

5 Analysis of the David Elliott/Bennett Reimer/Harry White documentation.

In the review of the literature, which is the main concern of Chapter 5, the crucial connection between the two strands of the thesis had to be re-established and maintained. The main thrust - the existence of the philosophies in significant conflict which it is the aim to reconcile - is addressed by examining, as a minimum, the condensed versions of Reimer's and Elliott's philosophical work as offered by them in their MEND presentations, together with the Reimer review of *Music Matters*, and Elliott's rebuttal of that review. Harry White's paper, *A book of manners in the wilderness*, in its wider circulation within the scholarly ambience of global philosophical dialectic beyond MEND, unambiguously forged the vital link between the Irish context and the Reimer/Elliott debacle. This was especially so since the scholars concerned became entangled in a productive tripartite exchange, White as the self-styled Devil's Advocate, the others as his baited respondents. White's paper (MEND Document 308) is exhaustively reviewed in the MEND Report (CD-ROM [mend09g.pdf - Section 18.1])⁵⁴ Note that the bracketed references to MEND refer to MEND Numbered Documents which are contained in the MEND CD-ROM (supplied for ready reference with this thesis), permission to reprint having been obtained beforehand, where required.

5.1 Overview of Performance as an Issue in Music Education Philosophy

Had the principal findings of MEND (see Chapter 7.1.2) not already been crystallizing prior to Phase III, Harry White's paper would, substantially, have formulated them, as indeed it now endorses them. In his MEND Phase III paper, White reviews, at the very outset, 'prevailing ideologies of music education insofar as these have been expounded in all three [only two, surely, at that juncture!] phases of MEND' and finds them wanting, if not as to their internal consistency, certainly as to their indiscriminate applicability to or possible implementation in Irish music education curricula.

⁵⁴ There are, thus, seven critical documents, apart from the understanding that Reimer's *A Philosophy* and Elliott's *Music Matters* are essential background reading:

1. White's *Book of manners* . . . (MEND 308).
2. Reimer's review of White (MEND 402).
3. Elliott's Review of White (MEND Document 417).
4. Reimer's presentation at MEND (MEND 203).
5. Elliott's presentation at MEND (MEND 208 a and b).
6. Reimer's Review of *Music Matters* (MEND 403).
7. Elliott's rebuttal of Reimer's Review (MEND 416).

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Clearly White is already arguing that the context in which a philosophy operates has a bearing on the case. And since he concludes that attitudinal ‘change begins with the educators’, he is predicating that music education theorists should look to *relevant* models of thought and filter these through to the educators, at source. White is concerned that, within the more obviously learned reaches of professionalism in music, ‘the Beethoven scholar provides a necessary equilibrium for the philosophers of music education, even if the two can sometimes seem to exist in a relationship of mutual incomprehension’. How much more should his concern be focused on dialogue being instituted between academics and practitioners, where dichotomy is rampant and misunderstandings have been even more mutually isolating and damaging. He deals with the breakdown (which he welcomes) of the Oxbridge-influenced universal model in university education in favour of the astonishing variety of options that are almost self-threatening to their own credibility in terms of their failure to define a recognizable model at all. White then makes the vital connection which links third-level courses with subsequent employment of graduates in the teaching profession. He warns, presumably in relation to the proliferation of other models, which, he feels, are responsible for over-dilution of what remains of the old university paradigm, that that model should retain its close connections with the ‘European tradition [which] becomes a permanent educational resource - in performance, in composition, in research. ... If university music is to “enable” music education at large ... our sense of a university model of music education ought to be more informed than it is’. This can only mean that he is fully aware of, and treats with due urgency, the responsibility to provide relevant training for teachers, as the irreducible resource in music education.

Finally, it is in relation to *performance* that Harry White’s paper gratuitously throws down the gauntlet to music educators in identifying, with unerring accuracy, the hubris, as it is the blind spot, within the whole enterprise. In so doing he eloquently verbalizes on the notion, which he holds responsible for many of the ills by which his ideas for a balanced and efficient music education system, at any level, are beset. It is not by accident that his named musicians of popular culture - Presley, Cash, Ellington - all belong within the performer category. But it is especially notable, too, that, coming from a self-styled non-performer, White’s detachment magnificently outshines any academic prejudice which might be attributed to him.

Performance is at the heart of music. The wish to perform is so strong in many that it can eclipse all other musical drives. It feeds vanity and massively begets self-deception; it is unexceptionally admirable, too, and deserving of encouragement, but it can disrupt and skew the whole music education process, especially in its general context. It can challenge time management to its ultimate limits. It is a vital component of music considered as product or as process. Performance, not surprisingly, is at the core of much music education philosophy. It features as a dimension of music in

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Reimer and Swanwick as it does in the rationale of the functionalists (typically, Merriam and Fowler); it seems totally to usurp Elliott's thought processes as a perennial preoccupation. It is the most aspired-to prize - the jewel in the crown - of music education as much as it is the *bête noire* of academics in music education who must fight a constantly losing battle for time against its allurements. Performance in music, especially at the early stages of training, and at any satisfactory artistic level, is largely dominated by the need for psychomotor skills; although this is often challenged in philosophical terms (Elliott's theories being typical) it remains true as an immanent problem in much music education.

In real terms performance is for a minority, but it has become a fashionable *sine qua non* of late, in response to the niceties of philosophies which define musical attainment targets, in general music education, in terms of composing, *performing* (own italics) and appraising. So well might Harry White vent his frustration: 'the cult of performance has so overtaken our sense of music (from the regiments of Suzuki to the peaks of the international competition) that our conception of music has narrowed accordingly'. And this is undoubtedly true, nor are we compensated in Ireland by any evidence of the polished performance 'problem' that actually, we are told, spawned the 'Music Education as Aesthetic Education' movement in the United States, and dichotomized the cohorts of school music learners in the process.

Harry White develops his theme by claiming that the trend in Ireland towards the North American model of the ascendancy of performance as a vehicle for music education has led to the 'conservative complaint from university teachers that standards⁵⁵ are already down, that school leavers know less and less as the years go by'. This would be logical if it were not for the paradoxical reality, based on reliable information, that the standard of performance is also down. But the numbers are up! In pinpointing performance as a problem area in music education, White usefully exposes a whole spectrum of related concern. He believes that the core conceptual problem with performance in general education is due to a basic confusion between instruction and education; 'the resultant destabilization of the subject in schools will ensure its minority status'. It is, nevertheless, crucial that the question of performance in music education continues to be addressed in Ireland, as elsewhere, in a way which

⁵⁵ This claim about Ireland refers to the standards in school examinations, and is based on reliable statistics (from school examiners and from the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment [NCCA, and again informally]). A possible explanation is that the standard is set at such an abysmally low level, to promote participation in music as a subject (and a statistic!) in second-level schools, that it only encourages high expectations for minimal work in the performance branch. It is arguable that the Voluntary National Standards in the US, if conscientiously applied with 'standard' in mind, are having the opposite effect [?]. The author feels that this is an area which is so subjective, and unquantifiable with any hope of reliability, that, beyond noting the information and the contrast, a comparative study would be fraught with difficulty and would seem well beyond the scope of the MEND enquiry and of this thesis.

does not endanger the regenerative cycle by which music as a social grace is enabled to survive and grow.

If there is a recognizable drift here towards the notion of performance, in real terms, as a specialization and as, therefore, elitist - if the embryo professional stream (e.g. music teaching) is not to be nurtured by school music as defined in curricular statements, these lacunas must be separately addressed. It is essential that these problems be recognized for what they are and that bridges be built, or barriers be deconstructed, to preserve continuum across crucial interfaces in the macrostructure of music education (as, for example, between second- and third-level music education). In the absence of a teaching cohort with the transcendental skills to incorporate performance meaningfully into school education (the Elliott ideal which has its own validity, in context, but merely as an ideal), the honest reappraisal of sham notions of performance and the restoration, or establishment, of a true balance in the menus of school music education may yet clear that vital space for listenership, without its pejorative connotations, for which Harry White so compellingly argues.

5.2 The Reimer/Elliott Reviews of Harry White's Paper - *A book of manners in the wilderness*

Harry White's paper (MEND Document 309), which has been exhaustively reviewed for MEND, was arguably the most provocative presentation at the MEND proceedings. When the promoters of MEND offered presenters the facility to publish their writings further, beyond the MEND boundaries, White took up this offer and, in submitting his controversial paper to the College Music Symposium (Journal of the College Music Society) in the United States, was guaranteed significant responses, which in turn could be added to the MEND analysis.⁵⁶ Little was it suspected that the respondents would themselves have been active participants in the MEND process itself. So it has proved to be a particularly valuable outcome of MEND that the triumvirate of Harry White, Bennett Reimer and David Elliott⁵⁷ should have been drawn into a fruitful philosophical dialogue which has yielded a rich harvest in terms of reidentifying most if not all of the key issues of MEND, offering comment as to their hierarchical importance in the *denouement* of the Irish music education dilemma. But Harry White's assumed role as Devil's Advocate, and a line of questioning that challenged North America to

⁵⁶ Permission has been sought and granted to reprint Professor White's paper and the responses in the Appendices of MEND (Documents 308, 402 and 417 respectively).

⁵⁷ It is not immediately clear as to why Dr Veblen's name was added as co-author with David Elliott of his response. The material is drawn exclusively from Elliott's writings and the style is unmistakably his, as comparison with his rebuttal of Reimer's review of *Music Matters* would confirm. Equally, the commentary is not recognizable as emanating from Dr Veblen's paper at MEND. With due respect to Dr Veblen, it is assumed, for the purposes of this analysis that only the triumvirate referred to in the text above needs to be considered as providing the material for the analysis. Dr Veblen's contribution to MEND is reviewed under the appropriate

vindicate or explain its alleged growing influence in Irish music education affairs, elicited two characteristic if profoundly dissimilar responses, from Reimer and Elliott.

5.2.1 Bennett Reimer's Response

Reimer begins by voicing some doubt as to whether the organizers of MEND were justified in assuming that American philosophers could contribute useful ideas in an Irish music education context; and he believes that White rejects that assumption. Perhaps Reimer is being too self-deprecatory here - of himself and on behalf of his colleagues. There is a vast middle ground between White's disenchantment with the patterns of music *consumption* in North America (and its assumed connection to processes of music education in schools and at higher levels) and the possible levels of frustration amongst American music educators that their model is flawed as currently dispensed.

Deliberations at MEND had to confront the current debacle in the field of music education philosophy in North America with, it is to be hoped, beneficial results from the attempt to analyse and rationalize it. And this is precisely the context in which Reimer is very helpful. In a presentation of outstanding honesty and self-examination he allows White's concerns to boomerang back into US music education philosophy. Reimer's observations are deceptively simple and disarmingly lucid. In addressing three commanding issues, he confirms MEND findings in placing these same issues high in any agenda for the amelioration of the Irish situation. They are:

1. How does a local/national culture (a subset of the multicultural issue) influence what music education should be?
2. How can the 'pop music versus art music' issue be handled?
3. What are the appropriate roles of performing and of listening as educational objectives?

Only in the first of these questions is there a significant difference between Ireland and North America. In both countries there is a need to define cultural pluralism, whether truly multicultural or some modified form in which only a limited number of cultures is competing for the aural, mental and social space of learners/consumers. In the Irish context this issue has also been discussed under the National Music section of MEND (Agenda Item 6). Broadly speaking there needs to be absolute clarity as to whether the general Irish response to music accommodates only three genres - art, popular and traditional music - and in what proportion.

heading (Ref. II P vi; Section 18.6; MEND Document 206).

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For comparative purposes American, or indeed any multi-ethnic, society should also be clear as to how its music education needs are being served. In other words, is multi-ethnic synonymous with multicultural and what, if any, are the truly *widely* practised strategies to include offerings from many musics in the music education curriculum? There is little doubt that these basic issues are in a confused state in both systems and are far from resolution, as Reimer freely admits in the case of the American context. He takes up the issue and makes the following points, before agreeing that ‘White cannot be faulted for characterizing American multiculturalism as being “amorphous”. We have a long way to go to get our own house in order, let alone being a model for Ireland with its very different cultural identity’.

1. Only Irish music educators can resolve, for Ireland, the issue of (multi)-culturalism, based on their own culture and history. This may be construed as a reference to the Reimer idea of Contextualism in arriving at a workable philosophy for any system of education. And note, significantly, that this is also confirmed by Elliott (Ref. II P viii; MEND Documents 208 a and b).
2. Multiculturalism is a supposed remedy for any failure to resolve the effects of cultural differences.
3. The extent of multiculturalism in education may, a) just reflect the number of cultures present and needing to be reconciled or, b) take on the universalist brief of being open potentially to all cultures. This is a vexed question, which contributes to the confusion in the US, especially over materials for multicultural education.
4. Heightened political consciousness may dictate, or be influenced to dictate, a policy of bridging the gap between traditional models of school music education and the socio-musical diversity outside the school walls. This has enormous relevance in Ireland, as elsewhere, in attempting to take cognizance of the endemic dissonances between these two streams.
5. The ‘new’ National Standards for music education in the US ‘rigorously promote diversity in the music to be encountered at all levels ... [but] choice of specific music is scrupulously left unstipulated’. It must be observed here that perusal of the American National Standards (Music Content Standards [MEND 303]) would uncover sufficient ambiguity to allow the demand for diversity to be channelled away from cultural diversity. The jealously-guarded criterion of state and even local autonomy in education would facilitate widespread ‘dodging’ of the multicultural issue, with impunity. And it is another question as to how truly widespread the acceptance and implementation of the National Standards is, in a federal sense.

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6. Few if any counter arguments to multiculturalism have appeared up to now in the US, but this situation is changing. Questions are being asked, such as “Why do it?”; “Should political/social ends be permitted to drive music education into multiculturalism to the possible detriment of intrinsically musical benefits?” (a burning Reimer question); “Can music foreign to one’s own culture be understood authentically rather than superficially or inappropriately?”; “Are we slipping into a chaos where judgement and value are no longer cherished criteria and relativism reigns supreme?”; “How can any uniformity in the approach to multiculturalism be achieved if communities, and therefore their needs, are so diverse?”; “Can repertoire be left to local discretion?”; “How can teachers be enthusiastic about music of which they have little or no experience and with which they therefore cannot identify?”; “Could such teachers be entrusted with a leadership role in a multicultural programme?”, and so on.
7. It is confirmed that there is an overwhelming dominance, at college and university level, of western classical music in American music education. This could be encouraging news (or cold comfort) for White in seeking to explain his conviction that pop music continues systematically and inexorably to replace western art music and folk music in American attitudes to listening. How can teachers accustomed to and trained in this [western art] tradition have possibly internalized musics outside of it - sufficiently to help their students to become more musically broadminded than they are likely to be themselves?

Reimer pragmatically raises a plethora of questions here. He believes that multiculturalism, certainly of the multi-ethnic variety, may be ripe for reappraisal as to its agenda and potential and as to the accuracy of its documented success. In this regard he is undoubtedly correct in counselling caution in Irish strategies, context being the only safe criterion.

5.2.2 Reimer on the ‘popular’ versus ‘classical’ dilemma

On the assumption that what the reader takes as meaning is of greater significance, in analysis, than what the author may have intended as the meaning in the first place, White leaves no doubt that he considers art music as superior to ‘the pop and rock forms of the present day’. Reimer relies on this muted assertion as an opening premise for his response. Again the honesty of his remarks is striking:

1. It is probable that a great many American music educators would be in sympathy with White, regarding pop music as a vast wasteland of musical mindlessness. ‘But while many might agree, few would be so boldly politically incorrect as to publicly proclaim their position (let alone with White’s pungent style)’. This is a significant point,

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highlighted by White, as to the way art music has been backed into a corner where it must almost apologize for itself; such is the force of commercialism and the people power, fomented by it, which can even threaten educational stability.

2. Popular music is seldom represented in school music, in the US, with anything like the presence and seriousness of western classical music. Its dominance in the musical life of students outside of school is quite another matter. Reimer believes that most teachers are unfamiliar with the specific ‘chart’ pop music that their students enjoy, and while they themselves may have been involved in some aspects of recent pop, as consumers and even as performers, they are not equipped with a methodology to teach it. This latter is a very significant point; a self-evident historical fact that the methodology of teaching art music is highly developed, and dies hard.

Surprisingly, having listed some of the parameters that define the pop dilemma, Reimer relinquishes it without offering any solutions. Yet his having raised the issue is sufficient to focus it as one of fundamental importance to music educators and music education. It may be that the cult mentality, in both its reactionary and milder manifestations, is inevitably pitted against the educational system as a social phenomenon, and that the best that Harry White can hope for is a stemming of the tide and the emergence of strategies to achieve some acceptable balance. Many concerns and many shades of opinion were expressed at MEND in relation to benign bridge-building which would achieve *rapprochement* in what is undoubtedly a deteriorating situation in the prospects for art music in schools. Marie McCarthy (MEND Document 307) and Patricia Shehan Campbell (MEND Document 305) were probably the most eloquent in proposing that the community and the school be linked more closely so that the traditional musical tastes characteristic of both can be brought into better alignment.

Twentieth century music educators have largely deplored, but also ignored, the issue of this troublesome dissonance, but they cannot be said to have succeeded in establishing music education (in schools) which is universally admired, availed of, and guaranteed as natural a place in educational priorities as so-called employment-orientated subjects. Harry White is to be applauded for his frankness in eschewing political correctness by raising the matter in its most controversial manifestation. And Bennett Reimer deserves praise for his ingenuousness, and courage too, in admitting that solutions are still refractory and are eluding efforts (even by the massive ‘think-tank’ that America is bringing to bear on the subject) to secure educational control over these vagaries.

5.2.3 Who (*sic*) is music education for? (Reimer Response)

We are on very familiar ground when the question is raised as to the appropriate prioritization of performance, *vis-à-vis* listening, in general music education. White, ignoring for his purposes the holistic nature of the best in performance teaching, prefers to point the distinction as between instruction (performing) and education (listening). The issue is ineluctable, and merits Reimer's classification as 'perhaps the central question now facing music education in the US as well as in Ireland'. Apathy towards the status of performance and lack of understanding and appreciation of its centrality in music education are listed amongst the substantive findings of the MEND initiative. Performance also, of course, marks the battle line of the wider Reimer/Elliott debate, accounting, with the addition of White, for the significance of this tripartite engagement. And here Reimer wisely warns against what he interprets (presumably from White's paper) as a current Irish tendency to promote performance as a dominant strategy finally to banish the vestiges of the imperial models which, at their worst, can be held accountable for the barren academicism typical of much Irish music education in the past.

Here Reimer and White are of one mind. While the latter couples an outcome of the 'current climate of self-expression', through performance, with a magisterial cry that 'we have ostracized the listener', Reimer still gallantly and directly expresses the same concern in a way which has invited the obloquy which Elliott would heap upon his head. It is strange that education seems no longer to be charged with the traditional duty of training listeners in the sense of ensuring that performers have appreciative audiences - currently deemed an opprobrious suggestion, requiring the ministry of euphemism to disguise its perceived discriminatory intent. But Reimer has this to say:

America's problem in regard to the health of its musical culture is certainly not a lack of excellent performers - quite the reverse! Its major problem is its marginal level of audience support for those musics outside of the popular genres. Surely a wholesale neglect by the music profession of the development of a discerning, enthusiastic audience has made the profession largely irrelevant to the actual musical lives of the vast majority of our population, which has no interest in becoming performers. Yet practically 100% of people are consumers of music, often with a great deal of ardor. The profession's disinterest in - often its disparagement of - the consumer of music remains among our major shortcomings. ... To the degree that we succeed in attaining ... a balance of learnings including but surpassing those available from performance, we will have better fulfilled our professional mission, and will serve as a better model from which other countries can gain useful insights.

While it would be foolhardy to accept Elliott's arguably distorted image of *Music Education as Aesthetic Education* (MEAE), it would be equally unsafe to lay its reputed failures at Reimer's door, just because his philosophy, first promulgated comprehensively in 1970, happens to lay out the case for an aesthetic view. Reimer is but one voice in the American chorus of philosophers and he could

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not be credited with the power, of words only, to change a whole tradition in performance, of more than a century in the making, and of which he is himself openly very proud.

Without undue exaggeration, the American system could be described, at its best and most beneficent, as freely offering performance to those who wish to take it up. And this performance module seems to have succeeded, generally, in siphoning away the talented and interested, often short-changing them on other more academic, but necessary, pursuits in music education, leaving (we are told) a complement of some 85-90% of all students, who opt out of performance. Is it this latter group, almost by definition the apathetic, who have been targeted for the benign intent of the MEAE programme (?); this is not clear. In fact, we are told, statistically, that only 2% of this cohort actually take music as teenagers (post-elementary).

These figures simply don't add up to an unambiguous statement of what the American situation has been, nor do they reveal who, in fact, are the students who are suffering from the imputed ravages of the MEAE programme. Staying with numbers, it seems logical to suggest that listeners to music produced from the 15% of performing students, many of whom take their interest right through to high-school (but few of whom go on to be professional musicians), could number almost 40 million nation-wide. This figure, providing stable audience participation, could be claimed and greeted ecstatically by music educators as a massive achievement. But this is simply not the case, while the population at large (almost 100%) are consumers of music, or so it is claimed. It is not that the others (85%) do not matter, but that they have opted out voluntarily and have been facilitated by the system in that decision.

This really did reduce music to an optional, not a mandatory, subject - an important distinction. And the sensitivity in the US about imposing educational standards federally is a further inhibitor to changing this situation, which in America produces too many performers, too few listeners and a vast population which is in neither category from an educational standpoint; the parallels with Ireland are exact as far as the latter two are concerned. According to Reimer, White's 'critique of the imbalance in Irish music education in favor of performance instruction over audience education is dead-on accurate to describe music education in the US'; but neither he nor White is correct if this is assumed to be typical of school music education in Ireland.

Reimer places great faith in the potential of the new National Standards to turn this situation around. (See Lehman [MEND Document 303] for a thorough exposé of the history and progress of this recent phase in American music education). Most significant in this regard is the fact that the music education lobby succeeded in shaming Government (no other description will suffice) into including

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music in the US Goals 2000 legislation for education. This is as near as it is possible to get, within the American system, to ensuring that music is on the agenda for adoption, state by state, as an important component in education, and equates approximately to the aspiration of our national curriculum, the most recent revision of which is currently being implemented. Reimer goes on to praise the intent behind the long battle for the recognition of music. ‘This represents a major event in our [US] history toward finally recognizing that an authentic musical education must be wider than what performance can encompass, and must be made available to the vast majority of people who are not performers. ... With the guidance of the national standards we can now hope for a more balanced, more comprehensive conception of music education to take hold, relevant to the musical needs of all rather than only of a small minority’.

Reimer, still deservedly regarded by many as the doyen of American music education, has several times revised the philosophical views he held in 1970. Far from detracting from confidence in the plausibility of such a protean stance, it is refreshing to find him so open to revision as propitious, especially in vindicating changes as timely and contextual. It should not be surprising that Reimer and White are predictably close in their views of the three commanding issues (see above) raised by Reimer as defining the world, as the Irish, dilemma irreducibly.

5.2.4 David J. Elliott and Kari Veblen: Response to Harry White’s paper - *A book of manners in the wilderness*

The differences between Reimer’s view and those represented in this response could not be more sharply etched. The Elliott rebuttal is awkwardly poised with regard to the use of the first person pronoun and virtually dispenses with Veblen’s view, for it cannot be assumed that they agree on everything; at least that is the sense of its impact. And the unfortunate recurrence of invective (all too prevalent in Elliott’s defences of his philosophy), which resorts to such words as prejudice, and worse still, ignorance and arrogance in referring to the basis of White’s views, is ill-advised, offensive and unacceptable. This tendency has been seriously criticized before by respondents to Elliott’s writings (as, for example, by David Aspin when reviewing *MM* for ISME) but it seems that Elliott is unheeding, in the process rendering his own views susceptible to unnecessary hostility. This is regrettable, as Elliott is passionately sincere and has much to contribute that is worthy of sympathetic and discerning perusal.

In Elliott’s paper under discussion, we are again confronted, after a perfunctory opening gambit, with yet another defence of his praxial philosophy, almost as if White had no other thought but to demolish it. This is to misunderstand the subtlety of White’s enquiry, if not to dismiss the brief he held, which

was to define a university model of music education as an enabler in general education (music) in Ireland. But, in many ways, Elliott's commentary also provides further material, in the guise of clarification, to focus more effectively on the essential claims of his praxial philosophy; these are, nonetheless, still controversial, hotly disputed, and very far from consensus acceptance, if we are to measure their minuscule influence as enabler in the adoption and implementation of the American National Standards.

5.2.5 Harry White's Concerns

Look again at a paraphrase of Harry White's concerns:

1. He was asked to sketch a model for university music education. He could not do this in a vacuum.
2. It was necessary for White to anchor his arguments in causal relationships; he did this by identifying the system to which a university model might respond and by which, in turn, it would be influenced. It was natural that music education (especially in schools) and music preferences in the community would have come in for scrutiny.
3. He deplors the equation in educational ambiances of western art music and inferior music, which he identifies within the syllabi for Irish schools. He finds no justification for the lengths to which egalitarianism has progressed. (Chronologically, White's paper was being written when Elliott's book - *Music Matters* - was barely in publication. It must therefore be assumed that Elliott was mistaken in believing that White was attacking the philosophy promulgated in *Music Matters*.)
4. He is at pains to address the context of Irish music education, which he sees as 'so far behind the rest of Europe, to say nothing of North America, that apparently useful comparisons break down under the stress of near primitive conditions'. He is impatient of the 'cultural imperialism which prescribes that we abandon or drastically relegate that which we have not yet properly attained'.
5. He raises issues as to whether the total multiculturalism now so fashionable in American philosophical provenance is appropriate for Ireland; as to the current imbalance between popular and art forms which is tending to obliterate the latter in Ireland; as to the autonomous nature of the listening process which can offer real musical experience and benefit to those who engage in it for its own sake.
6. He is aware that the so-called universal model of university education has been superannuated, and he is attempting to define a new dispensation, at first by stating what

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it should not be. This focuses on the American system and its truck with indiscriminate (and as yet unstable) multiculturalism, and the legitimized wholesale infiltration of the university model there with popular music, on an equal footing with western art music, but with its grossly less sophisticated didacticism.

7. White cannot be faulted for observing (MEND 308, 5) that the ‘fundamental tenet of Elliott’s philosophy is that all music is a human activity rather than a product of that activity’. White repudiates the egalitarianism and relativism which he sees as authorized by this ‘music as process’ approach. He is concerned that Ireland has embraced the commercialism of American pop music as a social reality, but that this has not been balanced by respect for the ‘imaginary museum of musical works’ which he sees as an essential part of the university repertoire, if it is to ‘enable’ music education at large.
8. White believes that whatever the condition of music in a society happens to be, it is ultimately in the hands of educators to influence. ‘Change begins with the educators’. If it is axiomatic to consider music education as, in the first place, guided and influenced by philosophy, it is hardly surprising that his cry of pain should also throw down the gauntlet to the philosophical lobby.
9. Perhaps it is taking the aversion to total multiculturalism too far when White ‘advances Ireland’s right of access to the European tradition (after centuries of denial and neglect) over and above the interests of egalitarianism in North America’, as if the latter had no claim in cherishing the traditions of Europe to speak of. White nails his colours to the mast by providing his own theory as to the underlying cause of what he considers to be the lamentable condition of music education in Ireland; and he sees this as a continuing reflection of global trends, exemplified in Britain and America as the precedence which performance - ‘any kind of music and at any standard of competence - takes over understanding and reception. ... The deliberate eradication of this form [listening] in the interests of pragmatic self-advancement seems to me an irresponsible abnegation of the past. What most distresses me [claims White] about this high-handed repudiation of art music is the assumption that one generation is free to dispense with its obligations to the generation that follows’.
10. White’s last point, that the ministry of even a contextual philosophy of music education, the development of which is seen, in MEND terms, as a *sine qua non*, is in the nature of ‘too much theory before the fact of our deprivations’, may well be a Parthian shaft to focus, rather, on the lack of material resources (library and performance facilities) for the support of effective third level education in music in Ireland. But the imbalance which he deplors in the components of school music must surely have its origins in the

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philosophical underpinnings which dictate the curriculum. Since he believes that the model for a relevant university music education must engage in a continuum with, and be influenced by, the model being dispensed at second-level, he might be persuaded to reappraise his priorities, since without a stable all-embracing philosophical rationale chaos must result at all levels, both internally and at interfaces.

