
 - knowing how to respond creatively to these musical interests;
 - knowing at what point to extend each individual's musical experience;
 - knowing how to structure and shape musical material so that it resonates with the whole ensemble;
 - knowing how to enable a group to build up a collective sense of musical expectation and aspiration.

Fundamental to this approach is the idea of teachers and instrumental tutors being given the opportunity to create and perform music with other professional colleagues and young people. Not only would this strengthen the collaborative working practices of music leaders, teachers and instrumental tutors, but by involving young musicians in the process, it would ensure that the music-making resonates with contemporary living culture as defined by young people. In the long-term, collaborative forms of professional development that are rooted in action within a local context, could make a significant impact on the quality of both formal and non-formal education.

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