It might be expected that White's ideas, *inter alia*, about the roles of performance and listening in music education would place him on a collision course with David Elliott. And his pejorative view of most performance as scarcely meeting the criterion of competence, not to mention proficiency or expertise, is undoubtedly at variance with what Elliot would like us to accept as an outcome of his praxial philosophy. Elliott's response to White can now be more effectively analysed.

Harry White's concerns may be linked essentially to three of the most dominant parameters in education - time, judgements (and value) and the philosophies that inform those judgements. In an ambience of limited time he fears that the inevitable dilution of the hitherto cherished norm, in music education methodology, of western art music, by potentially innumerable other musics, is becoming so disproportionate that so-called high culture music is threatened with redundancy. He calls into question the judgements that sanction such an indiscriminate and relativist valuing system and by implication, philosophies that coincide with this view. In particular, and again in an obvious context of the use of time (a scarce resource), he identifies the cult of amateurish performance as contributing additionally and significantly to the neglect, if not the total eclipse, of listenership as a musical goal or autonomous activity.

White is not necessarily saying that performance should be eschewed, but he is asserting the primacy of the art work to empower a much wider range of activities, all leading to more holistic experience. In stating his case, he is not so unsubtle as to claim that the praxial philosophy is invalid, but allows his case to stand as an invitation to the reader to reach his own conclusions. He criticizes what he sees as the prevailing American mentality in musical preferences and agrees with Roehmann (though from a vastly different stance [MEND 308, 6]) that only education can change this mentality. What he does not do is rush to judgement on whether the situation in America is due to the power of commercialism, capitulation by educators, or a flawed philosophy.

White must be credited with the knowledge that there are many rival philosophies, that the defederalized nature of education in America is such as to accommodate them selectively, and that not all of them are inimical to his point of view. The philosophies that were formally presented at MEND were two - namely that of Bennett Reimer (still, presumably to be considered *prevailing* if his

involvement with the drafting of the 1994 National Standards is to carry any weight), and of David Elliott, both paraphrased from their published works.⁵⁸ It cannot be assumed that Elliott's *new* philosophy of 1995 has supplanted the earlier work. Since Elliott's philosophy, quite apart from the arguably parenthetical material, is generally committed to music as activity, it seems unexceptionable for White to assume that he is more process- than product-orientated - but no more.

If the openness of *Music Matters* favours total multiculturalism and a methodology that elevates performance to a superdominant position; if it refuses in general to legitimize listening as an autonomous and separate activity of value commensurate with that of performance; if it inevitably gravitates, by playing down product against process and stressing music as a human practice or activity, towards a statement of the equality of all these practices ... then it is easy to deduce that Elliott and White are mutually in counterpositions. And we have ample material, by way of documented understandings, to show that White's claim that 'the fundamental tenet of Elliott's philosophy is that music is a human activity rather than a product of the activity' is reasonable. If David Elliott now refutes that claim, it offers a revised understanding which goes part of the way towards reconciling his with other stances. This reconciliation will be attempted in the Reimer/Elliott rationalization, based on the review of *Music Matters* and its subsequent rebuttal (Chapter 6).

David Elliott seems to be presenting *The Facts of the Praxial Philosophy* as if all 'past approaches [have] failed' and he is credited as 'taking dead aim at the distinctly western notion of art objects having value in themselves' (MEND 414, 3). Much of Elliott's philosophizing in this section of his response is totally unexceptionable, and has been in circulation for some time, but he is mistaken to call into question or attempt to expose an imagined fallacy within the aesthetics of western art, *inter alia*, which has always insisted that art is not centred in the art object but in the response to it. Reimer, amongst many others, in his perception/response theory, is very clear about that.

5.2.6 The Idea of Music as Product

It appears, however, that Elliott's idea of product, which he defends as being fundamental to his thinking, is considerably different from and more flexible than White's. Yet it is generous, too; he wishes music to be relevant to the widest spectrum of participation and this is a worthy aim of any music education philosophy. But his insistence that 'MUSIC [see footnote 47] is a diverse human *practice*' leading to *activities* and the efforts of musical *practitioners* who '*make music*' [writer's

⁵⁸ Bennett Reimer *A Philosophy of Music Education* (1970; rev 1989) and David J Elliott *Music Matters* (1995). The presentations at MEND by Professors Abeles, Colwell, Lehman and Swanwick, while they touched on philosophy, were not specifically focused on it.

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italics] is palpably to elevate process above its results - namely 'products, works or listenables'. This is the thrust of his phraseology, however he wishes to temper it for his purposes. And he *has* 'ostracized the listener', simply because he pejoratively plays down listening alone as making music - a negation of the aspirations of the 100% who indulge it. One may tolerate his rejection of Music Education as Aesthetic Education (MEAE) on *his* evaluation as valid 'scholarly difference of opinion' but it is not acceptable that the listener who, after all, creates the music in his response, should be so summarily excluded from music making except when he doubles his role by being a performer (improviser, composer, arranger, or conductor).

While not everyone would agree that music should be aligned with the social sciences, Elliott's praxial philosophy is attractive in having pillaged the literature, for our benefit, to highlight the social-cultural dimension of music. There is a need, not so much to repudiate the inflexible aesthetic approach to music as to expand it to fit other contexts and functions. But Elliott, unfortunately, seems intent on purging music education of the very notion of aesthetic response - or so it reads from the pungency of his rhetoric whenever he focuses on it. The writer is convinced that there is sufficient in the quieter backwaters of Elliott's opus to bring about reconciliation on this issue also. And it is surely interesting to point out that, in considering the Reimer/Elliott hybrid statement (MEND Phase II [MEND 603]) that philosophy is itself protean, Elliott is aiming at a moving object when he levels his criticisms at Reimer, who has gone through many acceptable and courageous metamorphoses since the publication of his 1970 book, and even its 1989 revision.

5.2.7 Diversity and Multiculturalism: 'The Innate Equality of all Musics'

The multicultural case is by no means cut-and-dried; but neither is it the intellectual property of David Elliott. There are indeed several senses of music that must be urgently considered and reviewed. The writer doubts if either Reimer or White would have any problems in accepting the reality that music may be considered in the contexts of human intent, artistic-social process/event, artistic/social product, and social-cultural communities of action, achievement and evaluation. Nor is there an argument against Elliott's statement that 'musical works and the musicianship required to interpret, listen to [this being an ambiguous activity in Elliott's definition] and make musical works originates in the contexts of identifiable music cultures. In this view, MUSIC (writ large) is multicultural in essence'. It is his proposal (which is a *non sequitur*) that, *therefore*, 'music education ought to be centrally concerned with inducting students into a *reasonable* diversity of music cultures during students' educational careers' that is open to challenge, and especially so in the context of available time. The idea may be attractive to some and a logical outcome of following the praxial philosophy, but is it practical? Much depends on what *reasonable* diversity means. In the context of Harry White's fears about the dilution,

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if not the annihilation, of the primary and, for many, the music-fostering culture, this proposal has to be treated with circumspection.

On the question of *Musical Diversity and Music Education* (Elliott's next heading), we are again confronted by a mixture of well rehearsed wisdom which has been current for a long time and which Elliott cannot, and presumably would not, claim as his intellectual property. But, in the first place, the opening paragraph is an unfair exaggeration of White's point. White speaks of *difference* and it is true that he also speaks of *privilege*, but surely in the sense that western art music has now been reduced to articulating its claim to the privilege of survival; it is the threat to western art music that concerns him and not necessarily the rejection of other music cultures. And it is interesting that Elliott even extols, in context, the virtues of 'belonging to and living deeply in a particular [monocultural] way of musical life [as] something to be cherished'.

Elliott's comparison between languages and Musics⁵⁹ is not convincing as he gravitates towards his theory that 'no Music is innately superior to any other'. While one can give guarded support to this claim while the qualifier, *innately*, is included, that is not the condition of Musics which is being compared. We are not considering Musics *ab initio*, but in their developed states. And there are philosophical principles which command respect in making judgements, notably in Immanuel Kant's *Analytic of the Beautiful*⁶⁰, and which stipulate, *inter alia*, that the judges should be recognized experts in the field [or multiple field]; that they should be free from emotional involvement with any of the subjects being judged; and that some criterion should be agreed or accepted in claiming universal validity - from a consensus that approaches unanimity. These seem to be pragmatic criteria which *are* attainable.

Few would deny that the dozen or so most dominant spoken languages are also the most developed, for reasons of the richness of their vocabulary and/or their literature. There may be genuine differences of opinion as to their relative excellence (Elliott makes the point), state of development or whatever else we choose to call the criterion. But a hierarchy of some kind will emerge, and precisely because of this fact, in the case of Musics, the cult of ethnomusicology stoutly defends the rights of the minority to parity of esteem; after all, that is a natural outcome of working in that branch of the art.

⁵⁹ Elliott's idiosyncratic nomenclature for the nature of music, combining 'musical practices, products, processes and contexts' is retained here. He refers hierarchically to MUSIC (a diverse human practice), Music (the individual practices each combining *music making* and music listening) and music (products, works, or listenables).

⁶⁰ Details of Kant's important theory can be found in the List of Sources under Hofstadter and LeHuray.

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Multiculturalism is a noble aspiration but, if it seeks to enhance the esteem of all Musics collectively by a process of levelling down rather than setting challenges to develop on an upward trend, it invites serious losses in the total achievement of the combined enterprise. When Harry White says, ‘Historians of music are not much concerned with implausible theories of musical superiority. Nor should they be; they are a waste of time and intellect. ... Abstract notions of musical superiority are self-evidently reprehensible’, he may be suspected of disingenuousness. However, the fact remains that David Elliott’s stance as to the equality of all musical practices, based partly on the supporting quotation from Slobin and Titon (‘it would be foolish to say that any one music-culture was “better” than another’ [MEND 208a, 6]) can be challenged and solved by the Kantian method.

If Elliott’s dream of a multicultural musical world of education were to be even minimally achieved, there would be a sufficient number of true multiculturalists who could pronounce authoritatively on such questions. The answers will not and should not amount to a dismissal of the lesser; there are always contextual reasons why all cultures should be cherished in the appropriate setting. Deciding on what that setting should be, and the factors that confer privilege upon it, is one of the challenges that faces music educators both globally and locally; it is at the heart of White’s rhetoric. And David Elliott corroborates the pragmatic approach; there is nothing surprising or *new* about much of this reiterated wisdom, but Elliott does introduce some useful concepts in addition to a raft of controversial, conjectural, unproved and therefore challengeable material. Thus the idea of the equality of all musical practices, a foundational principle of the Elliott philosophy, may not be taken as indisputable; and it appears, from Elliott’s placatory words (see below) that he does not wish to impose his views. The following is a summary of what might be inferred from his rhetoric:

1. If the socio-cultural and multicultural approaches to music education are desired (a controversial stance) then they should proceed in the belief ‘that fundamentally all musics are good, and we should compare them ... by what message they bring from their society’ (Bruno Nettl). ‘Each music-culture is a particular adaptation to particular circumstances. ... Ethnocentrism has no place in the study of world music. (Elliott again quotes Mark Slobin and Jeff Todd Titon [MEND208a, 6]).
2. Some musical practices may be educationally more appropriate than others (Elliott). There is room here for scholarly difference and, more importantly, for rapprochement between White and Elliott. ‘Teachers and students work in relation to a variety of constraints - practical, curricular, moral, social, cultural, ideological, political.’ Here Elliott, in recognizing the non-uniform nature of the challenge, is refreshingly non-prescriptive.

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3. 'It is essential for musical self-growth that novices achieve a match between their nascent levels of musicianship and the first challenges they meet in music education curricula. ... teachers should take account of a student's immediate musical contexts' (Elliott). This useful principle is generally applicable to all musical challenges and is clearly enunciated and developed by Elliott in Chapter 5 of *Music Matters*, with illustrations on pp122 and 132.
4. ' ... musical diversity should not be sought at the expense of musical depth'. This eminently practical piece of advice is, of course, double-edged, and could lead to Elliott being hoist with his own petard. As Elliott proceeds along this common-sense path, it is difficult to reconcile his suggestions with the wider aspirations of his praxial philosophy. The passage on pp 68-69 (*MM*) should be read in its entirety for some sound rationality and real wisdom. The following are selected extracts to capture its pertinence and general applicability.

When curricular time and resources are limited, the praxial philosophy supports an emphasis on musical depth over breadth. Teachers' central responsibility is to deepen students' musicianship. ... Thus, and in addition to the obvious criteria of students' interests, the availability of authentic repertoire, and a teacher's knowledge and/or disposition to learn new Musics over time, it makes perfect sense to emphasize the musical practices of one's local culture as a basis for music teaching and learning.

This raises many questions which dictate a departure from the full-blown praxial rationale, leaving some doubt as to how many variations are possible in applying the praxial philosophy. If it is too loose in its essentials it begins to disintegrate in favour of a liberal contextuality, tending towards relativism. This is what Elliott has to say:

The praxial philosophy supports the comprehensive study of people's most familiar and treasured musical traditions. At the same time, however, there are four basic reasons why the long-term scope of music curricula ought to include a wider diversity of music cultures: (a) MUSIC is a diverse human practice; (b) induction into unfamiliar Musics links the values of music education with the values of humanistic education (Elliott, 1995, p.209); (c) the self-identity of individuals in a music class *may* [writer's italics] benefit from affirming individual music-culture identities (pp. 211-212); and (d) the development of musical creativity can advance significantly when students realize how music is made and valued in other cultures.

Clearly the praxial philosophy does not advocate musical diversity at the expense of teaching a people's indigenous musics. Also, in my presentation of these views in Dublin I emphasized that I was not interested in imposing any views on my Irish colleagues. To do so would be contrary to the themes of curriculum making I advocate, including the praxial emphasis on local decision making by reflective music practitioners. ... these decisions call for reflective music educators teaching in critically reflective ways.

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While there is no doubt about Elliott's intention to be universalistic and prescriptive, in turn, about aspects of his own philosophy, and why no other will do, it is fatuous to suppose that his dismissive attitude to counterpositions lies well with such statements as not being 'interested in imposing any views on [his] Irish colleagues' and 'I advocate ... local decision making by reflective music teachers. ... I propose that teachers decide issues of repertoire, teaching strategies and so on; ... these decisions call for music educators teaching in critically reflective ways'. Surely critical reflection suggests the exercise of judgement, valuing and choice; and teaching strategies are the natural outcomes of an informing philosophy towards which eclecticism is a plausible approach? As Elliott himself said in his revised presentation at MEND (Document 208a): 'The application of a theory to practice is the bringing to bear of critical intelligence upon practical tasks rather than the implementation of good advice' (MEND Document 208a, 1); that presumably allows for disagreement with the theory and advice in the first place.

5.2.8 Context and the Aesthetic

It would be reassuring to know that Elliott has a liberal attitude to possible outcomes of what he is apparently sanctioning - a contextual philosophy. There is sufficient in what he is saying here to identify an accommodation of Harry White's aspiration and plea for the protection of the aesthetic, although he rejects White's notion of the 'privileged position of art music' on the basis of an equally, if not more, challengeable assertion about 'the innate equality of all music practices' and the criteria they invoke. And it is also worth noting that not one of his four reasons, given above, for diversifying into multicultural music education, has general acceptance. Two of them are purely speculative. For example, the use of language and medicine are both diverse, indeed universal, human practices, but in neither case is their diversity rammed down the throats of learners, even at professional levels. Why? Because in both cases there are understandings about a hierarchy and there are pragmatic limitations as to prioritization, both in turn a reflection of the relationship between the time factor and feasibility. And the linking of the values of music education with those of humanistic education is surely achievable even within a single culture; and it is questionable as to whether this criterion should take precedence, in any case, over aims based on imparting music's intrinsic benefits. Clearly there is a need for rationalization to establish what, exactly, Elliott means, and to purge his offering of ambiguity.

5.2.9 Listening as a Hybrid Activity

It is in the final section, *Musicing, Listening and Music Education*, that Elliott reveals himself most palpably, by proposing and claiming in relation to ‘all forms of music making ...[that] music education should enable all music students to achieve the values of music by developing their musicianship and listenership in direct relation to: performing-and-listening, improvising-and-listening, composing-and-listening, arranging-and-listening and conducting-and-listening. I propose that “all music students (including so-called general music students) ought to be taught in essentially the same way: as reflective musical practitioners engaged in music making generally and musical performing particularly. Artistic music listening ought to be taught and learned in conjunction with artistic music making.”’

The intent of this statement is, of course, in direct conflict with Elliott’s apparently liberal sanction that ‘teachers ... decide issues of repertoire, teaching strategies and so on’. And it is not just prescriptive: it is also exclusive. Seen in the light of White’s defence of listening as an art in itself, Elliott’s curriculum-as-practicum is arguably as narrow as any of the philosophically-based strategies that he attacks, notably MEAE (Elliott’s view). Three astounding dicta emerge unambiguously from this single statement, with the intended force of precept. Their effect is that:

1. Listening as an activity in its own right is not just ostracized as a form of music making; it is excluded, albeit revalidated, in a narrow definition and in a typical Elliott backtracking disclaimer, in the next paragraph. And this is a constantly exasperating outcome of Elliott readings. He could be respected, even admired, for the courage of his iconoclastic outbursts, but when he attempts to cover his tracks in the fear of advantaging his critics (see also later), he emasculates the impact of his views.
2. While occasionally Elliott omits to add the parenthetical (composing, improvising, arranging and conducting) to his basic concern with performing as dominant activity, he clearly states here that while these other forms of music making are valid (as they are), ‘students ought to be taught ... as reflective musical practitioners ... engaged in musical performance particularly’. He is clearly championing performance; the case for the other activities is only flimsily developed, by comparison, but here they are finally deprioritized.
3. There is no room for choice or specialization. ‘All music students (including so-called general music students) ought to be taught in essentially the same way’.

Elliott’s obvious obsession with distancing himself from his chosen interpretation of how MEAE operates has resulted in a very inconclusive, incomplete and woolly definition of listening, especially

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of listening *per se*. That he has a vested interest in being *different* is clear from the very title of his book, which purports to be a *new* philosophy. But it is axiomatic that listening be taught and practised within all the activities that he lists. Listening is cognitive by definition and musical activities do not exist in a vacuum of pure sensation; indeed they scarcely function at all in the absence of listening. So there is nothing *new* in Elliott's philosophy from this standpoint. But to suggest that listening to recorded music (which after all stands proxy, and very effectively, too, thanks to the miracle of digital reproduction, for live music) cannot be regarded as the fullest kind of music listening is an affront to the countless millions whose only music making it is, and to the professional efforts of the teachers who teach it professionally, musically and comprehensively.

It is even arguable that listening without the added distraction of having to make the music physically oneself is a highly concentrated and beneficial mode of learning how to perform. Of course the exercise is also necessary in reverse; the physical must be re-imposed progressively but the two methods, in all their permutations, are indispensable for performers and especially for artistic performance, which is Elliott's admirable objective. Nor is there an appreciable difference from the pronouncements of Reimer when Elliott, by a gradual slippage, first advocates listening to recorded music as an allowable option (though only at first in conjunction with his five practices [performing, composing etc.], and specifically in relation to the works they are dealing with), then praises the use of verbal and graphic descriptions, which he vilifies elsewhere, and finally moves on 'to recordings of related works and, then, [to] listening more widely inside and outside the musical practices students are learning in class'. This comprehensive routine is time-intensive and well beyond the capability of the general music programme to deliver⁶¹. But if we are generous enough (as Elliott should be since he is constantly recommending that teachers be trusted to do their job professionally and effectively) to credit so-called MEAE teachers with teaching to listen *for* - critically, reflectively and artistically, we must surely be making it well nigh impossible to detect that finest of distinctions between what Elliott recommends and what he abhors.

It might be claimed that Elliott *plays down* the importance of listening *per se*; in this he is in direct conflict with White and, not surprisingly, never reaches rapprochement with White's views. But to play down listening of the kind White yearns for is to deny its integrity, as for example when he (Elliott) proposes that listening be '*deliberately and systematically* taught in the context of authentic music making because four of the five kinds of cognition involved in music listening are situated forms of knowing.' (See Chapter 3 of *Music Matters* for details). Without going into lengthy

⁶¹ Another example of pure idealism in this respect is outlined (in 5.5.6) in Elliott's routines for teaching a Zulu song. The author struggles to envisage a time dimension unfolding manageably from such an aspiration, so redolent is it of the specialized study (ethnomusological in this case) more appropriate to the undergraduate level (or higher) described by Shehan Campbell and Santos in their presentations (MEND 305 and 207).

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explanations of what these forms of knowing are, the writer suggests that Elliott's five forms of knowing are as easily and perfectly applicable to the process of listening as they are to his five hybrid pairs (performance-and-listening, and so on). His omission of listening as a holistic activity in itself, and as worthy of addition to his five-fold list of co-dependent pairs (e.g. composing-and-listening) is in itself a significant statement that he must account for. And it is significant, too, that the majority of his critics see this as his stance.

It ought to be emphasized again that a reader must be able to extract from any philosophy, but especially from one as daunting, in the reading, and as complex and multi-faceted as Elliott's, a commanding, mainstream, line of thought, divested of its panoply of minor options. Even the most diligent reader may be mistaken, but the responsibility for the misunderstanding must largely rest with the author. As Elliott says: - 'Music students can achieve competent, proficient and expert levels of music-listening.' But to teach and learn this kind of thinking effectively requires that its development be embedded in efforts to develop musicianship through performing, improvising, etc. (*Music Matters*, p. 106). Could anything be more clear or devoid of the possibility of misinterpretation?

The writer, while readily accepting that these hybrid activities are a part of the paraphernalia of teaching and learning to listen, doubts that they fully or individually meet the criterion of being either necessary or sufficient; the educational matrix is incomplete and therefore calls into serious question the plausibility and reliability of this aspect of Elliott's methodological claims. Elliott's claim that 'in reality, then, my concern for music listening as praxis - the nature, values, teaching and learning of music listening - outweighs the attention I give to any other topic' can be taken on its face value. If, in relation to this claim, it is assumed that Elliott's irreducible ideas of praxis as proceeding from music as a diverse human practice to mandatory multiculturalism (which is ill-at-ease with the predominantly western idea of listening *per se* - the pejorative notion of developing 'passive' listeners) - to music as predominantly and functionally a process rather than product-generated; if the seriously restricted and therefore arguably flawed definition of listening that proceeds from Elliott's line of argument is arrived at and sincerely rejected, it must be cold comfort to him that his efforts have been so lavish, but so futile in failing to convince universally.

In answering White's concerns, Elliott side-steps the issue of the established ascendancy of pop as a threat to the stability of traditional music education as much as being a phenomenon that must be reconciled within it. He is unapologetic about the validity of multiculturalism as a tool of music education, but inconclusive (as indeed Reimer was, but by admission) as to how it can be invaginated within the time constraints of the subject in schools. His polar position on listening, as needing the mediation of an active phase (in his view) of music-making to validate it, ensured that he would not

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concede that White has a point to make. But his valedictory statements reveal conclusively that it is not White, but Reimer (whom he identifies with MEAE) who is his real *bête noire*. In a characteristic and unmerited piece of invective, he concludes that ‘White’s concerns ... about music education’s lack of attention to ... the development of “informed listenership” can be traced in large part to the theoretical and practical weaknesses of the aesthetic philosophy in which listening to recorded music for structural elements takes precedence in general music and performing is reduced to an activity of mere sound-producing’.

The writer just does not find this interpretation to be the case, based on readings of Reimer, regardless of the realities of American music education curricula, the delivery of which could, however, very well be at considerable variance with their published intent. But Elliott’s attack does not merit a response. There is little difference in essence between White’s focus on poor performance programmes (a reality in the Irish system) without crediting the work of a small cadre of teachers who excel - and Elliott’s singling out of this excellence while ignoring the more typical situation. However, White, in pinpointing the majority case, is nearer to the truth that must be addressed, in philosophical pronouncements as much as in the classroom. The same applies to Elliott’s rejection of White’s observation that university courses in Canada are now, typically, being forced into remedial action for freshmen who are poorly equipped for third level studies because of performance programmes in schools that deprive them of the ancillary essentials of a rounded education in musicianship.

White is an astute observer and a scholar of renown, and he is not disavowing the ‘work of hundreds of excellent music educators leading comprehensive programs that send well-educated young musicians to study the diversity of musics we teach at the University of Toronto ...’ He is merely trying to highlight the incompatibility between the sometimes extreme ‘performance only’ mentality in North America (which at least emphasizes performance for those who have chosen it) and the university model which must restore a balance. In this context, David Elliott’s Parthian shaft, in summing up White’s concerns and his articulation of them, is extremely distasteful. In detracting from his own credibility and status as a scholar bound by the conventions of seemingly critical behaviour, he does little to advance his own cause or to entice music educators to study his theories.

5.2.10 Conclusion - White/Reimer/Elliott

In the introduction to his *Music: Society: Education*,⁶² described as ‘an important stunningly original book certain to provoke debate, for it is an unflattering mirror of our time’, the New Zealander Christopher Small pens these obviously cautionary words:

It is generally acknowledged that the musical tradition of post -Renaissance Europe and her offshoots is one of the most brilliant and astonishing cultural phenomena of human history. ... It is understandable, therefore, for those of us who are its heirs (which includes not only the Americas and many late and present colonies of Europe but also by now a large portion of the non-western world as well) are inclined to find in the European musical tradition the norm and ideal for all musical experience, just as they find in the attitudes of western science the paradigm for the acquisition of all knowledge, and to view all other musical cultures as at best exotic and odd. It is precisely this inbuilt certainty of the superiority of European culture to all others that has given Europeans, and lately their American heirs, the confidence to undertake the cultural colonization of the world and the imposition of European values and habits of thought on the whole human race.

This is a pre-1977 view of great perception, predating the obsession with multiculturalism which has swept the world of music education in the quarter of a century which has followed it. Small, in a brilliant account, could easily be aligned with David Elliott in his plea for reappraisal and a new order. Writing for the average reader, he describes the function and social role (key ideas) of music in radically new terms for their time, including a defence of ‘music as process’, and he inveighs against the perceived excesses of the ‘music as product’ lobby. But he carefully prefaces his provocative stance with that reference to the paradigm of western art music as ‘one of the most brilliant and astonishing cultural phenomena of human history’.

The exhaustive review, which follows, of the kaleidoscopic philosophical engagement between Harry White, Bennett Reimer and David Elliott will take its cue from Small’s prefatory words. There is an obligation on the world of music education to preserve its rich legacy of western art music, quite apart from its attentions to other forms. Reimer has analysed its aesthetic significance impressively, and from his fundamental wisdom an order may be seen to have developed, for it has remained virtually unchallenged for more than a quarter of a century. Harry White has gallantly and idealistically formulated a plea for its survival, which he sees as seriously threatened by current trends. There is much of value in his arguably, but perhaps consciously blinkered, approach to stemming the encroaching tide of cultural and ethnomusicological offerings which compete for the impossibly straitened time allocations for music in general education. The writer sees White’s urgent plea as stimulated by the spirit of conservation - less by a desire to banish other worthwhile musics from the places of learning; he does not suggest easy options. David Elliott is the evangelist of the new order,

⁶² Christopher Small, *Music: Society: Education*. London: John Calder Ltd, 1977 and 1980, 1.

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prefigured to an extent in Small's prophetic writings. The writer's conclusion is that all three must be taken seriously.

Reimer has certainly moved away from the somewhat dated paradigm of the 1970 aesthetic dictum contained in his book - *A Philosophy of Music Education* - and it is greatly to his credit that he has had the flexibility and the philosophical honesty to do so. As Keith Swanwick has so elegantly and flatteringly phrased his euphemism: 'There may have been some underlying conceptual confusion and perhaps the paradigm has done its main work and could be laid aside' (MEND 304, 11). Times have changed, and with them the social order. Pure aesthetic theory, with its wealth of philosophical support from a distinguished array of commentators - from Schopenhauer to Hegel,⁶³ from Collingwood to Dewey, from Meyer to Langer - is no longer in phase with the wider and fashionable concepts of the nature and significance of music in human discourse; it needs not to be abandoned, but to expand its understandings to admit other aspects of the functions of music without doing irreparable violence to its cherished principles.

Elliott, though he might not see himself quite in that role, has essayed this flexure in the potential of music education by a serious and at times brilliant reappraisal of many of the fundamentals of music and music education. He has done this, for this writer at least, in spite of some serious reservations arrived at in this analysis. He may have overshot the target in his enthusiasm, as he has certainly antagonized many of his colleagues unnecessarily by the carelessly dismissive aggression with which he rejects *some* of his direct philosophical forebears and *all* of those who, in paying him the considerable compliment of examining his theories seriously, find them wanting in some aspect or other.

White, through the helpful mediation of Reimer, has brought the real issues - multiculturalism, pop music versus western art music, the nature of performance and listening - clearly under the lens of philosophical scrutiny, but also close to the bone of staunchly held philosophical difference. He has thus been the provocative catalyst in stimulating a further survey of the ground between the perceived polar positions of Reimer and Elliott, where some rationalization, better mutual understandings and compromise may lead to solutions that could be near at hand.

⁶³ For readings on Schopenhauer and Hegel, the reader is referred to (eds) Hofstadter and Kuhns (1964); Beardsley (1966) and Le Huray and Day (1988).

5.3 Aesthetic Education: Past, Present, and Potential for the Future

Dr Bennett Reimer (Professor of Music Education at Northwestern University, Evanston, Chicago, Illinois) [MEND 203]

Reimer's paper was reviewed very favourably in the Interim Report of MEND Phase II (MEND 603). It is fascinating to recall its detail in the light of the subsequent exchanges between himself and David Elliott and their responses to Harry White's paper *A book of manners in the wilderness*, given at MEND Phase III (MEND 309). And it is interesting, too, to compare this 1995 statement with Reimer's considerably expanded palette when he addressed the aspiration of a universal philosophy of music education at the 1996 ISME Conference in Amsterdam (MEND 401). Although there is change, it is generally negotiated without inconsistency.

It is very significant that Reimer's *Philosophy of Music Education* (1970, rev. 1989), which masterfully correlated and significantly added to the ideas of distinguished philosophical thinkers who were active in the three decades or so before the publication of his book, not only informed the influential Music Education as Aesthetic Education (MEAE) Movement in the US but remained a unique and virtually unchallenged statement for a quarter of a century⁶⁴. It has been enormously influential and must be credited with the tacit approval of more than a full generation of scholars - a notable achievement in a field so currently active as the philosophical lobby in the United States. One should feel confident, therefore, that it encapsulates wisdom of an enduring kind, while mustering the forces of a sharp intellect in examining a challenge. Reimer must be acknowledged for the gifts of simplicity in presentation, clarity, lucidity, easy logic, accessibility and applicability which suffuse his writings, making them acceptable as seminal statements in their time. And there is little substantive evidence that, although they have been challenged, they have been superannuated in American music education practice.

When Reimer clears a way for the exposition of an evolving philosophy of aesthetic music education, his pragmatism is evident in sometimes quite subtle shifts of emphasis which reflect the concurrent evolution of social/cultural and political/cultural values. Thus we find rejection of the extrinsic values of music in education being replaced by cautious inclusion; the transfer of formalism to its mitigated version of relating to the Langerian 'forms of human feeling'; the advocacy of 'classical' music

⁶⁴ In his review (1996) of David Elliott's *Music Matters*, Reimer acknowledges it as 'an important and interesting event in the history of music education scholarship, because it brings to an end a very long period during which only one book, entirely devoted to the explication and application of a philosophical viewpoint on music education, my own *A Philosophy of Music Education*, was widely recognized to exist, at least in North

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yielding seamlessly to the politically more correct multicultural model; the dominance of performance (based on the outmoded nineteenth century perceptions of its indispensability for familiarization with repertoire) giving way to the legitimate promotion of a wider range of experiences, without, however, dispensing with the performance option; emotional discharge transmuted into the expressive possibilities of embodied feelings; the substitution of the trade (training) idea of music education by the professional (reflective; see Mary Lennon [MEND 114]). All these essentially fluid positions are validated by Reimer's statement that 'aesthetic education, then, is not a dogma, or a fixed set of beliefs and actions, but an ever-changing, ever developing position that music is worthy of serious attempts to learn it, and that education in music include musical learning if its unique benefits are to be available to all'. This, it seems, is basic to the agenda of the position that Reimer holds, and seems unexceptionable.

The adaptability of Reimer's criteria for *quality* in music is particularly attractive and is open to application in all kinds of judgements of musical repertoire suitable in education. By using craftsmanship, sensitivity, imagination and authenticity⁶⁵ (another laudable shift from the 1970 position)⁶⁶- 'characteristics sufficiently broad to apply to all the world's music' - 'a powerful means for making substantive and defensible judgements of merit exists'.

Reimer replaces the preoccupation with performance, skills and repertoire by the Tylerian and neo-Tylerian model of structure-of-discipline and concepts as organizers of learning. This, he claims, enabled music study to become more organized and pedagogically defensible than had ever previously been possible, and enabled music education to expand its notion of music curriculum dramatically. This form of prescription is attacked by Elliott as 'resulting in a steady stream of "teacher-proof" curricula that continues to flow to the present day'.⁶⁷ It is arguable, however, that the idea, limiting as it may be and too redolent of the 'verbal concepts' approach for the small percentage of teachers who may prefer to transcend it in their personally imaginative methodology, is probably welcomed by most teachers, who prefer prescription over the responsibility of liberal choice. The prevailing attitude of the majority of teachers is an important consideration and, if we are to take the climate at MEND as indicative of Irish feeling on the subject, it would favour the Reimer model.

Reimer's final contribution to overcoming former insufficiencies in music education proposes a balanced approach to teaching for variety and comprehensiveness which he defines under the headings

America'.

⁶⁵ The question of authenticity requires another shift in definition to accommodate the more recent claim by ethnomusicologists that the implied dichotomy is largely artificial, biased and negatively value-laden.

⁶⁶ Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education* (1970), 103.

⁶⁷ Elliott, *Music Matters*, 244.

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of knowing *how* and knowing *within*, knowing *about* and knowing *why*. This approach, he suggests, suffices for all involvements and learnings, whether relating to general music education or in elective experiences across particular aspects of music (performing, composing, etc.).

In his peroration Reimer mentions the unfinished agenda of music education and indeed puts a pragmatic finger on the pulse of current concerns, not only in the United States but in Ireland too, albeit not always in an identical context:

1. He recommends that teachers in training should be exposed to readings on the philosophy of music education in order better to understand the reasons underpinning their pending decisions and to act as advocates for quality music education. (See also Abeles, MEND 302.)
2. He gives cautious support to the idea of promoting musics of the world's cultures - cautious in the sense of his pragmatic awareness of the difficulties involved in a relatively young discipline. Implicit are his concerns about suitable ethnic choices, appropriate repertoire and the inexperience of the vast majority of teachers (including those in the United States). This problem, referred to above under the Irish context, would, of course, present a different dimension for Irish music educators - one that needs urgent consideration, taking into account the importunity of the multicultural lobby in turning to its advantage the politically correct pronouncements concerning the relevance of other musics.
3. Reimer is conscious of the destabilizing effects of obsession with performance. Although there is a very different view, as articulated above, in Ireland, being in a sense on the other side of that coin, his warning might be heeded about perpetuating modes of instruction which are in themselves restricting, and efforts applied, as seems to be the case, to the fertilization of academically-based curricula with more experiential involvements with music. There is little likelihood in Ireland, in the foreseeable future, of high quality performance in schools, or the professional interests of performance teachers, being a negative burden on the comprehensiveness of music education. Reimer's admonitions might be generically classified as concern for the relevance of teacher training, also referred to above in the Irish context.
4. The question of equal opportunity is an issue very close to the heart of all Irish music educators and needs no special emphasis.

It is the immediacy and the common-sense of Bennett Reimer's philosophical dialectic that so commends it for serious consideration. And it is worth reiterating that his leadership, which is neither

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dictatorial nor claustrophobic when exerted in a benign climate, has had no small part in the shaping of American music education in the past three decades. Reimer's work seems to have had the long-standing admiration and support of a critical profession and it is still influential in the underlying rationale of the American National Standards, which are likely to dominate music education effort in the US for 'several decades' (Reimer [MEND 203, 6]). Reimer tacitly and anonymously acknowledges the challenge of Elliott in his MEND address, in a way which is almost inconsequential. His 1996 book review, a retaliation to Elliott's iconoclastic attack in *Music Matters*, is, on the other hand, much more in the open, as is the Amsterdam statement which, in tending to destabilize itself and thus the whole thrust of an otherwise scholarly and impeccable presentation, acknowledged that the Elliott challenge was to be taken seriously, since he himself, in taking notice of it, had so perceived its threat as a real one.

There is an exact parallel to the American National Standards for schools in the promulgation of revised music syllabi⁶⁸ in Ireland, completed (1999) with the issue of the Primary Schools documents. The Irish problem is not, as in the US, one of advocacy for their adoption since there is a *national* curriculum. The concern of music educators in Ireland should be to keep the implemented curriculum under active and constructive review as to its philosophical underpinnings and to try to influence ongoing policies and effect necessary modification (as provided for in the NCCA manifesto, confirmed by the chairman of the Music Syllabus Committee, Seán MacLiam) as our continuing absorption of philosophical pronouncements matures.

⁶⁸ The groundwork for these revisions was carried out before the MEND Initiative took place. Problems with the delivery of the curriculum (especially with Senior Cycle) were debated copiously at MEND (though obviously not in a comparative sense, which would not have been possible at that time) and recommendations made; these are fully reported in the 'docs' section of the CD-ROM. The problem in Ireland has always been (see *Deaf Ears?*) a poor correspondence between the promulgated (intended) and the delivered curriculum (a disparity nicely pointed up by Colwell in his presentation [MEND 209]). A government White Paper (1995) on the subject showed concern that resourcing of the curriculum, especially in the matter of teacher support and in-service training, needed to be increased. There are still problems in the delivery of the curriculum. The discovery at MEND Phase I that Irish music educators were, in general, not philosophically oriented, leads to the certainty that Irish documents predating MEND would not have been informed by rationalized philosophy, if indeed it would have been adopted as a fundamental in the first place. After the event, so to speak, the application of MEND Findings and Recommendations must await the next 'round' of revisions. The MEND Report and this thesis must therefore remain archival until such steps are mooted. As noted in the Final Recommendations of this thesis, there is scope for new researchers to make the comparison between operative curricula (published or delivered!) and the MEND paradigm to inform the decisions of the future. The adoption of the MEND Report by the Forum for Music is obviously of great importance in this context.

5.4 Music Education, Music Performance, and the Irish Music Educator

Professor David Elliott (Professor of Music and Music Education, University of Toronto; currently [1995] visiting Professor at the University of North Texas at Denton) [MEND 208]

It is imperative to have a cadre of teachers who themselves ‘embody’ the knowledge that they are expected to teach.

Howard Gardner, quoted by David Elliott

It may seem that the philosophy of music education as emanating from the North American Continent disproportionately dominated the deliberations of MEND and that it continues to exert too much influence, if not to the point of distortion, on the analysis of proceedings with a specifically Irish relevance in mind. It is true that ‘any peg will do to hang one’s hat on’ - to get a point across, so to speak - provided the context is clearly established. Paul Lehman (MEND 303) states it with consummate succinctness: ‘Philosophy and practice are mutually reinforcing because philosophy provides a basis for practice and practice provides an opportunity to test and validate philosophy’.

But the process by which philosophy transmutes into practice is considerably more fraught than the scholarly and clinically isolated exercise of developing rational underpinning in the first place. There is copious evidence, not so much as to how philosophy has failed in practice, as to how practice has deviated from ideology. The post-MEND III readings have clearly illustrated how North American experiences, in highlighting these dissonances, from the beginning of the twentieth century right up to the publication of Elliott’s *Music Matters* (in 1995, the year in which he addressed MEND), can be usefully applied to the whole Irish dilemma to discover fascinating and helpful correlations.⁶⁹ This might be said to revolve around the nature of performance. The reader is again referred to the papers given by Reimer (MEND 203), Straub (MEND 205) and Lehman (MEND 303).

1. It appears that, in the midst of an uncharted conflict between music educators and the great American public, ‘instrumental music became a fixture (in schools) in the early 20th century because kids enjoyed playing instruments’ (Lehman). But this is not a simple, unexceptionable fact. If we peruse the above readings it can be learned that this answered

⁶⁹ The applicability to Ireland of American experience and practice has been copiously defended in this thesis. Harry White was a formidable sceptic in this regard. For instance, as stated in 6.7.5 (The Relevance of American Music Education Practice), ‘. . . it is when Reimer identifies the performance problem that the relevance to past and current difficulties in Ireland is apparent. If the Irish got it wrong (and it is the writer’s view that Harry White’s interpretation of this concern [The Conceptual Failure of Music Education in Ireland as he terms it in MEND 108] is also open to question), it is true that the Americans did also’. See also 4.8 (Bennett Reimer in Ireland) and 5.5.10 (The Realities of American Music Education).

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to the public perception (*cf* Harry White's papers [MEND108 and 308, but especially the former]) of what music education should be - not the well rounded education (of composer, performer, listener) as advocated properly in more recent philosophical pronouncements, but simply an exclusive concentration on the skill- and product-based fruits of the one-to-one mode of teaching; and there was plenty of justification for the ascendancy of this form of access to music. The sophisticated thinking of the Absolute Expressionists was also evolving simultaneously from the early part of the century, but independently, it seems. It rounded the edges of the too formidable stance of Hanslick⁷⁰, but might now be admitted as having also been a child of its time⁷¹, or at least in need of the kind of tempering which Reimer has subtly applied to it in the 1990s.

2. When Bennett Reimer's epochal *A Philosophy of Music Education* first appeared in 1970 it must have been a rationale responding to a system, not searching for one. And, as can be extracted from the authoritative readings (see Straub - MEND 205), music in American schools was/is strictly an elective which has been allowed, for reasons that must have much to do with established norms of the match between teacher skills/employment and student demands, to create the extraordinary dichotomy (in context) of performers and non-performers (compare the Syllabus A [non performing] and B [performing] dichotomy in Ireland which, though less drastic, produced enormous problems). This was barren ground indeed to support the well-intentioned provisions of the Music Education as Aesthetic Education (MEAE) Movement, since the performers, with an arguably cultivated minimal commitment to a rounded musical education, had already been syphoned off; the remainder were, by conscious choice and not by MEAE pre-classification, non-performers. It seems to an outsider, therefore, that American highschool music education failed, by its very structure, either to challenge or to empower MEAE. More than twenty years later the National Standards are now attempting to correct this intolerable abdication from eclecticism. But there is still copious visible evidence in the US that the long-established system dies hard.⁷²

⁷⁰ Eduard Hanslick, a nineteenth century critic, whose polemic *The Beautiful in Music* supported the Absolutist view

⁷¹ See Swanwick (MEND 304) who referred euphemistically to Reimer's philosophy as a paradigm that 'has done its main work and could be laid aside'.

⁷² The author would be amazed if slavish adherence to the provisions of the (Voluntary) National Standards were allowed to threaten the outstanding performance achievements in American schools (Reimer's boast). It comes as no surprise (and, in a sense, it is consoling too) that a significant number of performance-oriented teachers in the US are 'in denial' about the applicability of the VNS to their curricular options (authority - Colwell), while others are compromising by partial compliance. The state-by-state autonomy in US education (as distinct from individual autonomy [a novel version to the author]) has been copiously noted in this thesis. See 6.6 (Residual Dissonances).

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In the midst of all this confusion and transition the Elliott book appeared. If one is to be guided by various critiques of *Music Matters* he had MEAE rather than American Music Education in his sights. The book is, putting it bluntly, iconoclastic, sets out (from its structural features alone) unashamedly to be so, and has drawn a great deal of negative criticism in this context. However, that is not to invalidate its ideas, which are fresh and stimulating, teeming with imagination and striving towards comprehensiveness. But for its conscious nonconformist tendencies, it would have been difficult to understand how two such eminent scholars as Elliott and Reimer could have worked themselves into stances so ostensibly and diametrically opposed. If the chameleon-like Reimer philosophy (responding, as it openly purports to do, to the changing circumstances which are the guiding principle empowering shifts in philosophical stance in the first place) represents the middle ground of twentieth century thinking, Elliott indubitably is more provocative and is even subversive. Given the plethora of philosophical stances that variously inform music education, it is obviously not a question that any one has to be embraced or that there are absolutes of right and wrong; if it were so, there would not be so many. What is important, however, is that music educators have the confidence, born of familiarity even with the verbal statements (more is seldom possible), to debate the issues and eclectically to apply consensus, where possible, to the contextual realities of particular cases.

Since the writer believes that the philosophies of Reimer and Elliott encapsulate as wide a spectrum as is likely to be encountered on a first reading, it is hoped that young professionals, by comparing them, will be encouraged to continue the debate - to analyse, call into question, demystify, clarify, challenge, accept, reject, modify, and reconcile - and eventually implement ever-better and more relevant philosophical ideas to ongoing practice. This is the proffered value of the exercise, undertaken below, to Irish music education.

The Reimer-Elliott debate has a copious bibliography; in fairness to the pretensions of David Elliott and to the extent to which his book has attracted international notice, the writer has consulted a representative sample of the literature (as listed in the footnote).⁷³

⁷³ It should be made quite clear that the impression made by David Elliott - from his somewhat sketchy MEND presentation (which he chose to deliver informally) to the more formal (and much more sophisticated) offering which the writer succeeded in eliciting subsequently from him; from the most thorough and painstaking perusal of his book (*Music Matters*) to the multiplicity of reviews (including his own lengthy rebuttal of the equally lengthy Reimer critique); from the fascinating triptych which the Reimer and Elliott responses to Harry White's paper (*A book of manners in the wilderness*) created - is not one that can be dismissed as insufficiently researched. The writer has been conscious of the responsibility to consult the widest feasible range of literature before coming to the conclusions presented in this report. It should also be stated that the nature of the debate itself and of the opening salvo by which Elliott's book created a hostile climate, must logically devalue the direct encounters (Reimer's book review and Elliott's rebuttal, analysed exhaustively in the MEND report - Section 18.1.2) on the Kantian principle of emotional involvement, lack of disinterestedness and detachment, and vested interest.

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The writer has argued that the universality of music has two manifestations - as experience and as faculty. 'Music-making is posited as a universal species-specific experience and faculty at least as old as language, born of a desire for communication between human and fellow-human.'⁷⁴ Experience may be minimally thought of as a kind of passive listening exercise of the kind attributed by Elliott to the thinking behind MEAE, while faculty could be construed as active music-making in the form of an indiscriminating involvement in performance, an equally far-fetched view of Elliott's praxis, as, for example, in the hands of the volitional non-performer. The writer has a much more interpenetrative and interactive view of both which, indeed, he believes the philosophies of Reimer and Elliott also reveal, as far as their intentions go, to the sympathetic reader.

Let it be assumed, for the purposes of this exercise, that the simple division, into experience and faculty, does correspond roughly to the aesthetic experience (perception and response as centred in listening) of Reimer and the musical activity ('fundamentally music is something that people do') of Elliott⁷⁵; neither is fully served by the definition but the premise seems plausibly non-pejorative and

The following is a list of the sources consulted:

Harry White, *A book of manners in the wilderness*, (Vol.38 of College Music Symposium) [MEND 308].

Bennett Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education* (1970, rev 1989).

Bennett Reimer, *Should there be a Universal Philosophy of Music Education?*

(Music Education, ISME Number 29, 1997) [MEND 401].

Bennett Reimer, *Through Irish Eyes*, Response to Harry White (Vol.38 of College Music Symposium) [MEND 402].

Bennett Reimer, *Music for Performers Only: Review of Music Matters* (Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education, Spring 1996, No 128) [MEND 403].

David J. Elliott. *Music Matters* (1995).

David Elliott, *Continuing Matters: Myths, Realities, Rejoinders: Rebuttal of Reimer above* (Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education) [MEND 416].

David Elliott, *Of Irish Myth: A Response to Harry White* (Vol.38 of College Music Symposium [MEND 417].

A (why from here do you suddenly start using only initials, as opposed to first names? LeBlanc, Review of *Music Matters* (Music Educators Journal, January 1996) [MEND 411].

E.V. Stublely, Review of *Music Matters* (Philosophy of Music Education Review, 4 (1) 1996) [MEND 412].

N Sarrazin, Review of *Music Matters* (Ethnomusicology 40(3) (Fall 1996) [MEND 413].

J.T. Humphreys, Review of *Music Matters* (Bulletin of Historical Research in Music Education, 17, January 1996) [MEND 414].

David N. Aspin, Review of *Music Matters* (Music Education, ISME Number 27, May 1996) [MEND 415].

⁷⁴ Frank Heneghan, *Interpretation in Music: A Study in Perception, Expression and Symbol* (Dublin, University of Dublin, Trinity College and Dublin Institute of Technology, unpublished thesis, 1990), iii.

⁷⁵ Lack of clarity or fluidity as to the nature of the intimate relationship between performance and listening (rather like the complementarity between music as product and music as process) has made for difficulty in arbitrating between Reimer and Elliott, since it has led to semantic wordplay which supports Reimer's defences as much as it enables Elliott to plead with such regularity that he is being misunderstood. It is relevant to ask whether listening is in itself an activity, separable from performance, and whether its notional optimal experience is one of vicarious performance. It is not quite clear in dealing with Elliott's overweening advocacy of performance (and the irksome parenthetical litany of related activities - improvising, composing, arranging, conducting - which are not treated with quite the same generosity of explanation) whether listening is conceptually just the other side of the coin in relation to any one of them, or how it fares on its own.

Considering that listening (without physical [muscular] participation), accounts for probably more than 99 % of all musical experience, it is unsatisfactory that doubts linger over these questions, particularly over the very respectability of listening alone, and at all developmental stages, as an unencumbered musical pursuit in its own right. Is it possible to exert one's full concentration on listening in the ambience of the technical distraction of

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the distinction is not made with any covert agenda of distortion. Provided it is suitably qualified, it is therefore as valid to claim that the ineluctable and truly universal binding force of music is listening - and that we make music so that we can listen, as it is to assert that music-making is the central act and that we listen because music is made. Both confirm the interdependency of the two activities; in general neither is disavowed by the philosophies in question and it would be misleading to make such a suggestion for rhetorical or any other purpose. The nature of and the emphasis on each activity may need to be commented on, but the principle is established. Both Reimer and Elliott would claim to be fully vindicated, in their own regard, in relation to this basic feature of the intrinsic interrelationship of music-making and listening, without positing their necessary coalescence in a single agent.

Both scholars attempt to produce a universal philosophy of music and it is here that the difficulties they encountered reveal themselves as implacable taskmasters in dictating the final form of each putative philosophy. It is interesting to speculate here whether composing, performing and listening (or simply making and appraising) were separately confronted by the authors as potentially fertile starting points for the fabrication of a universal philosophy of music education. Certainly the results seem to confirm some such search for a dominating premise, as indeed they also bring into focus their polarities, since they, characteristically, choose different routes.

Reimer presumably started from his own aesthetic ideal of listening (with implied performance). As already commented on (Amsterdam ISME lecture, 1996; MEND 401), he invaginated his Absolute Expressionism in a Referential definition. He allowed for Formalism, paid lip service to Praxialism without in any way justifying it as a special categorization (in spite of the current disproportionate attention being given to it) apart from its separation from music as product and its basis in music as process. He gradually enlarged his matrix with reference to the extrinsic (anti-aesthetic/functional) benefits of music in education and finally introduced the social/political and historical/cultural contexts which affect the way music can be thought of.

Reimer had already included multiculturalism as a value held in common, though this may be questionable in the context of its appearing as a response to political correctness in very recent years (a definition as to what multiculturalism means or actually entails is also called for). He leaves no doubt as to the incompatibilities between many of the stances in his matrix and the need for reconciliation 'to clarify what it is we hold in common at the level of our deepest values and fundamental beliefs'. Left with an amorphous array of humanistic influences he then attempts to relate these, by reference to the

performing oneself, which, after all, is fully validated as a cognitive act (in a purely craft sense) too? If the optimum way of gaining access to music is through activity (something one does [Elliott]) and if listening is an activity (which it certainly is), is it so naïve to suggest that the best way to learn how to listen is to 'concentrate while hearing' or to 'listen while listening' (!) in the same way as one listens while conducting, while

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work of the cultural anthropologist Robert Plant Armstrong, to the nature and value of human experience - to the 'beingness or phenomenality' which every culture provides for its members. With terminology which echoes the writings of Hanslick (sonic form - 'Tönend bewegten Formen') and Langer (consciousness charged with feeling) Reimer tries to transcend the idea of music simply as communicating object or function or symbol. He presents it, rather, not as a universal, characteristic yet unvarying affect, but as capable of first incarnating each culture's 'affective consciousness', celebrating it in all its particularity and separateness while transforming its experiences and values into sharable embodiments.

'The dimensions of form, practice, reference, and context [Reimer's four stances] are seen through his [Armstrong's] vision to be inseparable components of music, in what music is, what it does, and how it serves the deepest of human needs'.⁷⁶ This peroration is less convincing than the more objective philosophical mosaic which Reimer so carefully defines, simply because it descends, however eloquently, into the metaphysical; it is, withal, elegant, and invokes music as art⁷⁷, a criterion which assumes crucial significance as this analysis seeks to isolate irreducibles. Reimer cautiously relinquishes the *sui generis* ('Music means itself' [Hanslick]) qualities of music in order that it might be all things to all humanity. This is a more politically correct approach but one that he is obviously fearful about, lest it degenerate into a kind of musical anarchy which validates indiscriminately; this caution is admirable without being ungenerous.

David Elliott's stance (for he, too, is undoubtedly attempting to define a universal philosophy of music education) may appear, at first sight, to be altogether more robust. His *carte blanche* approach is made possible by two radical shifts which virtually deconstruct prevailing ideologies. One could imagine Elliott being happy with what Reimer, quoting Danto [1964], describes as music being 'whatever a culture's institutional policy-makers decide to call music', and ministering to that. He is mainly concerned with music as faculty, activity⁷⁸ and process. Although he is an expressionist (his choice of

performing, and so on?

⁷⁶ Bennett Reimer, *Should there be a Universal Philosophy of Music Education?* (Music Education, ISME Number 29, 1997), 19-20. [MEND 401, 11].

⁷⁷ The suggestion is made in this thesis that the idea of 'music as art' is seldom disavowed in educational terms and is therefore a useful consensus view. Art and the aesthetic are cognate, although the latter term is generally avoided because of misunderstandings (as to its truly non-threatening nature) and therefore in the interests of political correctness. The acceptance of music as art does, however, heighten the responsibility to use valuing and judgement towards the goal of quality in repertoire. This is non-discriminatory and does not confirm a hierarchy in which western art music, even in western societies, enjoys privilege.

⁷⁸ The use of the word *activity* is arguably redundant here. In this thesis the author makes claims about the universality of music as 'faculty and experience', suggesting the roles of music makers (composers and performers) and listeners (though listening is, in the author's view, also a vicarious music-making function, the vicarious idea being to stress the coalescence of the three modes). *Activity* came to mind as a generic term that suggests the holistic experience which is at once cognitive, affective and psychomotor. See 5.5.3 (the Reimer criticisms of Elliott's proposals, where a case is made for the bodily (psychomotor) involvement of listeners (quotation Judy Lochhead)).

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terminology confirms this), he rejects Absolute Expressionism, as a paradox, simply by denying, by default, the subtle differences between emotion and feeling; and all the extrinsic benefits of music (self-growth, optimal experience, social skills acquisition, discipline, etc.) are validated without question, provided they conform to his basic premise of activity-based learning - curriculum-as-practicum. And all of this is acceptable as a basic stance.

The other obstacle to a panacea universal philosophy of music education would be any hint of hierarchy between musical cultures; this David Elliott rejects out of hand. While this view does not invalidate his philosophy, it does serve to emancipate it as highly adaptable and attractive in dealing with multicultural education; Elliott is a committed multiculturalist. It appears that this claim by Elliott has stimulated a great deal of honest disagreement, judging by the fact that virtually every document that has come from Elliott's pen in relation to his philosophy has dealt with the subject (and in the same way), seeking to justify his stance (see Elliott *Music Matters* but also MEND 208 [both versions] and his responses to both Reimer and White [MEND 416 and 417 respectively]).

This is what Elliott has to say: '... it would be foolish to say that any one music-culture was "better" than another. Why? Because such a judgement is based on criteria from inside a single music culture. To call another music-culture's music "primitive" imposes one's own standards on a group that does not recognize them (Slobin and Todd). But while no one Music is innately superior to any other, some musical practices may be educationally more appropriate than others. In other words, music education does not occur in a vacuum, but rather in relation to a variety of constraints - practical, social, cultural, ideological, political, and so on. Chief among these is the practical problem of curricular time. There is simply not enough time to teach all the world's Musics to all children. Thus, difficult choices must be made.'⁷⁹ There is much food for thought in Elliott's words.

Elliott suggests criteria for attempting to establish musical hierarchy (but see also Reimer *A Philosophy*, 1970, p 103), only to claim the absurdity of each one. However, he fails to consider the possibility of evaluating the relative merits of two cultures by one skilled in the practices of both. (See Ó Súilleabháin's remarks on this subject where he refers to a growing number of bi-cultural scholars [MEND Document 120]). The influence of taste and prejudice is still, of course, a problem, but the exercise of evaluating between cultures is not to be discredited; it is an eminently possible scholarly pursuit and discipline which is highly desirable in certain circumstances. For Elliott to claim that 'no one Music [not even Western European art music (!), for that is the implication; let us be at least as honest as Harry White is - writer's insertion] is innately superior to any other' is a *non sequitur*, in the context of a denial that there are ways of establishing this within the normal processes of valuing and

⁷⁹ Elliott, *MM*, 210.

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judgement, without which there really is a kind of anarchy. The use of the word *innately* does, however, soften the tone and should temper the possible thrust of any challenge to his assertion.

As I have argued elsewhere (see review of Harry White - MEND 308 and MEND Report Section 18.1), there seems to be little objection to intra-cultural evaluations, but the idea of differences between cultures seems always to touch a nerve centre. Are some Musics, by inference, so fragile that they need the protection of such an arrogant agenda? The claims of some multiculturalists in this regard are unworthy. There should be no problem with parity of esteem (see Santos, MEND 207), nor should the claim of the multiculturalists for curricular time be disavowed, but to imply the equality of all Musics, from any stance, is surely not the strongest of arguments to put forward, if indeed the argument is necessary in the first place (see White [MEND 308] and the Reimer response [MEND 402] to the same for interesting views on this debate), as Elliott seems to think it is.

Nowhere else does Elliott directly try to shackle the powers of judgement, which are quintessential to the education process in any case; he speaks freely of valuing and selection, which are implicit in his statement that ‘some musical practices may be educationally more appropriate than others’. But judgement must be invoked in choosing the best materials. It seems inconsistent to suggest that the powers of judgement may be used provided they are not used to arbitrate *between* cultures in certain circumstances. If it is impossible to judge the relative merit of another culture how then are outsiders, by definition, empowered to judge its products in an intra-cultural sense, in the first place, and isn’t this privilege against the powers of judgement an affront to the capability of any culture to be self-justifying?

The writer has to admit bewilderment and honest frustration at this central tenet of David Elliott’s line of argument, which just does not make sense. And it is not fully congruent with the more subtle tones of the other multiculturalists at MEND (Patricia Shehan Campbell, Ramon Santos, Mel Mercier, Hormoz Farhat in particular). It seems that this moot point is still insufficiently clarified in multicultural dialectic to form, so prematurely, such a defining role in a universal philosophy of music education. It would seem almost preferable to make it clear that, while all musical cultures may not be equally developed, they are all entitled to parity of esteem in a humanistic sense and to special ascendancy in context. ‘When such recognition is withheld, or dishonest, the consequences can be grave. ... [it] can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being’.⁸⁰ There must be some way to take the tension out of this sophistry.

⁸⁰ Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and ‘The Politics of Recognition*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) 25. Quoted by Elliott in his paper (MEND 208).

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As to the results of these two attempts to define a universal philosophy of music, it appears that here, too, the world community is still in an evolving state. Bennett Reimer admits that there are differences in ideology to be addressed and enumerates them in what is a very helpful exposé. It should be recorded that his lecture attracted a capacity audience at the ISME Conference in 1996, surely indicative of the way the world, with some justification, looks to him as doyen for guidelines in the search for this utopian model. David Elliott's gratuitous efforts (for it is the writer who has proposed, in these pages, Elliott's New Philosophy as a candidate for universality) seem flawed or incomplete. First he rejects some philosophical stances as untenable while ignoring the existence of other divisions (intrinsic/extrinsic); secondly, the generally assumed inference to be taken from his writings - 'that no one Music is innately superior to any other' - seems too sweeping, controversial and eccentric to the middle ground of multi-cultural thinking that it raises more questions than he may think he has answered.

But it is time to proceed to a further detailed appraisal of David Elliott's own philosophical stance which, it can be predicted from copious preparatory reading, is rich in positive elements and applicable ideology, and is eminently worthy of the world's appraisal. Since an evaluation has already been carried out (post MEND II [MEND 603]) what it is intended to do at this post-MEND III stage is to extract the most persuasive arguments and to set these against both the negative aspects (as identified) that seem to be counterproductive and against the emerging findings of MEND itself.

It is a factor worth noting that Elliott is a former student of Bennett Reimer, a fact he acknowledged significantly when he said that 'I would not have been able to do what I did if Professor Reimer had not done what he did'. In this sense he casts himself in the role of taking 'the ideas of the past and weighing them'. His central premise is that music is a matter of actions and sounds - hardly a definition but an acceptable opening gambit. He also confirms his belief in the inseparability of product and process when considering music (or musicing as he calls the activity) and in the context (relevance to time and place) of what happens. Listening is described as a constructive cognitive activity, but a covert one. He fashions a matrix of musician, listener and context and claims that this set, or musical practice, represents what is universal in music. He goes on to map out the nature of knowledge involved in musical practices. He invokes the literature of cognitive science, cognitive psychology and philosophy of mind to define musical understanding as the possession of musicianship, which always includes listenership. It should also be noted that Elliott's personal readings seem, from his bibliography, to have been comprehensive and he is blessed with a command of language that is impressive, even if it occasionally leads him into ambiguity; there is sometimes a rather forbidding reconditeness.

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Elliott places great importance on music-making as the central activity or practice, appending listenership to each practice (performing, improvising, composing, arranging, conducting) in a series of linked pairs. It is significant that listenership on its own, while it is not disavowed (it is dealt with comprehensively in Elliott's book, though less so in the MEND lecture, opening up the possibility for misunderstanding as to its importance), is played down. This is a stance that must, of course, be challenged. Elliott, in championing 'musicing' (action) believes that Descartes is misleading in suggesting that thought is essentially verbal. He proceeds to enumerate five kinds of knowledge (thought in action) which are used in music as an activity, only one of which (formal) is verbally based. The first and most important is *procedural*, which may be informed by *formal* (verbal) knowledge but goes far beyond it. The writer has to comment that he finds Elliott's downgrading of knowledge-base in favour of action knowledge, without a context (or by using an arguably spurious one - skier/surgeon) is less than convincing; he has a point but it is too facile. The other kinds of knowledge that Elliott enumerates are *informal* (drawn from experience) *impressionistic* (or intuitive) and *supervisory*.

Although these are, as Elliott himself admits, artificially separated for consideration, it is arguable that they might all be classified as being experience-determined but are a plausible set, however theoretical in concept, as useful in musical activity (and Elliott convincingly presents them so). What is difficult to reconcile is why he is so insistent that the listening process can virtually never be separable from the musicing activities themselves (although there is grudging reference later on, based on a quotation from Gardner, to having the rest of one's life to listen, whereas the younger years should be given over to the overt 'skills'). It is relevant to record here that, when asked about the need for skill acquisition to advance in performing, Elliott remarked that 'skill is not a word in his vocabulary'.⁸¹ This is a crucial consideration in the final analysis of his position. He seems reluctant to accept that a performance-based curriculum cannot ignore the time demands⁸² of skill-acquisition if it is to operate at the kind of levels that are occasionally very explicit in the Elliott literature.

⁸¹ The context of the discussion with Elliott (on the campus of UNT, Denton, Texas in 1995) was the need for objective physical skills (painstakingly acquired) for the successful communication of musical ideas through instrumental performance. The author had no other option but to assume that Elliott understood the inference and was perhaps in denial in relation to the threat it posed to the successful implementation of a performance-intensive curriculum on a limited time basis. Fundamentally this is the source of the author's scepticism about the practicability of Elliott's method, whatever about its idealism.

⁸² This thesis enquires as to what is achievable through equal increments of time. In terms of the inculcation of a value system in relation to active appreciation of music as a life force, the options are between listening, performance or a balanced exposure to both with the limitation imposed by non-reliance on imported skills. The 'performance only' approach, imputed by Reimer to Elliott, even if it were the preferred method, would be heavily reliant on inordinate amounts of homework to reach the level of proficient skill to be satisfactory. It would be an imposition on those who should have the option to comply or not, on the basis of balance of time in their overall curricular options. In the author's view, the only democratic way forward is to treat performance as a specialization. And there are the additional complications that performance tuition may not be available in the

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Elliott goes on to stress the importance of valuing and judgement (see above). ‘There are no criteria that apply to all musical practices’; so says Elliott. As already stated, an implied inability to judge across musical practices would be the single greatest inhibitor to the progress of multiculturalism. And it calls into question the sincerity in following his advice that ‘engaged with excellent musical works within musical practices, we have an educational responsibility to teach as many musical practices as reasonable’. How can the excellence of musical works be decided on if ‘there are no criteria that apply to all musical practices’, unless it is taken by prescription and on trust from culture bearers; and Elliott is not enthusiastic about prescription, always favouring the independent judgement of teachers (see *Music Matters* p 246). Elliott recommends, in curriculum building, ‘a very careful choice of musical practices and then find the best examples of those practices and develop musicianship in relation to that. Music education is the development of musicianship in balanced relation to excellent musical works’. The advice is sound but the method is compromised. And there is another practical contradiction implied in his suggestion that ‘if your time [as a teacher] is short, music education should dominantly be involved in performing, which always involves listening. ...[If] we want to help create ... excellent listeners ... do it ...[D]ominantly through making, through action, and then through performing, because in that situation you can get a lot done in terms of targeting intention.’ To develop musicianship through performing must assume the acquisition of a certain level of technical competence, which in itself is a slow and time-consuming process. The writer has genuine difficulty with this piece of unguarded advice also.

In the hard-copy (formal) version of Elliott’s paper (MEND 208a) there is a great deal of further valuable information which, though not all (in the writer’s view) consistently argued, is applicable to the Irish context. Fundamentally he is presenting a philosophy which he defines as ‘a critically reasoned set of beliefs about the nature and value of music education’, with the rider that ‘of course, no philosophy can be perfectly applicable to all practical situations.’ The general principles of any philosophy must be queried ‘in relation to national, local and daily concerns’. This is to stress the contextuality of philosophy, a criterion which will later severely test the Elliott version. And Elliott himself is the strongest advocate of this bringing to bear of critical intelligence by evoking ‘judgement and not rote obedience’ (Entwistle 1982).

According to Elliott, music, by definition, is intentional human action. ‘Fundamentally music is something that people do’. Again Elliott defines the practice as comprising a doer, a product, the activity and a context. In fairness to Elliott, note the inclusion of both product and process (activity) in the set, as this was subsequently challenged in one of the peer group reviews, as one of Elliott’s

school (typical for Ireland and serving to classify imported skills as elitist) and the students may not have the instruments to practise on at home.

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omissions. Furthermore he also stresses the importance of listening as a force which binds musicers, musicing and musical products together. The interlocking pair of intentional human actions - making and listening - he calls a musical practice; there are thousands of Musics, or musical practices, each with a specific style. The practitioners of a Music, classified at competent, proficient and expert levels (interesting that there is no mention of a lower category of performing [beginner] at this stage), construct, transform, judge and interpret the emotional expressiveness - and so on. Elliott is punctilious in defining listening as cognition (minding) which processes “information” that arises in consciousness through interactions between, (i) our powers of attention, cognition, emotion, intention and memory, and (ii) the artistically created aural patterns we call a musical work. At this juncture in the paper, all (with the exceptions noted) is unexceptionable and succinctly laid out. It is in the process by which these actions (performing and listening) are carried out that Elliott begins to break new ground and to attract criticism.

Up to this point he is stressing the overt and covert construction characteristic of making and listening to music, the expression and impression of musical relationships. Again, he stresses that ‘there’s a direct and intimate relationship between music making and music listening’; this is also less than fairly conceded by his critics. It is only when he posits the inseparability of the two ‘actions’ (in other words when the action of listening ought not to be combined with the action of making by a different agent) that the theory becomes problematic for some, understandably so. This appears in the illogical jump by which Elliott claims that ‘the proof of my musicianship lies in the quality of my music making. ... to understand and assess that quality my evaluators (and other listeners) must possess a reasonable level of procedural competency in music performing themselves.’⁸³ This pre-justification for performing (composing *et al*) as the only means towards the acquisition of musicianship and listening skills is immediately challengeable on the grounds that the overwhelming majority of human beings are non-performers and presumably some (or many) of them are capable of listening and of judging intelligently. That is not to say that competence in performance will not assist and enhance their listening, but mandatory performance for all learners seems a rather drastic *modus operandi* to propose.

Elliott goes on, in this second document, to present again his five forms of knowledge - procedural, formal, informal, impressionistic and supervisory. In relation to informal knowledge there seems to be a suggestion that it cannot be taught (though this is later denied). ‘Music making and music listening are not simple matters of “habits, behaviours, routines and skills” ... and cannot be reduced to

⁸³ There is an interesting endorsement of this in Aristotle’s Politics Bk. VIII 1333b; 5-10. ‘Why cannot we attain true pleasure and form a correct judgement from hearing others, like the Lacedaemonians? - for they, without learning music, nevertheless can correctly judge, as they say, of good and bad melodies. . . .why should we learn ourselves instead of enjoying the performances of others?’ Ancient wisdom - but still arguable as to its

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verifiable methods that always work and that can always be expressed in words. ... The effectiveness of musicianship hinges on the critical selection and deployment of all forms of musical knowing'.⁸⁴ It thus seems that as many as four out of five of these knowings are empirically-based (this may very well be the strength of Elliott's proposals, in his own estimation). When it comes to formal knowledge, which of course he must include, Elliott's earlier concern to deconstruct if not to demolish Reimer's aesthetic education model is scarcely concealed when he so openly declares that 'music curriculum development ought not to take its direction from verbal concepts, not from so-called "aesthetic qualities", and not from recordings.' This *bête noire* obsession with MEAE frequently succeeds in destabilizing Elliott's logic. And this leads also to the putative aberration of Elliott's assertion that 'no musical practice or music-culture is innately better than any other'; this is clearly a question of informed judgement (which is possible) and is neither true nor false in relation to any pair of cultures, in the abstract. While Elliott's very logical, though not original, advice about choosing musical practices in education that conform, at first, to student's 'local' musical culture (see Shehan Campbell [MEND 305] and McCarthy [MEND 307]), he is not correct in assuming that for Irish children this would necessarily always include traditional music.⁸⁵

One must sympathize also with Elliott in his reference to time constraints in the curriculum while simultaneously recommending that "'music education" should be concerned with MUSIC in the broad sense (as opposed to just, say, one or two western "art music" practices, or just jazz practices and so on)'. It is admirable that he eventually comes down on the side of limitation. 'In short, musical breadth is not necessarily a virtue. Accordingly, when time and resources are limited, this praxial philosophy supports an emphasis on musical depth over breadth'. But he should not be so (frankly) astonished to hear an Irish music educator hesitate about the central (and rightful) place of Irish traditional music practices in Irish music education.

The distinct impression results from Elliott's incontinent attack on aesthetic education that he believes that to leave it with any vestige of credibility would threaten his own; and Reimer's provoked retaliation in his review of Elliott's book, *Music Matters*, is similarly barbed, unnecessarily diminishing *its* dependability. It appears that each has felt the tip of the other's weaponry. It is difficult to resist a negative reaction to both as read. To suggest pejoratively that listening to recordings is considered to be the proper focus for general music programmes is overstating and distorting the

Epicurean propriety.

⁸⁴ The works of Langer (*Feeling and Form, Philosophy in a New Key, et al*) and Collingwood (*Principles of Art*) engage this issue of the difference between craft and art in the context of selection.

⁸⁵ In fact, in Ireland, not surprisingly, the hierarchy in this respect might show a dominance of western popular styles followed, as poor contenders, by Irish traditional music and western art music. This, of course is one of the problems of contemporary music education - the question of the relevance of educational repertoire to life as lived by the majority.

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MEAE case, as if there is no intrinsic pleasure to be derived from listening as an activity. This is just an unacceptable premise and is an insult to the skills of teachers who may use that mode of listening as part of their teaching schemes.

It must be remembered, as has already been copiously discussed, that the MEAE system was responding to a situation which had to be assumed to have been already totally denuded of those with any interest in performing. It is true that perhaps it should have attempted to change that situation (as the US National Standards are now trying to do) but the power of tradition and the jealous guardianship of state-to-state autonomy in the US would have been formidable obstacles to have challenged with a subject so precarious in its prospects at the time, as the history (see Straub [MEND 205] and Lehman [MEND 303]) copiously illustrates. Elliott makes no mention of or allowance for this severely restricting dilemma. And the ineluctable implication of his quotation from Peter Kivy that ‘to have Beethoven’s Third Symphony in one’s blood and bones’ one must participate in the performance as a proof that ‘to play is a necessary part of musical literacy’ is to place the pleasure forever beyond virtually 100% of the population. This is intolerably elitist, if not ridiculous and unacceptable. *Tout court*, both Reimer and Elliott (but the latter is really more culpable) should realize that to convince their peers they will not advance their philosophies one whit by this kind of banal hyperbolic overstatement or quotation out of context.

Elliott’s admirably logical progress from the nature of music, musicianship and knowledge, and musical practices - to values and aims, has a convincing sequence. He suggests that approaches to music education based on his praxial philosophy, as prescriptively excluding other approaches (especially that of having any truck with the principles of MEAE) produce the ‘life values’ of self-growth, self-knowledge, enjoyment (or optimal experience) and self-esteem. This is because the two necessary conditions exist: (i) multidimensional cognitive-affective challenges (i.e. musical works) and (ii) the knowledge (i.e. musicianship) required to meet these challenges. His failure to mention the psychomotor element is, in the writer’s view, significant. His explanation of how the matching of musical knowledge to musical challenge can produce musical enjoyment and ‘flow’ (and this is well illustrated in his book - see p 132) is very convincing and attractive, if it did not have this hidden agenda of exclusivity about it. The end of this section (Values and Aims) is also laudably inexorable in the way it leads to ideas of performing (the writer nevertheless feels that the parenthetical nature of listening is problematic) propelling upwards to higher levels of complexity, to preserving a sense of community and self-identity and to an important form of multicultural education.

The writer has two concerns here. There is reference to Gardner’s advice as to the importance of ‘continuing involvement in the arts as reflective practitioners. There will be time enough in university,

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and beyond, for more “distanced” forms of artistic appreciation to become dominant’. And Elliott himself adds ‘that students have the rest of their lives to sit quietly and listen to recordings after schooling is over’. It appears that the importance of listening alone is not in question, but it is ostracized (to use Harry White’s reproachful word) because of its distorted connection to the MEAE mentality, quite apart from the facile abdication that is implied - that listening alone need not be taught. And Csikszentmihalyi (admired and regularly quoted by Elliott) downgrades listening on the grounds of its being insufficiently challenging and complex in relation to performing and interpreting – surely, in itself, a very judgemental appraisal of how the majority of listeners function, and very unflattering to the true nature and immanent complexity of informed listening.

The above stances are bold in statement but are potentially very vulnerable, being consciously exclusivist. The problem with listening may be that it is not taught well, but how much more could this be problematic in the more daunting challenge of teaching combined performing and listening (a notoriously demanding task for both teacher and learner - a phenomenon in which the writer has had copious experience ... and the problem is even severe with the very talented). The concern here is that Elliott’s philosophy in action, viewed at this culminatory stage of his presentation, seems to presuppose music school students and not general music students, judging by the inferred complexities of the activities involved and, especially, the time constraints. When there is reference to a music curriculum for Ireland including broadly based practices reflective of pluralism; engaging in the multidimensional nature of MUSIC as a reflective, artistic and social practice; production (performance) at the centre of the artistic experience; the absorption of musicianship at five levels of knowledge (all of which can and should be taught and learned, according to Elliott); *comprehensive* understandings of the musical works being interpreted and performed and/or improvised; formulating musical expressions of emotions, musical representations of people, places and things, and musical expressions of cultural-ideological meanings; self-examination and the personal reconstruction of relationships, assumptions and preferences ... this agenda, while admirably idealistic, seems out of touch with what Irish (and I suspect many other) educators would see as feasible in the time available.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ It is a ‘Devil’s Advocate’ argument to suggest that time is as much a constraint for a Reimer as for an Elliott approach to general music education. The claim is belied by the very nature of popular involvement in music, which is so overwhelmingly through listening that it rather proves the point that familiarity with and musical enjoyment of a piece of music are most immediate through listening, for equal increments of time. Again, Reimer’s definition of the performance mode of engagement with music mentions a minuscule repertoire painstakingly acquired, with the appropriate personal compensations and gratification. (See ‘Performing as the Basis for Music Education’ [MEND 403, 8-10] for an exposé of this topic). It is not just the *a priori* time in acquiring technical skills that is in question; the sheer physical burden of familiarizing oneself with repertoire through performing is obviously far greater than in the listening mode.

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Yet the idealism in Elliott's vision is attractive. Were there not constant evidence of a 'queen bee' attitude to listening alone as an activity (threatening to his stance) to be cultivated and duly honoured without in any way threatening the importance of performance, the philosophy would be commendable in circumstances where the time to match musicianship and challenges at *technical* levels could also be made available. But perhaps the idea of teaching through action alone is so deeply implanted as the cornerstone of Elliott's philosophy that it really is intractable and cannot compromise.

Reading the conclusion (summary) alone of David Elliott's paper (*Music Education, Music Performance, and the Irish Music Educator*) gives a very clear view of his obvious idealism; few of the objections that arise come easily to mind. The aims of self-growth, self-knowledge and musical enjoyment leading to self-esteem and self-identity are not just unexceptionable, but are highly desirable end products of music education. The idea of close approximations to real musical practices, if they were expanded to include listening alone as another fully constituted *action* responding to the five kinds of knowledge, could not but be ideal for optimum teaching and learning experiences.

Musicianship as the embodiment of the five ways of knowing and as capable of objective acquisition - and applicable to all - is also an idealistic concept that is worthy of support. The slogan that 'the best music curriculum for the best students is the best curriculum for all students' is worthy of approval, provided the learning situation has the flexibility to accommodate different levels of sophistication in balancing musicianship to musical challenges. But ... the separation of performing and non-performing streams - the time honoured reality of American high school music education - is an equally worthy and pragmatic approach; volitional specialization as against general study, as options, need not negate Elliott's ideas of the best curriculum.

The development of 'the capacity in students to adopt different stances toward a work, among them the stances of audience member, critic, performer and maker' is idealistic too, but it seems that the Elliott (and Gardner)⁸⁷ philosophy is not taking a literal reading of its own advice. And the implication that works can only be absorbed through a student's involvement in the actual performance (which must be minimal, and restricted in any case, by definition, to one of the many streams in, say, an orchestral work - and by technical shortcomings as well) is not only idealistic to the point of being ridiculous, but is not even true to the criterion of 'as close an approximation of real musical practices' which the multi-billion music industry evidences in the sale of CDs which are bought typically for the joy of non-participative listening. The disclaimer - 'in support of artistic listening-in-context, carefully

⁸⁷ Elliott relies heavily on Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. The appropriate references are given in the List of Sources.

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selected recordings are introduced parenthetically: in direct relation to the musical practices the students are being introduced into.

Similarly, formal musical knowledge is filtered into the continuous stream of authentic music making and listening as needed' is an amusing example of how Elliott regularly feels himself obliged to placate, or even to exorcise, the ghost of MEAE which benignly stalks him. The training of young musicians as apprentice musical practitioners is good, as is the standard teaching practice of directing listening to the music being made by students themselves, provided this is done within the discipline and moderation of a balanced curriculum. And this is hardly served by an almost exclusive involvement in performing (or any of Elliott's other parenthetical activities), which provides only for a severely limited *repertoire* of listening. Admirable though those experiences are in context, they are not sufficient.⁸⁸

The biggest problem in the application of Elliott's philosophy is the way he upturns the idea of music specialism which, whatever about the theory of how the American system is working, is certainly dear to the heart of the American public as an exclusively performance-centred concept. And balance this against Harry White's reference to 'the small measure of general music education that is available to Irish children'. It appears that Elliott would replace these input extremes with a master race of expert teachers; and his idealism again must be admired, however lacking in realism.

The competent music educator requires two forms of knowledge: musicianship and educatorship. One without the other is insufficient. To teach music effectively, a teacher must possess, embody and exemplify musicianship. This is how children develop musicianship themselves; not through telling, but through their actions, transactions and interactions with musically proficient and expert teachers: 'it is imperative to have a cadre of teachers who themselves "embody" the knowledge that they are expected to teach.' (Gardner). In other words, musical standards in teachers beget musical standards in students. ... novice music teachers require music education professors who can model musicianship and educatorship through their own vivid examples.

In Ireland this ideal is negated by the student-centred⁸⁹ system in primary schools which could not accommodate a performance-centred curriculum (of the Elliott intensity) at present. And secondary education⁹⁰, while it is changing, is currently embroiled in a low quality performance mode which is a

⁸⁸ The problem seen in Elliott's preferred mode of listening is that it must always be coupled with another activity (such as performing, improvising, etc.). Reimer states categorically (and the author concurs) that listening is an activity in its own right. This is the core of the difference, between the two philosophers, that is being analysed.

⁸⁹ Student-centred education, in the Irish context, means that the (typically musically unsophisticated) classroom teacher in primary schools is responsible for all subjects. This is in contrast to the subject-centred approach in secondary schools where there *is* teacher specialization.

⁹⁰ Secondary school music, which now includes a performance option (varying from the acceptability of a very rudimentary [and perhaps school-based] competence to highly sophisticated imported proficiency [with negligible discrimination between the standards achieved in terms of results posted]) is a subject-centred

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far cry from the idealism of Elliott, even if it were to parallel or shadow it. The regenerative quality of the education procedures, as envisaged by Elliott, are thus just not in place. In the US it is to be feared that the drastic changes in attitudes and mentality which would bring both academic teachers and practitioners into line with the musicianship approach of Elliott, highly desirable as much of it is in principle, are still to be negotiated.

David Elliott's *Music Matters*, and the material generated from it, break new ground in music education philosophy. His thoughts are presented in language that is compelling for those who take the time to immerse themselves in its complexity. The thrust of his arguments has been blunted severely (and, subconsciously, almost called into question) by an approach which seeks to discredit, if not to demolish, much earlier highly respected scholarship - and not just that of Bennett Reimer. This has tended to produce a secondary corpus of parenthetical method (the listening programme copiously discussed above is an example) which grudgingly acknowledges the discounted value of what he rejects. It has also made him, himself, particularly sensitive to criticism (of which he has had his share), evidenced by his frequent claims that he is being misunderstood. Yet the philosophy is fresh, original and provocative; but, as yet, it lacks a successful track record. Elliott's philosophy is modern in that it poses, directly or by inference, many if not most of the questions by which contemporary music education is beset:

1. Is it high time to superannuate the exquisite theories of the Absolute Expressionists, and the aesthetic ideal, as failing to touch the majority in their engagement with music of all kinds? Is music as product finally to be recognized as only a part, albeit an important one, in the totality of musical discourse?
2. How are music educators going to deal at last with the nature of performance and how are they going to reconcile the notion within the constraints of curricular time and skill acquisition? The question is raised by Elliott's own theory of the centrality of performance (action) in education. How are the separate needs of amateur and nascent professional performance to be met in music education?
3. Are the processes of music-making unique as forms of knowledge (and cognitive skill) and how does this impinge on the importance of music in the curriculum?
4. How are music educators to cope with the promise of multiculturalism - again within the constraints of curricular time? How is multiculturalism to be defined? Is the claim of the

activity, in that it is taught by specialist teachers, though these are typically non-performers. It was formerly very academic in content with two streams (performing and general syllabi). The curricular revision of the 1990s has resulted in higher uptake (one of the intentions of the curricular reform) but a lowering of academic standard and greatly rationalized (downwards) performing standards, again to accommodate the mediocre (competent in American terms?) performers.

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equality of all Musics sustainable and by what definition? How is the position of western art music to be sustained democratically in education without blunting the benefits of its pedagogical content and methodology through partial neglect? How is the high/mass culture dichotomy to be broken down in education and how can formal education bridge the gap and relate more effectively to the community?

5. How are the standards of valuing and judgement to be set in the future? Does musical taste have a legitimate place in curricular development?
6. How is the function of listening to be defined in modern music education?
7. How will the nature of and the training for music educatorship change with new approaches?

The writer's view is that Elliott's broadside into a complacent music education philosophical field will generate a great deal of new thinking and may yet rescue the profession from the doldrums of its chronic failures⁹¹ and galvanize it into an action that will find new solutions to ongoing problems. They may not always be congruent with Elliott's current ideas, but his intrepid interventions will play no small part in a new dispensation which reflects the ideals of a new millennium.

The Elliott book, *Music Matters*, has been extensively reviewed. Footnote 11 (*qv*) gives a list of reviewers, whose writings give a flavour as to how *MM* was greeted by the profession. They, in turn, are reviewed in Section 18.1.1 of the MEND Report. By far the most extensive review is that of David Aspin (MEND 415), reprinted with ISME permission.

5.5 The Reimer/Elliott Documentation

Review/Rebuttal on *Music Matters* - Bennett Reimer's Response: David Elliott's "New" Philosophy of Music Education; Music for Performers Only and the Elliott Rebuttal of Reimer's Response: Continuing Matters: Myths, Realities, Rejoinders

In the field of contemporary writing on the philosophy of music education, there is arguably no more significant pair of complementary papers than the two which are listed for review in the above heading. As has been mentioned, Bennett Reimer's classic - *A Philosophy of Music Education* - has

⁹¹ The failure to normalize the conceptual confusion about the nature of performance and to ensure that performers are mandatorily trained in musicianship is a case in point, as is the failure to bridge the gap between popular forms and high art, except as a concession to 'student power'. Elliott's attitudes to these problems, while hardly orthodox, are nevertheless provocative and invite reappraisal. In this sense they are an antidote to

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not just profoundly influenced more than a generation of music educators; there is compelling validity in the claim that, as far as North America is concerned, there has been virtually no other, for a quarter of a century, of sufficient weight and concentration to rival it. But once one has penetrated beyond the arguably pretentious sub-title - *A New Philosophy of Music Education* - of David Elliott's 1995 book - *Music Matters* - one realizes, from its length and the elaborate treatment of the subject matter alone, that here is a serious challenge. *New* is not a value-free term; it predicates the old and outmoded. One doesn't just feel this sense; one is made keenly aware of it from the very direct approach of the writer and the openly-stated commitment to superannuating the earlier Reimer work, not just on a variety of details but in absolute terms as to its very essence.

From the outset it must be admitted that a philosopher who essays the levelling of a rationale of such globally recognized stature, in such unequivocal terms, and with such unmitigated and relentless attempts at deconstruction, must be intrepid, passionately convinced of his counterposition and superlatively informed in the area in question. David Elliott, acknowledging himself as a scion of Reimer, is all of these things. It is important to realize this relationship, since it singles out Elliott as perhaps the obvious protagonist to mount a challenge to a philosophy that he may be assumed to be familiar with in its finest detail.

The nature of his dissent is, however, so total and unalloyed as to border on the melodramatic. As might easily have been predicted, Bennett Reimer, nearing the official end of a long and illustrious career, and vulnerable as to the timing of Elliott's attack (for that is what it was), reacted with perhaps less equilibrium and circumspection than is usual in his writings. Emotion can cloud judgement, to the benefit of one's adversaries. It is arguable, in hindsight, that Reimer would have been prudent not to have accepted the editor's invitation to review Elliott's book. That was not indeed because he lacked the skills to do so, but simply because it was a veritable snare, with all the trappings of a supremely logical choice of invitee; it was also because the world of music education would stand by with bated breath to witness this titanic clash, in which Elliott's anticipated rebuttal, as the grand finale, would be given the last word, so to speak. The exercise was, of course, productive in many senses. It enabled these two opponents to work off their mutual repugnance, albeit in the full spotlight of the world stage and in a manner that is difficult to present in analysis as having been at a level of detachment that one might look for in scholarly criticism. It served, too, to place side-by-side the essences of both philosophies, most particularly as to their perceived incompatibilities.

Claim and counterclaim, thesis and antithesis, denial and rebuttal and selective quotation of varying degrees of ambiguity and ethical gravity - all of these appear and even abound in both essays, each

complacency.

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running to considerable length. It becomes very obvious from the outset that they were, and still are, a necessary part of the launch of Elliott's philosophy on the world of music education. They are, in fact, indispensable to one another. Without a thorough reading and understanding of Reimer's *A Philosophy of Music Education*, and its fall-out in terms of moulding the 'intended' curriculum (notably MEAE from the 1970s on) for American music education in recent decades, it is difficult fully to appreciate the cut and thrust of this contest for credibility.

One thing is certain. Without Reimer's philosophy, whether accepted or not by the reader, the substance of Elliott's would lose much of its point. It is an antithesis on an epic scale, so much so that one wonders, if the wealth of disparagement and the constant self-assessment (and self-aggrandizement) by a Reimer yardstick were to be expurgated, what, of substance, would remain. Indeed, one wonders whether Elliott, bereft of a *bête noire*, would have put forward quite the same theories and in the same way. The writer believes that this attempted analysis is crucial to the derivation of a contextual philosophy for the Irish case. As it is expected to be long and involved, drawing, for the reader's benefit, in quick succession from both essays, rather than dealing with them separately, the following format is being adopted.

1. The Reimer claims for MEAE (Music Education as Aesthetic Education).
2. What is considered (by Reimer) to be admirable in the Elliott philosophy.
3. The Reimer criticisms of Elliott's proposals.
4. Elliott's rebuttals.
5. The writer's reading of what the realities of American music education are in relation to the claims and counter claims in the essays. It is critical that the potentially wide differences between the curriculum in its intended (published or theoretical), implemented, and attained (delivered) aspects be kept in mind. The writer is grateful to Professor Richard Colwell (MEND 209) for highlighting these necessary distinctions.
6. Rationalization.

Reimer's case is a strong one and is well argued, in a logical sequence, with admirable use of supporting quotations from his own and other germane writings, including those of Elliott, of course. It argues convincingly for MEAE as an enabler for the implementation of the aesthetic theory in music education. Superficially, at least on a first reading, it inveighs successfully against the praxial philosophy as defined by Elliott *but* there is one overriding caveat; the Reimer interpretation of what Elliott means must be accurate. If it is not (and there is ample scope for Elliott to proceed to further exegesis, especially in relation to his meaning of the performance/process bias) we will undoubtedly

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be left with a new understanding of Elliott's philosophy which may, paradoxically, emasculate it in terms of its difference and newness as an alternative to MEAE as (re)-defined by Reimer below. After all, the caveat must allow for both scholars to have the opportunity to clarify their intentions.

It must always be borne in mind, in examining the Reimer/Elliott writings, that both points of view are potentially compromised by the similarity of the generic approaches they unarguably adopt. Each has a philosophy to defend and each has one to deconstruct and disparage, simply because each represents a threat to the other. Why else would the Reimer review be so isolated by Elliott as worthy of such special treatment, a procedure not adopted in the case of any of the other reviews, including that of David Aspin (MEND 415), which seems, to the writer, to be potentially as damaging to *MM*, simply because it has the virtue of greater detachment. Although it is more evident in Elliott's essay, which unrelentingly maintains the antithetical stance of *MM*, there is a tendency for stark rejection by each of the other's point of view, giving the impression, at this stage of analysis, of total mutual polarization. There is little common ground admitted and weaknesses are identified and attacked as if they are unmoderated by redeeming features.

Nevertheless this 'dog-eats-dog' confrontation succeeds for the reader, as might be expected, in that the vulnerable aspects of both philosophies are gratuitously highlighted and scrutinized; this is helpful, too, for the analyst who is trying to preserve sufficient detachment to rationalize the points of view, as, indeed, seems eventually to be a real possibility, at least in some significant aspects. But there is no denying the fact that it was Elliott who fabricated this *mise-en-scène*. Although there is often a strong feeling that these two philosophies cannot coexist, if one were to allow oneself to be swayed one way or the other by the rhetoric of mutual exclusivity, it must, nevertheless, be unthinkable that they do not also have a considerable corpus of common ground. It is the writer's aim to search out this shared thread in pursuit of what Elliott himself describes as the eventual evolution of 'individual philosophy building', eclectically fashioned.

The emotional tone of both essays is evident in the choice of language. It is to be regretted that Bennett Reimer allowed himself to be goaded into a partial adoption of Elliott's abrasive style, which the latter adopted with renewed vigour in his rebuttal; in the event, and much to the displeasure of the reader (any reader) the result is to do no credit to either, on that score. Yet, each evinces impressive strengths and palpable weaknesses, in the writer's view.

5.5.1 The Reimer claims for MEAE (Music Education as Aesthetic Education)

1. 'Performance is an essential component of any vision of music education but it is simply insufficient to carry the entire weight of the music education enterprise at this point in history'.
2. MEAE is 'notably inclusive of all the ways that people engage themselves with music - listening, performing, improvising, composing, judging, analysing, describing, and understanding contexts and relations to other arts and other aspects of culture.'
3. A comprehensive musicianship movement grew up alongside with, and complementary to, the aesthetic movement. It is assumed here that the aesthetic movement itself is the body which, ostensibly, supports, and is attempting to implement the Reimer philosophy. The musicianship movement is therefore MEAE itself, or the application of the philosophy in the implementation of the curriculum.
4. The aesthetic idea is concerned with four dimensions of cognition, or musical 'knowing' - knowing *within*, knowing *how*, knowing *about* and knowing *why*.
5. Reimer constantly implies that the new national standards in the US (see Lehman, MEND 303) are synonymous with the intent of MEAE. Take for example the passage on page 7 (MEND 403): 'Students of every age deserve to be acquainted with the musical goods of their cultural inheritance, through singing and playing, ... through listening, through composing and improvising, ... and through learning about contexts'. This compares very well with the sense of the National Standards document (see Lehman, MEND 303).
6. 'In my view, performance is an essential component of general education in music as both an end, for the sheer sake of performing, and as a means, for what performance teaches about the music being studied.' It is uniquely a way of knowing, unavailable except by acting as an artist. Creating art (knowing *how*) is meaningful in and of itself, and adds an educative dimension to aesthetic meaning. In the performance elective it is performance itself that becomes the point, the purpose, and dominating involvement chosen by the student. This principle applies equally to all the other branches of elective musical involvement; they should be represented but not dominating in general music. Nor should the elective focusing on a particular musical engagement be allowed to be redundant within the overall scheme.
7. There must be a balance between general and specialized music (in this case performance), between experiencing and creating. General music has the entire world of music as its essential study material; it is *extensive* and *comprehensive*. Performance, on the other hand, has only a tiny percentage of the world's music as its essential study

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material but with each piece being experienced exhaustively; performance is *intensive* and *selective* in its approach to the art of music.

8. [G]eneral education must include performing, and performance electives must include learnings wider than the strictly performative dimension of playing and singing.
9. Reimer offers a theory to encompass the uniqueness of performance.
 - i) ‘The special nature of the performing act (in music as distinct form the other arts) is that it requires that ‘craftsmanship, sensitivity, imagination, and authenticity be brought to bear on the inherent expressive needs of a piece awaiting actualization. ... It is a double obligation - serving the music yet bringing it to life with individuality. ... People who are performers serve their art uniquely. Arts [*sic*] serves such people uniquely.’
 - ii) ‘Musical performance is a unique form of intelligence. In addition to giving sounds meaningful form, this form-giving is dependent on and springs from the skills of the knowing body ... the body as executive, in which *executive* is simultaneously noun and verb. Form and action, product and process, are inseparable in this conception. Mind and body, or thinking and doing, are also unified’. ‘Although the bodily movements are not in and of themselves the music ... the action of *making* the music is a powerful factor in the intimacy, or “self engagement”, we feel when listening to live performances.’

This useful definition of performance from the acknowledged architect of the aesthetic philosophy of music education is a far cry from the accusation levelled by Elliott at MEAE as condoning a reduction of performance to mere ‘sound producing’. (Note that a *definition of performance* has been highlighted by MEND as a quintessential prior clarification so that performance can be dovetailed meaningfully into all phases of music education.)

5.5.2 What is considered (by Reimer) to be admirable in the Elliott philosophy

1. Reimer accepts that scholarly specialists devoted to the essential task of probing fundamental questions as to the nature and purpose of music education will precipitate philosophical contention and debate, as in this case. The benefit will be in the form of enabling philosophers better to assimilate into their work more deeply understood reasons for their professional existence (and presumably to continue to clarify areas of current differences).

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2. Reimer draws attention and gives commendation to the fact that Elliott uses copious readings, and references to the literature of the subject, to strengthen his case. He does not equate this to mere borrowings (plagiarism), but believes it to be an enriching dimension of scholarly research.
3. Reimer commends Elliott's treatment of the parameters of performance (and listening), which he acknowledges, at its best, as being mindful and intelligent (confirmed also by other reviewers), but on the grounds that he is merely restating accepted wisdom. Reimer enumerates the characteristics of good performance, relating them to Elliott's forms of knowledge:
 - i) performers act with intention.
 - ii) they select, deploy, direct, adjust and judge as they act.
 - iii) their actions are specific to their particular practice.
 - iv) they practice before they perform.
 - v) their performance demonstrates understanding (procedural knowledge).
 - vi) the performance can be influenced by verbal understandings converted into actions (formal knowledge).
 - vii) 'savvy' (informal knowledge) affects what performers do and the way they think.
 - viii) intuition (impressionistic knowledge) guides the performer to what is appropriate.
 - ix) performers monitor what they do (supervisory knowledge).

Reimer's simplification removes the metaphysical tone.

4. Reimer is largely in agreement with Elliott on the *nature* of listening. '... it is not that Elliott does not understand what listening entails - he certainly does. What is disappointing and illogical about his position is the stunning *non sequitur* he propounds as to what we as educators should do about cultivating listening abilities: to have all students become performers!'
5. Reimer, while he does not trivialize Elliott's five forms of knowing beyond observing that 'some of the language [he] uses is particular to him', claims that all these ways of thinking about performing (and presumably also about the other four phantom-like activities regularly conjoined by Elliott - improvising, composing, arranging, conducting) belong to the familiar territory of music education philosophy.
6. Reimer is not opposed to praxialism and deals with it in his paper on universal philosophy (MEND 401 but see also the review of Reimer's MEND paper above for

details [MEND 203]), read at the 1996 Amsterdam Conference of ISME. This is a very important document as representing Reimer's revised thoughts beyond those contained in *A Philosophy of Music Education*.

5.5.3 The Reimer criticisms of Elliott's proposals

Note: This long subsection has proved to be the most recalcitrant of all the material presented in this thesis in terms of reader-friendly navigability. And yet the analysis is crucial to the attempted reconciliation of rival stances. It did not prove possible to itemize the points with their immediate cross-referenced contexts into a strict concordance, since both writers ranged freely from topic to topic, not all of which are of equal importance to the denouement. The most critical parameters (the product/process issue, the nature of listening [and performance], music as art and the aesthetic, the relevance of American music education to context in general and to the Irish case in particular) have been extracted as separate headings, since they eventually define the cornerstones of the reconciliation. In Elliott's rebuttal he uses Gardnerian phraseology with pejorative intent, referring to Reimer's criticisms as Myths; the reader will notice that only a selection of the most relevant is included, but can be assured that there are no selective omissions on the grounds of potential to weaken the thrust of the arguments in this thesis. Both documents are reprinted (by permission) in the Appendices of the MEND Report (CD-ROM MEND Documents 403 [Reimer] and 416 [Elliott] respectively), supplied with this thesis.

The writer's comments are interpolated in the text.

1. There is a suggestion that Elliott's philosophical treatment has not been managed with scrupulous professional honesty and that it fails to be deeply relevant to the existing and emerging musical/cultural realities of the times for which it is being proposed.
2. Reimer notes two 'remarkably faulty premises' used by Elliott as bases for his philosophy:
 - i) His understanding of the purpose of philosophy itself as a 'species of competitive sport in which the ultimate goal is to "win" by defeating an opponent.'
 - ii) Performing is the essential good and the essential goal.
3. Elliott supports his proposals on two basic premises:
 - i) He offers a philosophy that is in opposition to the prevailing one, which he terms MEAE (Music Education as Aesthetic Education) and identifies with Reimer. This 'new' philosophy is seen as a 'clear alternative to past thinking'. It seeks to

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identify, first, a dimension of music not in any way recognized by the view he wanted to overthrow and, second, to demonstrate that it is important enough to sustain the whole music education enterprise. This dimension was provided by praxialist thinking, emphasizing engagement in actions [construed, by Reimer, to mean performance]. Reimer claims that the ‘sub-title “new”, as signalling that the “old” should be discarded, is not compatible with reflective scholarship’.

- ii) That MEAE neglects or denigrates performance. Reimer claims that this is not true, simply because MEAE has been extensively adopted by the profession, and performance is flourishing. He even quotes the MENC publication *The School Music Program: A New Vision*, which presented the new national standards, as stating that ‘frequently music programs have been based exclusively on performance’.
4. Elliott is not presenting a ‘balance’ issue. He is claiming that, i) performance should be the central dominant, essential involvement and that, ii) MEAE is opposed to performance.
 5. Elliott’s agenda forces him to separate process from product. In this context he makes a distinction between the questions “what is a work of music?” [product] and “ what is music” [process]. Reimer gives an interesting sample of answers to the latter question, which he found to be overwhelmingly product-orientated. Reimer claims that ‘it is not possible to have a musical product separated from the processes that went into its creation’ and that Elliott needs the distinction so that he can build his philosophy on it. Reimer uses a quotation from Elliot Eisner (1973) which very relevantly points the issue (against Elliott) - ‘This myth argues that what is educationally significant for children is the process they undergo while making something, not what it is they make ... whether that product is ideational or material. ... we will never be able to see the processes the child is undergoing. What we see are the manifestations of those processes. ... To disregard what the child produces puts us in an absolutely feckless position for making inferences about these processes. In addition, without attention to what is produced we have no basis for making any type of judgment regarding the educational value of the activity. ... Product and process therefore cannot be dichotomized. They are like two sides of a coin. ... To neglect one in favor of the other is to be educationally naïve’. Elliott is creating a caricature of MEAE programmes, which rely heavily on composing, improvising and performing, along with listening, as essential ingredients of musical experiencing and learning. He has eventually to accept that works (examples of Elliott’s phraseology are given) are important, but he denigrates the product side of the coin, by

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confusing works with notated compositions. According to Elliott, ‘... music is a matter of singing and playing instruments. And even in the West ... there are many kinds of musical situations in which the actions (in the intentional sense) take precedence over music in the narrow sense of esteemed works’. Reimer finds this globally condescending to the oral/aural tradition but especially to the musicianship of people outside the West and goes on to claim, convincingly, that works and the esteem paid to the best examples (instances) are the norm, and that such paradigms - ‘exemplars of music - are ubiquitous throughout the world and in all styles and types of music’.

6. Reimer claims that the praxial philosophy reneges on its ‘obligation to acquaint the young with the cherished achievements of [their] culture’ by being so performance-obsessed as to endanger the healthy education of youth.
7. A result of Elliott’s obsession with process is that the praxial philosophy, which he espouses, plays down the specifics of chosen repertoire (‘esteemed’ and ‘revered’). His approach denies the need to balance process and product and to recognize their interdependence. His single-strategy approach - ‘treating all music students (including “general” music students) as apprentice musical practitioners (*MM*, p. 266) - fails, by definition, to honour the principle that different musical goals require different programs tailored to each’.
8. Reimer draws attention to a recurrent implication in *Music Matters* (it is never developed sufficiently to be more than an implication) that what applies to performance is equally valid for improvising, composing, arranging and conducting (but *not* to listening *per se*). This causes some confusion, as when the philosopher Wolterstorff is quoted (by Elliott) as saying that ‘[m]ost of all, musicing reminds us that performing and improvising through singing and playing instruments lies at the heart of MUSIC as a diverse human practice. ... the basic reality of music is not works or the composition of works but music making’. This seems definitively to anchor Elliott’s philosophy in championing performance; listeners (uninvolved in any other musical activity) are disfranchised in the process, Elliott’s strategy being to channel them all into performance, whether or not it is their choice of involvement in music.
9. Elliott’s catalogue of the component varieties of knowledge applicable to performance fail to capture ‘what there is about performing music that is particular to its nature beyond what is shared generically with so many other human/cultural activities’. Reimer believes that professional music educators must ‘(a) demonstrate that performance opportunities should be supported in education and (b) teach for what performance offers that is unique

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to it and not just as easily attainable by doing a host of other things.’ This is a very characteristic Reimer stance.

10. Reimer is concerned about the possible redundancy threat posed by technology to performance, and finds Elliott’s failure to address this problem surprising and disappointing. Reimer’s definition (which deals with the single case of a composer using computer technology to bypass the performer) does not go into the numerous psychological aspects of how the human psyche relates to the experience of ‘real’ performance - or as Reimer himself puts it ‘the value of being involved in the act of musical creation at the performance stage’, giving it uniqueness in its musical function. Rather Reimer advances the query because the use of technology represents, he concludes, a devastating prospect for Elliott’s ‘performance only’ mode, in the special context of the claim that ‘music is a *performing* art’ and that the only way to know music is through performing it.
11. Elliott disagrees when ‘[s]ome people want to claim that musical understanding is distinct from knowing how to make music well. The claim is false. It rests on the dualistic assumption that verbal knowledge about music represents true understanding, while the ability to make music well is a mechanical skill or behavior. ... This book’s praxial philosophy of music education [i.e. referring to *Music Matters*] holds that musicianship equals musical understanding’. This statement, based on Elliott’s belief in a much respected theory that cognitive and psychomotor modes (dualistic above) cannot be separated, is sweepingly presumptive as an implication about MEAE and how it defines the connection between music making, understanding and musicianship. Note Reimer’s description: ‘Musical performance, I am suggesting, depends on the body as executive ... Notice that form and action, product and process are inseparable in this conception. Notice too that mind and body, or thinking and doing, are also unified’. The Elliott passage is consistent with his tendency to play down, if not to outlaw, the fructifying contribution of verbal knowledge of all kinds to the musical enterprise, in turn identified by him as one of the fallacies promoted by MEAE (he does, however, eventually but grudgingly acknowledge verbal knowledge in his book). Reimer counters Elliott’s claim with an array of scholars (among them Nettl and Sparshott - both Elliott heroes) whose literary works manifest supreme involvements with and understandings of music. He goes on, in decrying Elliott’s ‘narrow, exclusive vision of musical understanding (which equals musicianship as defined in its five-fold aspects in *Music Matters*) by asserting that ‘there is simply far more to music, and musical understanding, musical learning, musical experience, musical value, musical satisfaction and growth and delight and meaning, than performance can encompass. Performance surely offers all these goods; they are offered

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as well in a great variety of other modes of involvement for which music education must be responsible, if it is to reflect the diverse ways music is manifested, and understood, in our culture.’

12. Elliott has contempt for teaching listening directly, rather than always as a concomitant of performance. Thus claims Reimer, and he goes on to query Elliott’s reference to a coterie group for each culture who ‘act specifically as listeners or audiences for the musical works of that practice’ as a bizarre idea which is not in touch with the reality of listening activities in all cultures. Reimer asserts that ‘all people in western culture (and most other cultures) are music listeners. ... The vast majority of people in our culture engage in music only by listening. ... That music education has poorly served the needs of all people to become more perceptive, intelligent, discriminating listeners is perhaps our major failing, in that we have opted, instead, to focus our major efforts on helping the 15 % or so of students who choose to learn to be performers. Elliott, unfortunately, by focusing entirely on performance as the only valid way to be involved with music, would severely exacerbate this failing of music education’. An intervention, however premature, by the writer here seems necessary to draw attention to Reimer’s persistent assumption that Elliott sees music making as the activity which alone can effect musicianship and that the activity is narrowly conceived as performing (‘through singing and playing instruments’). Although there is some justification for arriving at this conclusion, it is factually a misinterpretation, albeit a valuable one in opening up the discourse, and throwing additional light on the activity of performing; in other words, it serves the purposes of MEND and of this analysis.
13. Reimer takes issue with Elliott’s key statement that ‘[i]n sum, educating competent, proficient, and expert listeners for the future depends on the progressive education of competent, proficient, and artistic music makers [performers] in the present’. As stated above, it seems perfectly understandable and excusable, at this stage, that Reimer should interpret *music makers* as meaning *performers*, since that is the general thrust of Elliott’s rhetoric; his other branches of musical activity are almost always mentioned merely parenthetically, creating a distinct impression that he has performance in mind as his paradigm, as much as he certainly is *not* thinking in terms of listening alone. A very pertinent and useful quotation from Richard Colwell (a MEND presenter [MEND 209]) is appended here: ‘The development of aesthetic perceptual abilities in the arts does not automatically result from performance experiences; the teachable aspects in such development are knowledge-intensive and dependent on direct, focused learning experience’ And Reimer raises the very point that the MEND analysis (of Elliott’s paper) has also focused on. ‘Whatever learnings do accrue from performance are

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learnings unavailable to the vast majority of people in our culture, very few of whom can become, or choose to become, competent, proficient and expert performers, despite Elliott's illogical premise that this is achievable simply by involving them in exploratory performance experiences in ... school-supplied simulations [lacking authenticity] of what musical performing artists are required to do. ... Elliott so overestimates what school music programs can possibly produce by way of performing expertise, even if all instruction were given over to performance as he would desire, as to insure that the music education enterprise would topple on such an insufficient, narrow base.' With reference to the enjoyment of the arts in general (and music in particular), '[h]ow illogical and irrelevant it is to insist that only those able and willing to achieve competence in producing these arts can possibly enjoy or understand them ... including, if we are not to be hypocritical, many music educators, who are also incapable of performing competently, proficiently, or expertly most of the music they enjoy in their lives.' Reimer insists that performing and listening are disparate faculties, that levels of capability in them are typically and healthily unequal (in children), yet they can listen effectively to, enjoy and benefit from relatively complex music which is far beyond their capability to perform. 'To limit the musical experience of students - at every grade level - to that which they themselves can perform "competently, proficiently, and expertly", is to deprive all students of satisfying musical experiences readily available in their culture'. He summarizes this section provocatively by stating that 'the mistake Elliott makes - and it is a profound mistake - is to reject the obvious fact that listening, too, is musical praxis, deserving of cultivation as much as (or, given its centrality and ubiquity in the actual musical lives lived by all people in our culture, perhaps more than) all the other ways music can be experienced.' He draws on Foster McMurray (writing as early as 1958) for support in this. Speaking of non-professional performers, McMurray claims that 'there must be a great gap between their level of aesthetic insight and enjoyment on the one hand and their technical ability as performers on the other. ... Whatever the values of musical performance might be, we must recognize that performance is not a *primary* means to development of aesthetic sensitivity.' Since it is axiomatic that performance must invaginate sensitive listening to be considered a truly valid musical activity, it must be assumed that McMurray is referring here to listening *per se* as a valuable source of aesthetic experience and learning. And it must be remembered that listening *per se* is a universal activity across all cultures.

14. Reimer finds Elliott's neglect of the sensuous and his dismissal of the creative characteristics of listening to be ungenerously pejorative in relation to the cultural power and potential of the activity. As in the case of the bodily gesture used in the

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communication of musical essence through performance, he attributes the same gestural significance to the act of musical reception, drawing on a Langerian quotation from Judy Lochhead: ‘Perception is not a mechanistic process ... or the intellectual process of interpreting the data of sensory input, but rather it is a *bodily enaction of meaning*. I meet the sounds with my body and through it I enact the melody as a felt significance’. On the question of the essential creativity of listening - the construction of musical meanings by the exercise of imagination - apparently rejected by Elliott, he has this to say: ‘The active contribution to the process [of perception] by the percipient is also an essential factor in aesthetic engagements. ... Aesthetic experiencing requires a reconstruction by the imagination of the percipient of the imagined interplay of occurrence built into the form by the artist [both composer and performer. In other words the listener is a vicarious performer]’. Elliott claims that this is a covert act, that it cannot be witnessed, that it is not assessable and therefore is without creative value. Elliott’s inconsistency is remarkable. Because, in his opinion, creativity in listening is not witnessable and assessable, he rules against it; yet, on the question of ‘the innate equality of all musical cultures’ he claims, selectively, that because hierarchy is not assessable, equality may be assumed! As Aspin remarks, he can’t have it both ways. Reimer disagrees with Elliott and believes that evidence of success in listening assignments can be effectively and readily collected. He quotes T.M. Amabile as claiming that ‘creativity can be regarded as the quality of products or responses judged to be creative by appropriate observers, and it can also be regarded as the process by which something so judged is produced’ and uses this to define the responsibilities of professionals in influencing ‘the process by which students engage themselves with music as listeners as well as performers, improvisers and composers. ... The process of learning to create musical meaning through listening is challenging, as is creating meaning through performing, improvising, and composing’. Again he observes that listening is concerned with both product and process as an inseparable pair, both of which can evince the measurable presence of creativity.

15. In relation to *Concepts as Learning Tools*, Reimer again interprets Elliott’s concentration on performance as ‘the curricular goal [which] is to organize music classrooms and programs as effectively and genuinely as possible by simulating the ways in which musicing and listening are carried out by artistic music practitioners [performers]’. This is factually an over-simplification as Elliott does include, however parenthetically, four other forms of activity as germane to practitioners. And presumably Elliott does, in some grand sanguine sweep, imply that all the other ‘activities’ listed by Reimer as part of a well-rounded musical education (the acquisition of musicianship) accrue from the ways in which these practices are taught, learned and implemented. But it is in response to

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Elliott's claim that MEAE 'negates the procedural essence of music [*inter alia*] ... by reducing these knowledge domains to simplistic verbal objectives and concepts' that Reimer takes the ethical high ground by pointing to the use of selective, out-of-context, quoting; and certainly the example he analyses is clearly a transgression of significant proportion (although Elliott adduces a similar misquotation by Reimer to balance the account, so to speak [see below]!) and creates a false impression, diametrically opposed to Reimer's intention and professional caution when he elaborates about verbal concepts: '... they are *only* tools , and it is important that we understand that, so we do not misguide our activities as we teach. ... Conceptualizing, when it goes on without sufficient listening to music exemplifying what is being discussed, without sufficient performance to keep learning musically creative, without appropriate probing of inner musical conditions through analysis, and without musical assessments, becomes academic in the worst sense.' In further defence of language as an indispensable tool in music education, Reimer adds two more highly pertinent quotations. The first, again in Langerian vein, is from Lochhead: '... concepts are the perceptual tools by which humans know their world. They are not simply intellectual abstractions from experience, but rather are the practical implements by means of which meaningful and varied experience arises.' The second, from Tait and Haack's *Principles and Processes of Music Education (1984)*: '... we need to explore the language connection ... to identify and develop those forces that contribute to our feeling moved when we experience music. Language is not the same experience, the words are not the same feelings, but language is the essential tool that allows us to conceptualize and think about, to analyse and teach about these vital musical matters that ultimately can take us beyond words'. He also gives a useful reference (Dennie Palmer Wolf's *Becoming Knowledge; The Evolution of Art Education Curriculum*' (*Handbook of Research on Curriculum 1992*) as further material to set against what he believes Elliott is portraying as a model for curriculum building.

16. As in the case of performance, perceived by Reimer as effectively Elliott's preferred, to the point of being the exclusive, means of training musicians, Elliott's failure to discriminate between the intrinsic and extrinsic merits of music itself (and music education) are targeted as leaving 'the profession in a more vulnerable position to being perceived as unnecessary in education'. Reimer calls for a celebration of the uniqueness of music by identifying qualities that it does *not* share with other activities. This has always been a fashionable and compelling stance, held stoutly by MEAE practitioners. As has been stated elsewhere in this report, it could very well be that Elliott's confidence in the robustness of music as an educational option dispenses with the need to be so fearful for its survival; but this is surely open to the criticism of being foolhardy, considering the

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unflattering statistics world-wide on the voluntary uptake of the music option in general education. But, let it be said, Elliott does engage and deal with the intrinsicity issue in his own terms (MEND 416, 24).

17. It is interesting to compare Reimer's calling into question of Elliott's statement of the essential features of music itself (especially in the context of how the affective dimension is dealt with and the dangerous reference to 'expressions of emotion'), and Elliott's claim that Reimer's aesthetic theory has also been superannuated. We are left here in a limbo in which the fine distinction between the discharge of emotion and the expression of feeling, surely that most significant and hotly debated discriminating dimension in musical experience, is thrown into a new confusion.
18. Reimer finds Elliott's treatise wanting in the encouragement of understandings of the relationship between music and the other arts. This is highlighted in the fairly recent (1992-94) drafting of the US National Standards for music education, in which music, for strategic and political reasons, was allied to the other arts for the purposes of their promotion, as a group, in the successful campaign to have them incorporated in the *Goals 2000* US legislation for education.
19. Reimer takes issue with Elliott's restrictive definition of general creativity as 'a congratulatory term that singles out a concrete accomplishment that knowledgeable people judge to be especially important in relation to a specific context of doing or making'. While this may seem to be merely a question of definition, Reimer is concerned that it excludes the many more modest acts of creativity that occur regularly along a continuum, which stretches right back to the most elementary instances of musical achievement which 'music educators - of *all* people - should immediately recognize' and reward. But it is surely educationally reprehensible in principle (and contrary to the *Implications for Music Education* so thoroughly and convincingly treated on page 131 of *MM*) to ridicule a commendable balance of musical challenge and musicianship at the novice level by denying that 'a beginner's toots are as creative as a solo by Wynton Marsalis'. That is not the point.
20. In his *Conclusion* (summary), Reimer returns to his irreducible objections to Elliott's philosophy, which he believes to be pursuing a 'doubly false agenda by any possible means'. His objections are grounded, first, in a model of philosophical discourse, which 'descends to ridicule ... and stoops to deceitful tactics no scholar can condone', which Reimer believes to be 'potentially damaging to music education scholarship'. His second major reservation relates to his conviction that 'Elliott's limited vision is so fixated on the most traditional, most entrenched, most conventional aspect of music education -

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performing - as to represent a species of music fundamentalism, a deification of a historical value no longer able to satisfy [did it ever? Writer's intervention] all the music/cultural needs of our times and how our times are quickly evolving. He has put forth a philosophy for a time that has passed, based on a musical culture no longer dominant and quickly becoming transformed by new possibilities. Elliott's "new" philosophy at best enshrines the status quo; at worst, it would direct us backward'.

5.5.4 Elliott's Rebuttals

Elliott's response to the first four Reimer objections (listed above) is taken *en bloc*.

He gives four motivations for the formulation of his philosophical thoughts:

1. To act as spokesman for the plethora of philosophical theory that has been accumulating since Reimer's 1970 and 1989 publications.
2. To insinuate the ethnomusicological case into music education theory and practice. Elliott comes through as a convinced multiculturalist.
3. To provide another foundational text-as-tool [alternative] to spur critical thinking.
4. To link philosophy with practice, reflecting the expertise of artist-teachers, hence the praxial philosophy.

Elliott explains that his application of the word *new* to his philosophy is unexceptionable as emphasizing *alternative* or *recent* perspectives. He goes on to suggest that the praxial philosophy is 'only one possible view ... unlikely to replace completely what has already been done let alone discourage others from producing alternatives'. This is not borne out by some of the language of dismissal he uses in dealing with Reimer's work. 'A philosophy has been proposed in *MM* that includes "contending arguments" and "alternative views" - nothing more, nothing less.' This, too, would be acceptable, and an encouraging introduction, were it not for the vehemence with which he seeks to discredit other opposing views, as if they have no merit whatsoever.

With characteristic lack of caution in relation to his own vulnerability, Elliott claims that 'if even one basic principle in a highly systematic set of beliefs [MEAE, Tyler, Bruner?] is invalid, then the others must be considered suspicious, if not invalid'. He goes on to quote Borhek and Curtis as saying that '[f]or highly systematic belief, any attack upon any of its principles is an attack upon the system itself; if one principle is abandoned, all the others must be, too. Therefore, the greater the degree of system, the greater the importance of negative evidence for the whole belief system. ... In consequence a

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systematic belief system is at the mercy of its weakest link' (*MM*, 38). Presumably Elliott considers that *MM* presents a systematic belief system (the writer hopes so), too, and would accept, therefore, that it is subject to the same iconoclastic and nihilistic criterion of judgement. This search for human infallibility is clearly doomed to failure.

Many of Elliott's critics have commented that he does not stop short of offering an alternative, but rather seeks to raise his own stature by attempting to dismiss his opponents' views out of hand. Thus we find him not only rejecting MEAE but also the whole foundation on which it is based, including distinguished offerings by Charles Leonhard, Susanne Langer and Leonard Meyer, in addition to Reimer's synthesis and expansion of those views. Consider C.D. Burns's far more positive view of philosophy in evolution (used elsewhere in this report because of its constant appositeness): 'philosophers in every age have attempted to give an account of as much experience as they could. ... all great philosophers have allowed for more than they could explain and have, therefore, signed beforehand, if not dated, the death warrant of their philosophies'⁹².

Elliott's attack on MEAE, whatever the degree of vindication that eventually emerges, is more in the nature of total deconstruction, and ill-at-ease as evidence of his claim that '*MM* has begun to serve as a tool for critical thinking; this critical-companion text [a collection of critical essays responding to *MM*] is intended to contribute another meme to the ongoing process of philosophy-building in music education'. In other words, is Reimer's essay here to be included in the collection? In rejecting MEAE he faults Reimer's theory of 'absolute expressionism' as combining two views of music that contradict each other, both views being deeply flawed in themselves. Yet Elliott fails to make the fine distinction himself between emotion and feeling (arousal/discharge and expression) which gives such a subtle and fine edge to Langer's theories - and between disappointment and surprise which modifies the significance of Meyer's *inhibition* theory and permits compatibility with Langer's view.⁹³

These speculations are far from an open-and-shut case for facile adoption or dismissal and are still subject to scholarly dialectic and fine-tuning. And there is no reason to believe that Elliott's first premise in attempting 'to build a concept of music by investigating the nature of music makers, listeners, music making, listening, musical works, and the contexts and interdependencies of all' would not also serve to define the aims of the aesthetic movement. Nor is there any contradiction or incompatibility evident when Elliott claims that 'listenership involves the covert construction of intermusical and intramusical information, relationships and meanings through the same *kinds* of knowing that make up musicianship: procedural, formal, informal, impressionistic and supervisory

⁹² C.D. Burns, *The Sense of the Horizon*, quoted in Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 5.

⁹³ S.K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key* (see Index under Emotive theory) and Leonard B. Meyer, *Emotion and*

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musical knowledge. The knowings required to listen effectively for the musical works of a given practice are the same kinds of knowing required to perform, improvise, compose, arrange, and/or conduct the music of that practice’.

If listeners/musicians are to know even a reasonable cross-section of the mature works of a musical practice, he is surely not suggesting that it can only be done by personal efforts at performing them? There is more than a hint here that Elliott covertly validates a very large amount of listening separate from music making; and it would be comforting if it were true. But Elliott differs typically in failing to credit listening *per se* as a fully qualified musical activity in itself, this in spite of his admission that it has a place, but one of far less significance than the practices that he names (performing, improvising, etc.) as mandatory concomitant activities with listening. And in this section Elliott also points to another significant difference in his view - ‘that *works* of music (in the praxial sense) are artistic cultural constructions involving several interconnected dimensions or facets of meaning including the following: interpretive, structural, expressional, representational, social, ideological and, of course, personal meanings.’

Already he is calling into question (and rightly so, in many respects) the indiscriminate unyielding application of the artistic theory of music so pertinently commented on by Arnold Schönberg: ‘If it is art it is not for all: if it is for all it is not art’. Nor can Elliott’s view be faulted in this attempt at democratization which seeks to open up music, in a humanistic sense, to all kinds of manifestations (social, ideological, personal, cathartic). But it must also be noted that Elliott’s frequent preoccupation with, and usage of, the phrase *artistic performance* aligns him, even perhaps inadvertently, with the aesthetic theory of the interplay of mimesis (imitation), craft (skill) and human feeling (in spite of the fact that in a pre-MEND II personal interview with the writer [Fort Worth, Texas, 1995] he declared, in relation to praxial applications, that the word *skill* was not in his vocabulary!).

In responding to the arguably less intrinsic characteristics of a great deal of music, the pure aesthetic theory, having metamorphosed, so to speak, from Hanslick to Langer, needs now to relax, without abandoning its more absolutist tendencies, to embrace a much wider spectrum of musics as worthy of its attention and of reconciliation. Elliott gives a very pertinent quotation from Charles Leonhard (MENC 1985) where he reminisces: ‘I began emphasizing aesthetic education more than thirty years ago in *Education*, a now defunct journal, with an article titled “Music Education: Aesthetic Education.” At the time of publication of that article and during the intervening years, I never anticipated that the concept of aesthetic education would come to be used as the major tenet in the justification of music education. That has, however, happened. As a result, the profession has been

Meaning in Music (see Index under Surprise).

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sated with vague esoteric statements of justification that no one understands, including, I suspect, most of the people who make those statements'. This is surely cautionary in delimiting aesthetic education as to its potential for manifold application (*MM*, p.300). And Reimer, too, has shown great resilience in this respect, and his hand is evident in the flexible and non-prescriptive provisions of the US National Standards for music education, as indeed his attempt at sketching a universal philosophy of music education for the new millennium (Amsterdam ISME Conference of 1996 {MEND 401}) is also a worthy effort at compromise, validating as it does a wide array of function for music and music education (including praxialism).

It might usefully be argued at this stage that MEAE (or the more extreme aesthetic ideal in music education) needs to essay détente with a much wider range of musical experience outside western art music (to which it is perhaps best, though not necessarily uniquely, suited). On the other hand, the praxial philosophy (if we are to believe Elliott), which is an open manifold of accommodation for all kinds of music, needs to exercise caution in setting discriminating standards of judgement and value. However, already, Elliott is declaring his hand. His openness to social/cultural values is either influenced by ethnomusicological interests or directs him towards them; and, let it be said, there is nothing unworthy in that either, if thoughtfully managed. But ethnomusicology, itself a respected and growing area of scholarship, when education-targeted, is currently more concerned with the practices (music-making) of various cultures than with their indigenous scholarship, certainly as far as incorporation in school education curricula is concerned. This inevitably leads Elliott to his praxial *processual* philosophy and to his thesis as to 'the equality of all musical practices'- a stance he visits (unconvincingly) on Harry White's paper *A Book of manners in the wilderness* (MEND 308). Curiously, this is not challenged by Reimer, although it contributed largely to Aspin's rejection of Elliott's praxial philosophy.

It is a great pity that Elliott, beyond acknowledging Reimer's contribution to MEAE as an important development in music education (but in 1970!), has absolutely nothing to say in its praise; this, of course, inexorably mutes the plausibility of his own views. Considering the influence Reimer's *Philosophy* has exerted over the past 30 or more years (and indeed continues to wield), his rejection of an entire order (and the countless colleagues who have plied it over the years), without offering any means of accommodation or *rapprochement* whatsoever, is so unflattering, if not eccentric, as to discourage ready allegiance to his alternative rationale. And his wholesale misinterpretation of MEAE practices (as, for instance, equating its performance programme to mere sound-producing) is also damaging to his own credibility. The objections to MEAE, which he lists in his counter-attack, render *it* no more vulnerable, as to detail, than the praxial philosophy itself.

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So, the writer believes that, in spite of Elliott's protests, perusal of *MM* will provide abundant evidence (particularly and significantly in the earlier part) that he set out to overthrow MEAE from the outset. If this is so, the ethics of the philosophical approach in his book must, at least, be open to question. Similar comments have been made by professional colleagues (see the review by David Aspin); certainly his aggressive style is most unattractive. On the other hand, it was a rash overstatement, on Reimer's part, to claim that the praxial philosophy is for 'performers only'; there may be abundant evidence in *MM* that this is a tendency, and this aspect will be teased out, but Elliott potentially includes much more than performing in his definition of music making.

It is never clear, for the purposes of comparison, from any of the documentation studied, what the total remit of MEAE is in the perception of even American music educators. The writer's understanding is that, in the US, the performance option pursued by the 15% or so of all school-goers can, at worst, be exclusive of many, if not all, of the other learnings insisted upon by MEAE (as ideally conceived), as Reimer himself has conceded. In fact it is not clear, either, whether the aesthetic movement can claim the performance programme, such as it is, as its own since, according to Paul Lehman (MEND 303), performance has been entrenched in school music in the US for most of the twentieth century anyway. And if MEAE is then taken to apply only to the remaining 2% who follow the general music programme as (volitionally) non-performers (Reimer's authority again - 'Fewer than 2 % of students after elementary school are involved in any music classes except performance, meaning that, starting in grades 6. 7 or 8, 85 to 91% [or so] are completely untouched by music education' [see the Reimer reply to Harry White, MEND 402, 4]; the parallels with Ireland are very real here), it is easy to see how a listening-rich education could be construed as anti-performance. This, of course, is not the case either. As Richard Colwell so significantly remarked at MEND II (MEND 209), it is very difficult to find out exactly what the true situation is in relation to a *delivered* curriculum. But Elliott tends to interpret selectively for his purposes in this regard.

As stated, Reimer, although he still has a valid point to make, was unwise to extract from *MM* an interpretation that 'performing is the essential good and the essential goal' of music education. 'Elliott's limited vision is so fixated on the most traditional, most entrenched, most conventional aspect of music education - performing - as to represent a species of music education fundamentalism'. The writer would, on the other hand, have a different problem with Elliott's vision as being so idealistic (admirable in itself), and tending towards an all-inclusiveness (five species of music making - all mandatory to a greater or lesser degree), that it crumbles under the very notion of time constraints and practicability. And it might have been better for Reimer to have organized his rebuttal of *MM* by trying to anticipate Elliott's counter-rebuttal (being reviewed here) and stating the

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full range of his notional activities only to highlight the impossibility of taking such a plan to fruition. However, Reimer does use this strategy later on.

Elliott's activities and comments will now be examined.

Elliott urges that 'music education should activate students' musicianship and musical creativity [a problem word, and a source of disagreement between Reimer and Elliott] in *all* forms of music making.' ... laudable so far. He then proposes that '*all* music students ought to be taught in essentially the same way: as reflective musical practitioners engaged in *music making generally and musical performing particularly*. Artistic music listening ought to be taught and learned in conjunction with artistic music making'. For the moment let him not be taken to task as to what he means by artistic (from art!), which is dangerously encroaching on the whole field of aesthetics, mimesis, form, craft, feeling and their interconnections. His five forms of music making (each with a conjoined listening dimension, which it should be hardly even necessary to enjoin) are performing, improvising, composing, arranging and conducting. The writer maintains that all of these activities demand considerable levels of skill (craft/technique) to be effective, quite apart from the problem of balancing the offerings to and capabilities of each student (all being taught in essentially the same way!).

Already a considerable input of time is being predicated for students in the general music curriculum, most of whom typically (if we take the US statistics, such as they are) do not want to be involved anyway. Conducting is an early casualty in Elliott's essay, meriting only a perfunctory mention in what follows. Since composing and arranging in a curriculum-as-practicum must have outlets in performance, Elliott then notionally elevates performance and improvising to a position of *first among equals*. He further expands (or contracts?) his ideas with the instruction 'teachers must decide which forms of musicing to select. ... [they must] focus primarily (*but not exclusively*) on music making through performing and improvising. Composing, arranging and conducting ought to be taken up with reasonable frequency. ... In addition, ... listening ought to be taught in direct relation to the musical practices and works students are learning in and through their own active music making'.

It seems to have escaped Elliott that this closed system, where everything, seemingly, is dictated by what students can themselves perform, is limiting to the range of artistic experiences that composers, arrangers, conductors and improvisers (and even performers) can have. It certainly places the onus on performance to do more than its part and cries out for a less restrictive way of teaching listening, which cannot be fully fertile under such a constrained definition. It is only in this limited view that Elliott's musicianship is wanting. Otherwise his statement about matching cognitive challenges and musicianship is an elegant and convincing way of defining how students achieve the primary values of

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‘musicing’ and listening [music education?]. And he continues with a further expansion of his multiculturalist views, all perfectly acceptable as one valid stream of philosophical dialectic about music. The writer, in disagreeing with the term ‘educating feeling [rather than *taste*?]’ (attributed to Reimer) as an outcome of music education, finds Elliott’s goals of self-knowledge, self-growth and enjoyment (flow) to be feelingful terms and not unacceptable as valid and desirable outcomes of music education, if, as Elliott demands, ‘they are generated in an intrinsic way unattainable in any other domain, artistic or otherwise’. Note that here Elliott is reaching towards the criterion of intrinsicity, denied him by Reimer.

But we are left with Elliott’s own (quoted) progressive portrayal of priorities in the implementation of the praxial philosophy. In the writer’s view (but it is, of course, for each reader to judge for himself), pragmatism itself defines performance as by far the most important (Reimer claims it to be the exclusive) activity in Elliott’s scheme, and the only feasible one, as the time/skill factor alone relegates the other activities to nominal involvements, whatever the laudable aspirations of the philosophy. And unless Elliott is proposing a model for music education which literally uproots the norms of current practices (and this may be the case) with all that it entails in terms of the training of teachers alone, a simple statistic drawn from the numbers of school leavers who would currently rate their relative expertise in performance, improvising, and so on, there is little doubt that performers would greatly outnumber all the others together. This is further proof that Reimer was not astray in his basic assumption.

In the writer’s view, Elliott also hints broadly that, even with music education as praxial education, the mix would not significantly change. It is a matter of some concern also (see Aspin’s review) that Elliott seems to take considerable pride in Custodero’s (1996 review)⁹⁴ summary of praxial themes in that ‘students are perceived by the author [Elliott] as apprentice performers, composers, improvisers, arrangers, conductors and dancers’. The apprenticeship model of education, redolent of practical training by one-to-one instruction, imitation and skill acquisition (and necessarily limited personal repertoire), is a difficult concept to promote in general education. The failure to encourage the idea of the kind of listenership *activity* which does *not* depend on a concomitant form of intrinsically limited music making (see above) for validation, and which alone can ensure that students of all activities have an open opportunity to know the widest spectrum of the repertoire relevant to that activity, is a cause of concern. It must be attributed to Elliott’s lack of generosity in failing to consider or allow that listening, according to his exaggerated and pejorative notion of how MEAE operates, might often, like

⁹⁴ Lori Custodero, Book Review of “Music Matters: a New Philosophy of Music Education”. (American Music Teacher, 2, February/March), 63-64.

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the many other commendable teaching styles that he attributes to praxialism (alone), also be effectively guided in MEAE by knowledgeable teachers acting as ‘reflective music educators’.

It has to be stated once more that Elliott’s typical and unrelieved condemnatory tone (quite apart from its naïveté as a dialectic procedure), from which one might be forgiven for deducing that all MEAE teachers are uniformly in error, simply by virtue of their truck with the concept itself, and all praxial teachers now and in the future can only, by contrast, be exemplary, does not advance his case one whit. In fact, it is very little short of a gratuitous insult to ‘tens of thousands of music educators who are not as stupid and misguided as Elliott portrays them, nor as hopelessly simplistic’ (MEND 403, 16).

In passing it should be acknowledged that Elliott’s response to Reimer’s criticism (which should, in fairness, be read in context) that in *MM* ‘no mention is made of the teaching of composition as a major new opportunity for the music education profession and for creative musical experiences in schools’ reads very well as a statement of recurring concerns about facilitating the teaching of composition for the relatively small number of learners who choose to pursue it seriously. While no broad-minded musician could deny that the composing option is worthy of equal support with other activities, and while talent for it must be identified and subsequently encouraged at all stages, there must also be a balance in the extent to which it can feed, as a right, on other activities, unless such collaborations are in the best communal interests.

There is no reason to believe that MEAE, or the new US National Standards programme, or the praxial philosophy is not fully cognizant of the problems in supporting this activity appropriately or that they are at odds with one another in this regard. Elliott’s answers often create the impression that only the praxial philosophy has the answer; in this particular application the writer has no sense of a basic difference in approach. If one is accustomed, at this stage, to ignoring such fatuous statements as ‘[f]or example, I have often seen MEAE-based classes [only?] in which students “compose” ... by chunking sound patterns together in meaningless, sloppy, “chance music” productions’, the rest of his response reads like an enchiridion of good composition teaching practice, including the cautionary advice that ‘until students come to know the essential nature of musical works as performances ... composing should not be the primary way of developing musicianship’. This is at once proof of pragmatism and focused deprioritization.

Elliott’s response to ‘Myth 4. Reimer claims that computer technology “effectively renders performance obsolete for music from this time forward” and that Elliott never mentions the “precarious position of performing at this moment in music history”’ should be acknowledged as very

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convincing. The question of composers being able to convert their ideas directly to sound through technology, thereby apparently giving them the power to dispense with the services of performers has, naturally, raised temporary concerns of a superficial nature. Stravinsky (see his *Poetics* [1970])⁹⁵ is known to have favoured the idea of a milieu in which composers could dispense with the services of performers. Theoretically it is possible, by the most sophisticated techniques of digital sound derived from real acoustic models (if that is the desired end-product) to simulate a ‘performance’ of a work in a laboratory, and this facility undoubtedly has its uses, attractions, verisimilitude and advantages. But the recorded sounds of the greatest music makers have a tendency to lose their immediacy even after the first rehearing, even for the ordinary listener, let alone the aficionado; it takes very little reflection to arrive at the psychological reasons behind this phenomenon. Feeling, interpretation and sensuousness (Reimer’s word) are protean qualities which give performance (not ‘sounds as produced’, to use another unmerited Elliott criticism of MEAE) its quintessential and unique quality, a deliciously ephemeral characteristic which is intrinsic to the process and can create the appetite for further hearings. Technology has its part as a single (or even a random multiply-controlled) stream in this process, but it hopelessly lacks the human characteristic of creative whim or definitive artistry (where the end product is unpredictable while the performing art is in process - an essential quality if it is to be judged as true art and not just as craft). By this criterion, art has little to fear by way of being superannuated.⁹⁶

It is surprising that ‘Homer nods’ in relation to this issue, considering that aesthetic theory so magnificently defines and supports the art process and its essential attributes. And Reimer himself is at his most impressive when he discriminates, within experience, between the necessary dimensions of perception and response if the experience is to have artistic value; this is to point the difference between ‘sounds as produced’ and ‘sounds as interpreted’, whether in the ear of the composer, performer or listener. Elliott makes the most of this extraordinary lapse on Reimer’s part; his response is eminently sensible in its theory, but caution is urged on those who may still wish to avoid the subliminal absorption of some questionable praxial thinking, especially when it is derivative, without acknowledging its sources.

⁹⁵ Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music*, (Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press).

⁹⁶ Frank Heneghan, *The Interpretation of Music: A Study in Perception, Expression and Symbol*, (Dublin, University of Dublin, Trinity College, 1990; unpublished treatise), 12.

‘Art encroaches upon life, and the sharing which art makes possible can best be considered as an attitudinal engagement between an art-object, such as music, and the individual perceiver; therein is the invitation to creativity to which music handsomely responds. Steinbeck provides a fitting epilogue (though couched in non-inclusive language, this does not compromise its message [East of Eden]):

Our species is the only creative species, and it has only one creative instrument, the individual mind and spirit of a man. Nothing was ever created by two men. There are no good collaborations, whether in music, in art, in poetry, in mathematics, in philosophy. Once the miracle of creation has taken place, the group can build and extend it, but the group never invents

Elliott is totally convincing when he states, in relation to authentic ‘performing’ that ‘[p]erforming music expressively - through singing or playing instruments ... involves listening keenly for all the dimensions of the musical work one is attempting to *interpret* and express creatively in relation to the standards, histories, and artistic ethics of a musical practice. Musical interpretation-in-context is central to musical artistry and creativity’. But this statement takes for granted so much received wisdom on the nature of art and is so redolent of the pronouncements of the aesthetic lobby (to which Reimer would admit himself to being but a minuscule contributor, such is the abundance of relevant, and, yes, often mutually-contradicting literature) that Elliott would have to clarify his view as to how universally applicable his statement above is to all forms of music making. In particular, he should clarify his understandings of expression (of emotion or feeling?), *their* place in the artistic/creative scheme of things, the compatibility, mutuality and inclusiveness of art and craft as a pair, the conditions under which music may lay claim to artistic integrity, the interface of art and function in music and a great many other parameters that are left vague in his otherwise laudable but all-embracing accommodation of music as ‘the outcome of a particular kind of intentional human activity. Music is not simply a collection of products or objects. *Fundamentally music is something that people do*’.

There is very little in this quoted opening gambit (*MM*, p.39) that is intrinsic to music. Yet it is interesting also to note Elliott’s unattributed cleavage to some form of artistic definition of the nature of music. And one is entitled to reserve judgement on the absolute truth of his alluring statement that ‘the best preparation for listening to and enjoying the fruits of present and future musical practices is to engage students in a balanced program of music making in relation to a reasonable diversity of musical practices’ until the significance of every word is pondered as to its potential to exclude unstated but necessary experiences. If, for instance, unencumbered listening to a reasonable diversity of musical practices does not qualify in itself as a *reasonable* example of musical practice, there is ample cause to demur. MEND insisted (in an Irish context, but also as a generally applicable concern) that the nature of performance must be defined. But it seems that, in the light of the praxial philosophy as defined by David Elliott, the activity of listening is even more urgently in need of definition and advocacy.

5.5.5 The Inseparability of Product and Process

In what is probably the core issue (product versus process) of the differences between Reimer and Elliott, there is again another example of each writer presenting the ‘worst case’

anything. The preciousness lies in the lonely mind of a man.
Here, then, is the heart of the matter; can there be a philosophy that would cavil at that?’

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understanding/interpretation of what he believes the other means. Elliott always seems, flatteringly in a sense, to regard MEAE as synonymous with Reimer's ideas, acknowledging in turn the power that seems to have been invested in this one man through a virtually global acceptance of his philosophy, as unassailable, for a quarter of a century - a formidable admission of an educational institution in itself. One must ask, therefore, whether MEAE is really so eccentric that it devalues *process* by raising the idea of *product* (esteemed works) to a place of such disproportionate eminence. The answer simply is no, as can be attested by any musician who is sensible and fair-minded enough to observe the scholarship that has fed on it and the reliance which a significant part of the music education force in America alone has placed in it (and in practice too) over an unprecedentedly long period.

It cannot be assumed that American music education in that era (1970 onwards) has been the dismal failure that Elliott now predicts for it if any vestige of MEAE remains in operation. The writer would not expect an exact converse to be the outcome if similar but suitably rephrased questions were to be advanced in relation to the so-called praxial philosophy; and Elliott's simple denial that he is denigrating product in favour of process is sufficient to point the imprudence of Reimer's case, in spite of the many valid points made *en route*. In fact it leaves Reimer's questions and observations somewhat without a real target. As in much dialectic of a cavilling nature, so much depends on definition and authorial intention, as on the broader view which must normally be invoked by an outsider, often suggesting means of reconciliation. And after all, surely that must be an aspiration of true philosophical enquiry - to allow admirable theories to coexist without the feeling of total antithesis, which is damaging to the good faith of those who seek eclecticism and not just an either/or option. If these writers had pondered the significance of every word written in the context of its vulnerability to the other's case, eventually leading to this *dénouement*, it is likely that the phraseology would have been much more carefully chosen and guarded; but perhaps it is an advantage that music educators are, in the process, witnesses as much to their weaknesses as to their strengths.

Elliott's response to Reimer's concern contains much which is interesting, compelling and persuasive, but it attracts criticism also in terms of its incompleteness, its misunderstandings, or rather of his implication that his so-called multi-dimensional ideas of a musical work are all, save one, foreign to the notions of *aesthetic* thinkers. It is true that Elliott carefully and systematically constructs his model of *A Musical Work* (MM, 93, 155, and 199); in that he can defend himself ably against Reimer's accusation. But it cannot escape notice that the first of its basic dimensions is not the pristine conception (as begotten, so to speak, in the ear of the composer, and independently of such niceties [of its eventual overt aural realization] as notation, improvisation and so on) ... but the *performance* or *interpretation* (correctly to point the need for meaningful expressive performance).

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It is, of course, admirable that Elliott invokes P.G. Woodford's confirmation of a widely held view of the democracy of creativity (with which it is unthinkable that Reimer would disagree) that '[t]he performer's work may be treated as a distinct composition in itself. Performance, itself, is viewed as a process of realizing musical ideals (i.e. cognitive representations of musical composition).' This is surely to give advantage doubly to Reimer, yet again, as stressing performance and the performer(s) (and not, typically, the conductor/ arranger/composer or even an improviser's unique skill), by definition, over the work itself which has, and had, conceptual existence prior to the performance. His other dimensions are musical design, standards and traditions of practice, expression of emotion [feeling?], musical representation and cultural/ideological information, none of which can be excluded from the paraphernalia of aesthetics, albeit requiring some clarification as to definition.⁹⁷

It is inaccurate, and even a little churlish of Elliott, to impute to the hated verbal concepts, which are only part (and a very small part in context) of aesthetic education, the sole intention of constraining students to listen (and, therefore, to perform, compose and improvise) narrowly. And generically to confuse processes in human experience (as, for example, listening) with the theories of how they happen, is to make nonsense of philosophical endeavour, even his own. Is he seriously suggesting that listeners cannot and do not have aesthetic experiences without understanding the complex theory of aesthetics? The theories are merely attempts, *a posteriori*, to analyse the processes; they may be flawed but they do not invalidate the experiences they are trying to explain. And is it to be assumed that it is not possible to be musically active without being aware of separate faculties of using procedural, formal, informal, impressionistic and supervisory knowledge? Of course not!

In fairness to Elliott, this theory of knowledge is a fascinating exposé, but musical activity, right up to the highest levels, does not depend on its tenets. The writer can accept that the more inflexible form of aesthetic theory, which can comfortably accommodate and inform the absolutist ideals which work for Epicureans, needs to relax into a more familial attitude towards other forms of musical experience which Elliott champions. It is interesting to observe Reimer's metamorphosis in this respect where, in his model for a universal philosophy of music (Amsterdam ISME 1996), he seems to favour classifying Absolute Expressionism as rooted in Referentialism (the *representation* of human feeling). What is important here is that perfectly adaptable theory should not be so summarily dismissed, but rather subjected to careful reappraisal and modification to suit the case in point.

⁹⁷ The reader is again referred to the writer's treatise dealing, in great detail, with the subject of interpretation in music. Frank Heneghan, *The Interpretation of Music - A Study in Perception, Expression and Symbol* (Dublin: University of Dublin, Trinity College, and Dublin Institute of Technology, unpublished thesis 1990 [MEND 608]).

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There is no reason to suppose that aesthetics does not have manifold applications to praxial themes. Aesthetic theory, as distinct from MEAE, seeks to define the features of music in artistic (art) terms - no more, no less - or so it should be. Its function is not, nor should it be, to demean other related activities,⁹⁸ but merely, within its brief, to define them. Thus the word *musical*, which figures largely in Elliott's writings, is less related to music as a generic ontological term than to a certain mode of performing music which is artistic and therefore interpretative in nature. In her critical analysis, *On Interpretation*, Annette Barnes⁹⁹ reinforces Danto's insistence on the intimate relationship between art and interpretation.

The moment something is considered an artwork, it becomes subject to interpretation. It owes its existence as an artwork to this, and when its claim to art is defeated, it loses its interpretation and becomes a mere thing.¹⁰⁰

This is a very strong and apposite statement - one which, the writer believes, handsomely accommodates both MEAE and praxialism without any need to insist on mutual exclusivity. But praxialism cannot have it both ways. If Elliott deals with interpretation (as he does, and not only when he refers to *musical* performance) he is predicating art. This forces him into difficult choices when he is admitting all kinds of music, which he may not necessarily be including as art, into the wider domain of music as experience. No disrespect for music is entailed here, nor does it fail to have meaning, if it does not pass muster as art by the canons of aesthetics (and no others will do, nor are they necessarily Reimer's, Elliott might be relieved to hear). It is a matter of definition and it is unlikely that Elliott sees himself as the ultimate authority in this area. He cannot usurp the rubrics of aesthetics and coin his own definitions, nor is there any need to do so.

Examining Elliott's blueprint for the nature of music, combining 'musical practices, products, processes and contexts' we find a reference to MUSIC (a diverse human practice), Music (the

⁹⁸ The reader is referred here to the excellent and highly relevant treatment of this subject by the British aesthetician R.G. Collingwood. Collingwood (1889-1943), philosopher and historian, was Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy, Oxford University. One of the most learned men of his generation, he had a remarkable breadth of interest and knowledge and originality of mind. He is the author of many notable books, including *Essay on Metaphysics*, *Essay on Philosophical Method* and *The New Leviathan*. *Speculum Mentis: or The Map of Knowledge* (cover note to *The Principles of Art*). His theory of aesthetics, equating art with expression, is generally linked with that of Benedetto Croce. According to Monroe Beardsley, however, "the extent of his indebtedness is not clear, but it must be considerable (despite the fact that Collingwood hardly refers to Croce in his works), even if we allow - as we must for such a strong and go-it-alone mind as Collingwood's - that he could have worked out a great many of the ideas himself, given only a few suggestions. Collingwood is not to be dismissed as a mere follower, in any case; his own originality shows in his determined search for the differentia of art, as opposed to all manner of things confused with it, and in his detailed analysis of *imaginative expression* as a process in which inchoate emotion becomes articulate and self-aware" (Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, 324).

⁹⁹ Annette Barnes is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Her work is valuable in that her treatment of the interpretation of art works refers to textual in addition to the more conventional aspects.

¹⁰⁰ Annette Barnes, *On Interpretation - A Critical Analysis* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1988), 167.

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individual practices each combining *music making* and music listening) and *music* (products, works, or listenables). There is always an element of ambiguity in Elliott's use of the term *music making* (which he normally attributes to five sources - performer, composer and so on), but turning to his own definition of a Musical Work on p 93 of *MM*, it is found that it refers to a *performance* (see Figure 4.2), hardly to be construed as the composition itself and therefore the work of a composer (even by the broadest of definitions). This, probably quite consciously, obviates alignment with what Elliott would see as an MEAE idea from which he seems to feel the need to distance himself unequivocally. So what remains is the equation of Elliott's *music* (lower case, the third of his blueprint components noted above) or 'products, works or listenables' with a *performance*, aided by Woodford's corroboration (MEND 416, 10). The writer has no major reservation about this somewhat idiosyncratic nicety of definition (believing that the work as authentically interpreted is inseparably bound to the composer's concept anyway [but not so to Elliott, it appears]); but the comment is necessary to show how Elliott, by his own hand, invites an interpretation of his blueprint for music which really *is* a matter of process. Reimer's claims, so based, are not so absurd as Elliott would like his readers to believe.

The nub of this matter is surely the nature of aesthetics as a discipline, removed from all association with Reimer and his sophisticated treatment of its applicability to music and music education. Such an appraisal would obviously be a gargantuan task and would not be appropriate in this analysis. But there are a few vital elements that must be taken into account in attempting to explain some of Elliott's too facile (mis)understandings of how this highly respected discipline can illuminate much of what happens in the *feelingful experience of music*, if that would be accepted by Elliott as applying to most, if not all, of his open list (by definition) of musical practices. There is a danger that one can become incarcerated in one's own culture to such an extent that its products can be taken for granted and even misapplied in a philosophical sense.¹⁰¹

It should, therefore, constantly be borne in mind that most of the philosophy of music (obviously excluding the contribution by the Greeks) and of music education (including MEAE and Praxialism), and the disciplines of aesthetics and ethnomusicology are themselves largely rooted in the cultural traditions of post-Renaissance Europe. Ethnomusicology is the most recent and is, of course, by definition, not ethnocentric. But aesthetics, although as a scholarly pursuit it has its origins in 18th century Europe, is nevertheless also not Eurocentric. Described variously as the science of perception (Baumgarten), philosophy of the arts (Sulzer) or simply as a study of response to things perceived, it invariably plays down the idea of the art object; response is the crucial quality. But it essays to

¹⁰¹ The reader is again referred to the writer's thesis - Heneghan, *The Interpretation of Music - A Study in Perception, Expression and Symbol*, 13.

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examine response to all the arts in all their manifestations; it thus does not place European art music in any privileged position. The eminence of the European musical tradition in its own right must also be recognized, and - more importantly, the scholarship associated with it, particularly that related to educational theory, methodology and practice.

It is now crucially necessary to come to some understanding of music (or Elliott's *Music/music*) as art. This should be merely a question of examining the definitions and coming to a decision on the basis of the dozen or so criteria that are in general circulation. They include mimesis (or imitation); craft; unity in variety; judgements of beauty (again with their own canons, conventions and contexts; it is not just a question of taste or fiat but of the exercise of judgement based on experience, which may [or should] be cross-cultural); feeling/emotion; expressiveness; function - and so on. If a segregation of musics is necessary, it should be well founded and should carry neither stigma nor accolade, being merely a question of classification. But this is where the problems and misunderstandings arise.

In spite of what Elliott claims about the innate equality of all musical practices (dealt with in detail elsewhere; see review of Elliott's MEND lecture [MEND 208] and the treatment in David Aspin's *MM* book review [MEND 415]), there is an almost instinctive and very prevalent propensity to elevate some music above others; this may be a question of conditioning, social/cultural perceptions, and the like, but of its existence there is no doubt. There seems to be little objection to intracultural judgements of excellence and value. In fact it seems almost crass and inane to deny that, for example, in western art music (even within the output of one composer) some pieces are palpably better than/superior to others. The writer struggles to find a vestige of substance in the claim that similar judgements, backed by experience and scholarship (invoked by Elliott in his treatment of creativity, in which he has no qualms about elevating certain manifestations over others in value and authenticity), cannot be applied interculturally.

If there is a hierarchy within each culture or genre (note Elliott's treatment of Duke Ellington's *Daybreak Express* as a masterpiece) why are intercultural judgements not subject to the same relativity when authentically appraised by multicultural experts? No disrespect for what is excellent in any culture is entailed in the belief that the inter-cultural continuum of excellence would reveal a substantial amount of overlapping between cultures, should the exercise ever be necessary to establish this. However, it is important to recognize (as Reimer suggests) that a hierarchy does exist, that there is a basis for judgement, and that reflective practitioners bring to bear their experience and differentiating powers in ensuring that the best examples of any culture should normally be offered in a curriculum in which that culture is a worthy component.

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On one side of this exercise in discrimination there is rejection akin to elitism: on the other there is resentment, accounting for many well-known phenomena. Harry White referred to one of them, in which the aficionados of musics other than European art music borrow its academic jargon to storm its citadel in academia; another is the common practice in the publicity surrounding pop stars to refer to them as *artists*, again showing that most musics aspire to the condition of art. Artistic endeavour may be a labour of love, but its achievements are time- and work-intensive; there is a tendency for the pseudo-arts to aspire to the inner sanctum. If they cannot all be admitted, the blame cannot be laid at the door of aesthetics. In the case of music, the writer is convinced that there are exclusions which define themselves, but they do not cease to be music on that account. Thus, for example, it is not inconsistent in an artistic (musical/expressive/interpretative) sense for Reimer to refer, in a non-derogatory way, to practices which are unmusical simply because they are outside the consideration of art (see Collingwood [*Principles of Art*] [footnotes 98 and 103]). If these practices, on the other hand, and as seems to be hinted at by Elliott, are found to invaginate artistic qualities by virtue of their craft and/or expressiveness, then they are candidates for readmission as art. But this is not a theory attributable to Reimer.

There is a real need for Elliott to reappraise aesthetic theory with a less jaundiced eye. The writer is unsure as to how Elliott views music's claim to being globally and indiscriminately artistic. If he supports it unconditionally, he is just being iconoclastic in relation to a wealth of well-founded and highly respected aesthetic theory, which evolved, not with the idea of exclusion but for metaphysical clarity. If he does not, he is, on the other hand, opening up an abundantly helpful area of relevant and potentially fruitful enquiry as to an enlarged context for music, which *is* pressing. This is a major concern for music education in the new millennium. It was raised by Harry White in his paper, and commented on by Reimer in a very candid and honest way, which pinpointed three issues - multiculturalism, popular music and performance (definition) - as being central to the dilemma. In the writer's view, Elliott's stance which, *inter alia*, seems to be saying that music education should just become multicultural in its broadest sense (even if one were to ignore the confusion about product and process and the dominance of performance in the scheme) is simplistic, if the methodology of doing this is not crystal clear, which it certainly is not from Elliott's generalizations.

Whatever about attitudes within MEAE (as the 'official' music education philosophy in the US, according to Elliott), certainly Reimer has long ago dispensed with notions of absolutism (if he ever had them); he has expanded his ideas into the softer version of Absolute Expressionism which aligns it with Referentialism; he has adopted the developing ideas of multiculturalism, which were not so relevant when he wrote *A Philosophy of Music Education* (1970) as they are now; he has included praxialism as a possible approach to music education and philosophy (though he specifically does not

support what he considers to be Elliott's extreme version). He seems, on this evidence, to be ripe for détente. While Elliott is writing such obviously spurious comment as that 'MEAE assumes that the Navaho people listen to and value their musical achievements as "unconsummated presentational" symbols and for structural elements (e.g., contrasting sections high and low, nasal timbre) to achieve "insight" into the general forms of feeling (Reimer, 1989, p.86 [which does not seem to refer])', he seems very far from compromise or rationalization.

5.5.6 Aesthetic Theory

Aesthetic theory has much to offer to the widest spectrum of musical experience to explain its nature. As proposed above, the wealth of philosophical material available from the treasury of European cultural history has blossomed into an elaborate and multidimensional pedagogical and methodological system. To this MEAE is one, though by no means the only, contributor, as far as music goes. At least it has had the courage to lay out systematic approaches to the teaching, appreciation and enrichment of musical experience for learners. Whatever the flaws imputed to it (and Elliott can find little else) it does attempt, even in the example quoted above (Navaho music) to provide some point of entry (no more - and typically to an ethnic example within a multicultural programme), not for the Navaho Indian (who doesn't need it anyway - and Elliott's mocking tone noted above is impertinently irrelevant here) but for the novice outsider. Such outsiders typically represent most learners who may have little opportunity to hear or witness an authentic performance except through recordings; even that is a resource issue by no means easy to make provision for comprehensively, which is fair to the diversity of music which Elliott is at pains to stress.

There is nothing to prevent the reflective practitioner (even an MEAE devotee), who is enthusiastic about such music and judges it to be a valuable experience for his students, as a priority, from taking all kinds of initiatives to bring the experience nearer to the reality of a Navaho involvement. Contrary to what Elliott is suggesting, MEAE is not trying to 'educate the feeling' of a Navaho Indian; neither, presumably, is it attempting to give to the arbitrary listener anything more than a flavour of the music with some practical help in its absorption and enjoyment. And neither is it essaying the impossible task of so identifying with the culture as to ensure that the alien listener will have the same rich experience as the Navaho in recognizing the music 'as a cultural identity that belongs to [him] and to which [he] belongs ... this sense of musical belonging is something to be cherished' (*MM*, p 211).

Pragmatism alone, in relation to choice from the myriad experiences that constitute a well-rounded musical education (within the virtually insupportable time constraints of the general music programme) rules that little more than Reimer's suggestion is possible. This may be typical of the

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Concept as Tool approach, but it is not just trying to tell ('notify, inform, advise') students of something (since it is merely a preliminary to the experience of the music itself), but is an aid which most listeners will attest to as a real help in enriching the experience, no matter what Elliott says. While it cannot be denied that he is idealistic and well-intentioned (except in his outright refusal to credit MEAE with any merit whatsoever in the educational process), Elliott's slice-of-life answer to MEAE (p.14 of his essay) is hopelessly out of touch with the realities of the general music curriculum, even in ambiances which are much more benignly multi-cultural and better resourced than (say) Ireland; the criticism is, however, generally aimed.

Taking any example of music (Elliott chooses the Zulu song *Siyahamba*) and gathering from his comprehensive list of how it should be taught we find him insisting that the 'performative, expressional and cultural dimensions ... together with the structural dimensions' should be dealt with; that the music should be evaluated comprehensively, contextually and authentically in *all* relevant dimensions; that it should be performed and interpreted according to genuine tradition; that other performances (live and/or recorded) should be critically reflected upon [without the crutch of verbal concepts?- writer's insertion]; that a video should be watched with a view to identifying and solving problems, and leading to enhanced performance; that another work from the same culture should be introduced and studied; that composing, arranging and performing works in that style should form part of the class activity. Presumably there would still be sufficient time to 'learn to sing arrangements/compositions chosen from more (or less) familiar musical practices'! The writer struggles to envisage a time dimension unfolding manageably from such an aspiration, so redolent is it of the specialized study (ethnomusicological in this case) appropriate to undergraduate level (or higher) described by Patricia Shehan Campbell and Ramon Santos in their presentations (MEND 305 and 207). It seems far beyond the scope of the school general music programme if a balanced menu of music is to be attempted, and particularly in the contexts of (a) the relevance of the music to the population and cultural needs of the school (a problem that the multiculturalists and ethnomusicologists are far from having solved as yet. There is no disrespect implied here for Zulu music); (b) the readiness of the class to participate in the niceties of absorbing cultural, contextual and interpretative 'information' from the music itself with no other props, such as conceptual tools; c) the ability of average teachers to be so comprehensively 'clued in' to a potentially wide variety of unfamiliar music; (d) the resource implications; and (e) the problem of authenticity, style and tradition in performance, which will tax the average teacher, typically, in most of the performing/interpreting repertoire, and not just in that of unfamiliar music.

Multiple questions arise, as one reads his essay, as to what extent Elliott is providing well defined and workable alternatives to the more comprehensive statements of the aesthetic movement. Even if one

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were to indulge his criticism of MEAE as effectively attempting to ‘homogenize the diversity of musical endeavors and musical products worldwide’, when his own generalizations are discounted and the extravagance of his alternative slice-of-life pondered as to its feasibility and its capability to ‘target, teach and esteem all dimensions’ in a typical course time-allocation, one is as daunted by its impracticability as much as one can admire its starry-eyed intent. There are obviously questions of balance and curriculum management to be taken into account here. And one must honestly ask whether aesthetic thinking in practice (by reflective practitioners, who are engaged in ‘the bringing to bear of critical intelligence upon practical tasks rather than [in] the implementation of good advice’ (Elliott MEND 208a, 1) cannot be aligned with the very processes that Elliott seems to be claiming as his own. There is an uneasy feeling that the amount of distortion, of both aesthetic and praxial themes, introduced by both Reimer and Elliott, is occluding a considerable amount of common ground.

Elliott’s quotations from his reviewers, when he considers them complimentary to his approach, raise similar questions. Thus one must ask in relation to Natalie Sarrazin’s review (MEND 413), whether there is consensus that music education should be responding meekly to the demands of the social sciences and ethnomusicology. She cannot have been aware in 1996 of Reimer’s work on a universal or ‘inclusive philosophy’, placing music in psychological perspective, in addition to ‘placing music education in the company of most recent ideas in the social sciences’ without having recourse to theories that are no more than hypothetical. And the attribution of the idea of the multidimensional work to Elliott by Stublely (MEND 412) could be challenged in all its dimensions as having been debated long since by various contributors to the aesthetic dialectic and, indeed, rejected by some on convincing arguments.

To conclude his commentary on what he refers to as Myth 5, Elliott repeats his insistence that neither he nor his colleague Jerrold Levinson ever stated ‘that music exists only as a process’ and, also, that ‘the praxial philosophy makes a central place for musical works/products in its concept of music’. What he *does* say in his book, by equating musical products or works with performance, which is clearly process-based, is reported above for the reader to reflect on how justified Reimer was in his converse interpretation. But it does not alter the heartening reality that both philosophies recognize the inseparable interrelationship of the two (product and process). Elliott claims that the question “What is music?” cannot be answered by some version of the aesthetic concept of music, which denies ‘the epistemological and social nature of music makers, music making, musical works (broadly conceived)’. Admittedly Elliott is putting forward a burning question here that must be a preoccupation of music educators, in this millennium, faced with the ever-widening chasm between many purely social experiences of music (and music making) and the perception of how music is taught in schools. But it would be more cautious to essay an enquiry into the musical epistemology

and nature of some social behaviours as to rule that *all* socially- as distinct from humanistically-based musical experiences must be allowed to usurp the musical picture and skew the image.

In this context aesthetic theory, which is humanistically based, by definition, has a great deal to offer in the analysis. Elliott's philosophy must come clean on the artistic nature of music and, in the resolution, if certain musics emerge as unduly dominated by their social content¹⁰² we must know what to do with them - above all how (or if) they should be taught. As Reimer pragmatically and provocatively observes, '[m]uch of popular music is a vehicle for non-musical experience and therefore has little to do with the function of school music as aesthetic education. We can bypass such music safely because few youngsters would expect or want it to be brought into the school' (*A Philosophy of Music Education*, 1989, p.144. The passage must be read in its entirety to derive its full significance.). The writer is comfortable with the idea that the teaching of music, in school, by enlightened and reflective practitioners, who may wish to adhere to the most recent thoughts on the application of aesthetic theory to music teaching, can prepare students to be more discriminating in their choice of music for listening. If learners value music merely for the social experience of it - and this (being a perfectly normal human behaviour) is not necessarily being denigrated - they do not need to be inducted into the process by elaborate and painstaking methodology. And indeed one wonders whether, in fact, such methodology exists in the same refinement as in more conventional approaches. But Elliott obviously has more in mind than clarifying the place of pop music in the western tradition. His multicultural preoccupations are beginning to emerge and dominate; these must now be rationalized as to their feasibility for inclusion in the general music curriculum.

5.5.7 Elliott's Response to the Works of Music/ Product/Process Criticism

In conclusion (Product/Process), Elliott makes the following additional points:

'A central aim of the praxial philosophy is to offer students and teachers a comprehensive model of musical products that can be used as an open and flexible guide for listening to music ... as an alternative to the *aesthetic* concept of works'. This ought to be challenged on several fronts - not with the intention of demeaning Elliott's idea, but with a view to rescuing aesthetics from the restrictive and narrow interpretation that Elliott invokes with monotonous regularity. Elliott himself eventually accepts the idea of usefulness of verbal knowledge (which is equivalent, if one does not cavil unduly,

¹⁰² There is some music which is important as an accompaniment to social functions of young people and which is validated by fashion and mindless taste rather than by qualitative/artistic analysis. Reimer's comment a few lines further on puts the point in context.

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to ‘concepts as learning tools’) but it seems reprehensible that he should so repetitively latch onto this as, seemingly, the only educational device in the armoury of MEAE.

It is true that both Reimer and Elliott impute to one another a failure to have read the supporting documentation in relation to the points they make. Here it might be commented, in fairness to Reimer, that the scope of his book is infinitely wider and more sophisticated than the image which Elliott’s caricature of it presents, which takes little account of a wealth of sensitive analysis in the treatment of the subject. For the purposes of this analysis (though Richard Colwell’s cautionary words should be heeded (MEND 209), that theory, practice, and outcomes seldom, if ever, coincide) we must take Elliott’s evaluation that Reimer’s philosophy (presumably only that of 1970-89 but obviously ignoring later pronouncements) and MEAE may be taken as being in a theory/practice relationship. If Elliott also accepts the idea of the equal importance or interdependence of product and process and the notion of esteemed works, performances or manifestations in all cultures (and there is no longer any reason to doubt this, although it is distorted in Reimer’s apologia) it is amazing that he accepts and portrays, as approval, the statement of one of his reviewers (Humphreys) that ‘[h]e [Elliott] takes dead aim at the distinctly western notion of art objects as having value in and of themselves, apart from their cultural contexts.’ This just is not true (see Harry White’s *A book of manners in the wilderness* [MEND 308] for an unambiguous statement of how great works are mediated through their culture and *vice versa*, apart from their additional qualities of timelessness) if the ‘western notion’ spoken of is assumed to be in line with aesthetic theory, which is also careful to stress response - the effect the so-called art object has on the sensibility of the person who engages with and *experiences* it visually, aurally and so on.

In the writer’s view it is splitting hairs, if indeed it is not pure misrepresentation, to claim that philosophies of music other than Praxialism are unconcerned with ‘meanings pivoting on shared thought processes and public standards of evaluation that arise in and work through the music making itself’; that assumes, of course, that music *listening* may also be included as an act of music making. The concept of listening artistically, supported within MEAE, is equally as benign, flattering to the ear, democratic and all-embracing as anything that Elliott brings forward by way of opening music to the most comprehensive interpretation of its nature, significance and value.

Elliott is not the first music educator to show well-intentioned concern about the sociological phenomenon of the cleavage between ‘high’ and ‘popular’ cultures and the compromised condition of ethnic musics (‘whatever ethnomusicologists, say, would agree is music in cultures other than our own’) in western perception, in spite of their validity. But in seeking to sanction ‘the widest most inclusive central usage of “music” [in the product sense] current at the present time’ his starting point is obviously an aspiration towards a universal philosophy of music education, and is setting a task that

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may very well be impossible because of the levels of adaptability to so many standards that it entails. One wonders, therefore, whether he is not being too idealistic and whether, indeed, if the mysterious candidates who are being outlawed (according to Elliott) by artistic theory (Reimer, MEAE, or simply classical aesthetics) were to be identified, one is not dealing with a marginal and minuscule area of music that can be validated, for their purpose, by other worthy criteria. The writer believes that music as art is a hardy and compelling notion that encapsulates ideas of judgement, value, quality, excellence and comparative standards to which he would not imagine Elliott to be averse; it is totally interpenetrated with aesthetic theory and is too pervasive and valuable a mentality to be discarded, if indeed this would be Elliott's intention. And the idea of music as art is not peculiar to western culture. Elliott's obsessive and somewhat myopic aversion to Reimer's philosophy is therefore placing him in a compromised, if not in an inconsistent, stance.

In claiming that the praxial view goes beyond the 'design' dimension and evaluates musical works comprehensively, contextually and authentically, in all their relevant dimensions, it is not clear to the writer how Reimer's philosophy fails in this respect. The multidimensional concept of the musical work is honoured comfortably in the aesthetic approach which certainly takes account of the nature of performance, and interpretation (and not just by equating them to 'sounds as produced'), to musical design, to standards and traditions of practice, to expression of feeling (discriminating between it and raw emotion), to representation (in the symbolic sense which is a highly respected general theory, not to be despised or trifled with, of how the human condition functions and expresses itself) and cultural information. There are differences between it and Elliott's form of praxialism, of course; but it is certainly not unidimensional and actually addresses Elliott's six dimensions (*MM*, 199) in a significant way.

Just as it must be accepted that Elliott recognizes the inseparability of product and process, Reimer must be credited with the same belief in all its fullness. Thus there is no 'narrow [aesthetic] sense of esteemed works', except in the narrow [aesthetic] sense of inflexible Formalism (which Reimer places in admirable perspective in his Amsterdam paper as to its theoretical value but superannuated fashionability). Nor can it be claimed that Reimer's philosophy ignores or plays down the importance of 'performative, expressional and cultural dimensions' in music. Reimer suggests criteria for evaluating music (*A Philosophy* 1989, p. 133 *et seq.*); it is true that they are related to music as art and that they eventually create a hierarchy and a continuum with a flexible threshold of acceptability. But they are, significantly, open to all kinds of music (typically western art music, popular and ethnic musics and their hybrids, which define a very large, if not all-embracing, constituency in themselves).

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There is more than an implication that Elliott supports the idea of excellence (e.g. the Ellington masterpiece). One wonders specifically, therefore, as to which of his *musics* is beyond the pale of Reimer's criteria and indeed on what grounds he would validate them himself, if they are. Since human feeling is deeply embedded in the social context of music it seems to be a 'red herring' to point to an appreciation of the social aspects of music making as a significant, differentiating and polarizing feature as between praxial and aesthetic approaches. And note Reimer's confirmation that in certain cultures (e.g. 'that of Bali, famous for its integration of art with life') 'few if any distinctions are made among arts or between artworks and life itself; the process of doing art, and the products of those processes, are recognized as necessarily interdependent, in which specialized products are made by people who specialize in the process of making them' (Reimer review of Elliott *MM* [MEND 403, 6]).

Again it should be noted with satisfaction that Elliott, in being goaded by Reimer into clarifying his sometimes unguarded statements, confirms his belief in revered pieces (e.g. Ellington's *Daybreak Express*) and honours the musicianship of artists outside the western tradition (e.g. the Dagomba *master* drummer [note the hierarchical and élitist connotation here], 'who knows why, when, and how to shape the "ongoing texture of rhythms" in ways that are artistically and socially significant' [again note the use of the purely aesthetic term *artistically*]). The confusion is clarified, but Elliott's phraseology makes him vulnerable to misinterpretation, as, for instance, when he claims that '[in] many cultures, music is not a matter of revered pieces ...; music is a matter of singing and playing instruments. ... And even in the West, there are many kinds of musical situations in which the actions of singing and playing (in the intentional sense) take precedence over music in the narrow sense of esteemed works.'

Elliott is admirably drawing attention to the social dimension of music (an aspect of music on which there is consensus in present day music education as to its importance and as to the urgency of developing a more benign attitude towards its influence on the way many people regard and enjoy music), whereas Reimer is justified in querying the artistic content of such performances and in suggesting a continuum in which each performance can be classified, with each potentially becoming a revered work. The writer has no problems with either stance or with the compatibility of both. It is merely a question of how their own words can expose these adversaries to mutual misunderstanding and inevitable criticism and point-scoring, a practice disavowed by Reimer but one in which he is tempted to indulge throughout his essay.

'Making music, and listening to the music one is making, is both an end in itself and a stepping-stone to understanding and cherishing more challenging works in the same musical practice that students may never have the opportunity or level of musicianship to perform themselves' (Elliott). While this is

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unexceptionable as it stands, it should not be taken to mean, categorically, that it is the only or best route to understanding and cherishing other music, as Elliott states elsewhere: ‘the best preparation for listening to musical performances in the future is full participation in music making in the present’ (MEND 416, 14). And participation (even as a listener) in more challenging music is less a question of opportunity than of developing musicianship; this, in turn, is related to the inculcation and acquisition of skills which, in the variety and complexity suggested by Elliott (improvising, conducting, composing *et al*) are far beyond the capability of general school music programmes (as we currently see them in operation). Both MEAE and praxialism aspire to the same involvements in music making that Elliott lists; but MEAE seems to be more pragmatically based and vehemently attests to the value of unencumbered listening as an aid to appreciation (as, also, to active music making), which it undoubtedly is when artistically and imaginatively taught as context demands - a possibility that Elliott does not seem to envisage as normally feasible or desirable.

As one delves further into Elliott’s essay (and indeed, at source, into *MM*) one is struck more and more by his insistence that listening to music (and, yes, simply and baldly interpreted, only because it is an essential component in the MEAE approach) be disallowed as a ‘key to “systems of meaning”’ which relies on ‘a unique, multidimensional, and practice-specific form of thinking and knowing called musicianship’. Is one to assume, then, that listening to music is a grossly inferior way to inculcate musicianship and that it is neither a unique nor practice-specific form of thinking and knowing about music? Although Elliott will argue that listening *per se* is allowed for in the praxial approach, it is not accorded the status of being a musical practice; it is deprioritized as a passive pursuit (which it certainly is not) in relation to the active components such as performing; it is *postponed* as a private procedure more fitting to adult life, and is denied the specific teaching (unattached, for its purposes, to active music making) which must surely be necessary to ensure that it can be indulged to maximum effect in that form, which is typical of most involvement in music, if we are to trust the statistics and the commercial evidence of investment in music listening.

The writer finds nothing in Natalie Sarrazin’s description of Elliott’s philosophy (as based ‘on ethnomusicological theory ... a multidimensional model aimed at aiding musical understanding This multicultural music is subsumed through praxis, where all learning is to occur through culturally informed significant musical challenges’) which is outside the scope of the aesthetic approach (as fully treated in Reimer’s book). Again what is wanting here is a clear definition of what *cultural* means and the extent to which it should be allied to artistic considerations (enlightenment and refinement of taste acquired by intellectual and aesthetic/artistic training) or just considered as the typical behaviour, customary beliefs, social forms and material traits of a racial or social group. This latter meaning does

little service to the artistic aspirations of such groups, which may be very real and very valid indeed in many, if not most, of their musical manifestations.

Clarification of this confusion (in which Elliott constantly refers to *artistic* performance and *interpretation*, both redolent of aesthetic treatment - which does not recognize the artwork as an entity in itself, divorced from the response of the percipient, let it be said)¹⁰³ would throw considerable light on the apparent contradiction in which Elliott first asserts that ‘*MM* never states or assumes that “music” is different from a work of music’ and then follows this by challenging the assumption that “What is music?” is the same as the question “What is a *work* of music [in the *aesthetic* sense]”. It does appear as if Elliott, in his investigation of the social nature of ‘music makers, music making and musical works (broadly conceived)’ regards the art connotation (in spite of his constant invocation of artistic phraseology) as insufficient and unnecessary for his purposes. It certainly leads to an interesting (if somewhat pointless, because it is a too loose) definition of music as a diverse human practice. While it celebrates music as a mere skill-based artefact (although he disavows the need for skill), it does little, on the one hand, to establish a sense of distinctiveness or even of uniqueness for music which has no aspiration to artistic utterance; on the other, the definition is pejorative for an overwhelming repertoire of music which definitely is conceived by its makers (composers, interpreters and listeners) in artistic terms.

5.5.8 Listening

In 5.5.3 (8) above, Reimer draws attention to a recurrent implication (it is never developed sufficiently to be more than this) in *Music Matters* that what applies to performance is equally valid for improvising, composing, arranging and conducting (but *not* to listening *per se*). This causes some confusion as when the philosopher Wolterstorff is quoted (by Elliott) as saying that ‘[m]ost of all, musicing reminds us that performing and improvising through singing and playing instruments lies at the heart of MUSIC as a diverse human practice. ... the basic reality of music is not works or the composition of works but music making’. This seems definitively to anchor Elliott’s philosophy in championing performance; listeners (defined as those uninvolved simultaneously in any other musical activity) are disfranchised in the process, Elliott’s strategy being to channel them all into performance, whether or not it is their choice of involvement in music.

¹⁰³ R. G. Collingwood epitomizes this concern in his *Principles of Art*, 41 and 108:

Aesthetic theory is the theory not of beauty but of art. The theory of beauty ... is merely an attempt to explain away the aesthetic activity by appeal to a supposed quality which is in fact nothing but the activity itself, falsely located not in the agent but in his external world. ... There is in art proper a distinction resembling that between means and end, but not identical with it;

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What emerges from the section on ‘Musical Listening’ (MEND 416, 13), when it has been divested of the predictable trappings of thesis, counterposition, claim, counterclaim and defence, is that both Reimer and Elliott value listening, although their approaches are somewhat different, notably in the way Elliott consciously avoids overt enthusiasm for any procedure that might be seen as aligning him with MEAE. It is palpable how he damns with faint praise (verbal concepts and listening are particularly targeted) only to readmit the perceived so-called MEAE practices with cautionary qualifications. The point at issue is not whether active music making (performing, conducting, etc.) demands cultured listening, which no reasonable person would deny.

Enough has been said about Elliott’s failure to stress the importance of listening as an independent activity, as employing situated forms of knowing, and as a comprehensively challenging activity in its own right; and his isolation of performance (by various comments that deprioritize the other activities into parenthetical and nominal roles) as his effective route to musicianship and to listening has also been commented on. The dominating effect of Reimer’s (MEAE?) philosophy is evident in Elliott’s repeated reactions to it, resulting in implausible sequences, simply because they are incomplete (except in the *small print* or as elicited by Reimer’s criticism). The central issue here is the status of listening as a freestanding activity in its own right. It can be taken from Elliott’s defence that it may now be admitted as a valid pursuit. And Elliott may be credited with sincerity in the assertion that his ‘concern for music listening as praxis - the nature, values, teaching and learning of music listening - outweighs the attention [he] gives to any other topic’. This, of course, should be axiomatic in any philosophy of music education.

The upshot of all this selective and pejorative interpretation by each writer of the other’s intentions, and a dogged insistence on playing down the full spectrum of activities provided for in the rival philosophical approach, attempting to deny it credibility, is that the similarities between the two eventually emerge more vividly than their incompatibilities, at least on the subject of listening. Elliott’s activities (all five, but on a rapidly diminishing scale of feasibility, leaving performance implicitly as the dominant mode) are included in the wider context of MEAE (or so the writer believes). It seems grossly unfair to single out the school curriculum for *voluntary* non-performers as defining the totality of MEAE - an impression that may easily be taken from Elliott’s implications. And Elliott is at pains to correct Reimer’s interpretation of praxialism as discouraging listening when it is unrelated to one of his (Elliott’s) activities. There is, of course, still the question of balance and emphasis which, in a North American context, is imponderable since the autonomy of individual state control of the curriculum (or the adoption of proposed standards) intervenes, adding an extra

something to do with emotion, with a resemblance to arousing it, but [which] is not arousing it; something to do with making things ... but not by skill.

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dimension of confusion to the shortfall between the intended and delivered curriculum. And there is as yet no edifice of methodology devoted to the wholesale delivery of praxialism (and the National Standards in the US, couched in very general and neutral terms, evince no special commitment to it), so its effectiveness remains conjectural.

The section dealing with musical understanding is another case of futile arguing and point-scoring on an issue which really is as unsolvable as the theories in each philosophy are unprovable in absolute terms. Ignoring Reimer's unwary isolation of performance (which is irrelevant to this issue anyway) as Elliott's only substantial activity, there can be little doubt that immersion in one or more of the activities of performing, improvising, composing, arranging and conducting will lead to enhanced musical understanding. The number of professional musicians (including scholars) who have been untouched by some form of music-making (as defined by Elliott) must be minuscule. It is also probable that the vast majority of these musicians have been exposed to a balanced (pre-praxial) diet of both practice and so-called academic experiences. There is therefore little substance in an argument (Elliott's) that just *asserts* that their musical understanding emanates from a specific component of their training (music-making). Many people have their experiences and understanding of music enriched by their reading and by listening *per se* (two areas of involvement that are accorded only a kind of second-class citizenship by Elliott). And those who make their contribution to the music enterprise by writing about it certainly contribute to those understandings, both in their own concentrated listening-based research and in the subsequent appreciation of their readers.

It is a truism to assert that all understandings in music must, of course, and by definition, be music-based. If, as seems now to be the case, Elliott has made a place (albeit a relatively lowly one) for listening *per se*, it follows that listening as an activity in itself can and must contribute (and handsomely, the writer believes) to musical understanding. Apropos, it seems an artificial distinction which denies listening a full role (or accords it only a compromised one) as an activity, since Elliott claims that it, like all his preferred activities, employs the full range of five forms of knowing that he proposes for our consideration. It therefore also seems ungenerous and pessimistic, if not spurious, for Elliott to assert that 'intelligent writings about music are not manifestations of *musical* understanding in the fullest sense'. The writer knows non-practitioner musicians in academia who write about music, not only with great appreciation, understanding and passion, but in such a way as to stimulate their readers and to communicate to them much of what they feel, which is undeniably truly musical. Nor are such understandings to be equated to mastery of certain concepts like 'style' or 'rhythm' or 'the Renaissance', as Howard Gardner suggests pejoratively. If one keeps listening in mind, as one of *now six* modes of music-making, Gardner's definition fits very well: '... any notion of understanding ought to center on the capacities exhibited and the operations carried out by masters of a domain

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[including writers/listeners?], and each domain features its own characteristic constraints and opportunities', though doubtless this is not Gardner's intended meaning.

It is becoming increasingly obvious in this comparative study that there are two scholars who see themselves, and behave, as if they are in polar positions, while the writer believes that the polarity is without real substance. In one case it is assumed the better to ward off siege and threat: in the other, by deconstructing the strongly established and widely recognized position of the first and by distancing itself from its 'suspect' tenets it is hoped to persuade the readers to reject them and embrace the opposite. Elliott places this polarity apparently at its most extreme when he quotes Reimer as saying that '[p]erforming, in the general music programme, is an essential but contributory mode of interaction with music' whereas his stance is that '[l]istening to recordings in the general music program, as in all praxial curricula, is an essential but contributory mode of interaction with music'. But are these statements also not merely variants of the same basic principle - that performance (activities) *and* listening are quintessential in the music education dispensation? It seems to the writer that Reimer is being cast as a pragmatist and Elliott as an idealist here but, apart from these differences, each defining a respected approach to philosophy (in practice and in concept, though paradoxically they are in reverse roles here, Elliott being the more academic and Reimer the more practical in approach), it is not always a case of comparing like with like.

5.5.9 Towards Rationalization

The parameters that need to be weighed in the balance are sketched below:

1. Although Elliott is Canadian, it may be taken that both he (*MM*, Chapter 12) and Reimer (*A Philosophy* [1989], Chapter 9) are addressing the school music education scene in the United States, for the purposes of their confrontation in this instance.
2. Music education in the United States is not uniform in approach and this accounts for much of the confusion. Reimer's position has changed with the realities of the perceived successes and failures of the dispensation, as far as it can be assessed in general terms, and this has always been made admirably clear. It should be affirmed, however, that his base philosophy and his commitment to the aesthetic principle has not changed and this is stated in the 1989 edition of his book (*A Philosophy*, xiii). There is no doubt that the system - Music Education as Aesthetic Education (MEAE) is largely attributable to him, as intellectual property, but much further confusion has been generated over the years as to its total remit (and Elliott has compounded the confusion). If one is to be guided by *A Philosophy of Music Education* (1989), it is clear that the approach considers the

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comprehensive programme in schools and so, for the purposes of this study, does not elevate listening over performance, as any honest reader will soon discover. To interpret Reimer's book otherwise would be to do him an injustice. There is thus no cause whatsoever for Elliott to be triumphalist (see Note 11 of his essay [MEND 416]) about the order in which the American National Standards (MENC Music Content Standards [MEND 303]) list music activities; it would be very strange indeed if performing music did not occupy an important position, as it would be if listening were not also included. But it should be remembered that, as Paul Lehman states in his paper on these very standards (MEND 303, 3), they are no more than an aspiration, an attempt to make a 'clear and explicit statement of what every young American should know and be able to do in music. ... Our [US] standards summarize what results we seek from music instruction rather than what *activities* [writer's italics] we think the students should engage in. They are not advocacy statements. They don't promote any particular methodology. They are not a curriculum ... They say nothing about how they are to be achieved; that is left to the school districts and individual teachers'. Could anything be stated with more neutrality or less hierarchical intent?

5.5.10 The Realities of American Music Education

The realities of American music education, with a long history which predates Reimer by half a century or more, are that music *is* and *has been* perceived as a matter of performance, with supplementary ancillaries as dictated locally by music educators and education policy. Nor is this surprising; there has been a similar attitude in Ireland, which is the concern in Harry White's paper. Reimer cannot be credited with or criticized for the performance programme as it has evolved in the US. And he has made it clear on many occasions that, in spite of its successes, which are considerable and impressive, it tends to be too unidimensional; it is doubtful, reading Elliott's *MM* as he would wish, that such a programme would meet with *his* unqualified approval either. The problem that faced Reimer and the music education strategists (before 1970 and even up to the present) is the stranglehold that the performance programme exerts over the music education mentality, in its widest contexts, and for reasons that are complex, socially and politically, and far beyond the scope of this study to explain. Suffice it to say that the performance programme is a sturdy irreducible and fixture that presents an enormous challenge to the National Standards, in their acceptance and enactment, to modify.

The performance programme is a matter of national pride in the US, but its robustness (tied, *inter alia*, into issues of the employment of performers as music teachers) is such that it also controls the attitudes of student participants. Thus only a negligible part of the performance cohort participates in the general music programme and, considering its optional status in middle and high schools

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(whatever about the future), there is little that could have been done in the past to change that. Thus there were and are two music education programmes in schools - one performance-dominated to the point of suppressing or merely paying lip service to the many supportive activities, the other, erroneously assumed to be MEAE, by definition or by a natural process of students exerting options (or not) being virtually bereft of performers. It is arguable (and Elliott's idealism is compelling here) that this pseudo-streaming, in operation, has had discriminatory effects (on both cohorts) but, considering that it is only in the 1990s that the arts have been accepted as essential in education (see Lehman - MEND 303), Reimer and his colleagues were faced with a virtually immutable situation in the 1970s. This gives a totally different perspective to Reimer's statement that '[p]erforming, in the general music program, is an essential [note *essential*] but contributory mode of interaction with music'.

Faced with this entrenched socially-based (as distinct from school- or educationally-based) dichotomy, with music education in a weak and vulnerable position *vis-à-vis* the employment potential of other (core) subjects, the question might very well have been asked as to what options were open to music educators. It must have seemed plausible and compelling that they should have tried to salvage some musical experiences for those who were, by choice, non-performers (in the sense of falling short of even competent, not to mention proficient or expert level) by exposing them to the widest feasible repertoire of music through listening, and (presumably with the mediation of inspired and inspiring teachers), to help them to listen with more enjoyment, purpose and understanding. There is no reason to believe that Reimer and colleagues would not have been delighted, if they had been presented with the resources (teacher training), the time and the guaranteed interest of students, to have developed performance-rich curricula which would also have included balanced offerings of other activities, including listening. Now the situation is vastly changed, at least potentially, but, as noted above, although music is included in the Goals 2000 Education Legislation, the National Standards have no power to impose a single programme to replace the two-stream one hitherto in operation.

MEAE responded and adjusted (through the MENC document [National Standards]) to the promise of the legislative provisions. Indeed, since the advocacy movement was already showing signs of a major breakthrough as early as 1992, Elliott's book (1995) could also have taken advantage of the enhanced status of music education, even to the point of assuming that in its delivery the new dispensation would not be inimical to praxial ideas. The National Standards do not amount to a mandatory national curriculum; they rely for their implementation on state-by-state adoption, but statistics and predictions (2004) are encouraging that this is happening. It is heartening, too, that federal legislation supports the arts in education. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to predict the detail of their implementation, especially in such matters as the balance between curriculum-as-practicum (Elliott's

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maxim) and the more traditional approaches of MEAE. Comparing the Standards broadly with the terminology of the multiple British systems, we find the three-fold and two-fold elements (composing/performing/listening, or just music-making/appraising) predictably included. (Only conducting and arranging are omitted.) In fact it is difficult, in the light of the template provided by the National Standards, to imagine how Praxialism and MEAE (in its broadest sense) differ, since they both seem to fit so comfortably (and would claim to do so) with the aspiration of the published Music Content Standards (see MEND 303).

Circumventing the argument about Elliott's five (only!) forms of music making and assuming that performance is typical of the challenge in each, as involving all his suggested forms of knowing (procedural, formal, informal, impressionistic and supervisory), there are two philosophies to be compared on basics. Each recommends thorough involvement in performance and listening; each is cognizant of the intimate relationship between and mutual inclusivity of product and process; neither eschews concepts as learning tools when appropriately employed. Both are concerned with giving to all learners the best possible legacy of truly musical experiences. There is a range of relevant parameters to consider in deciding on the best approach to this classical dilemma of optimizing the educational experience:

1. The nature of music and the characteristics that we wish to transmit in education. While the ultimate goals of music education remain unfulfilled, this must be a perennial preoccupation with strategists. In particular it is necessary to relate music to art, not to define it so absolutely (because of the danger that it would fail the criterion of universal validity), but simply because the relationship is a common perception of the nature of music and is probably and primarily so in most cultures, whether conscious or intuitive. This is not to revive any spurious and obsolete dichotomy which distinguishes between the terms 'fine art' and the so-called 'useful arts' (based on function and the technical theory of art as an example of craft, means and end). The aim here is to be sure of and honest about educational motivations. Music may be related to anthropology, but we should be clear as to whether we are teaching it in this context or for its intrinsic qualities; it is not to disavow either approach when vindicated in practice, but it is necessary to be sure of the precise orientation. If music as art is insufficient for some contemporary views of comprehensiveness (and this is becoming increasingly problematic), there must be clarity as to when it is *not* art and why and how we teach it in that context. That is to throw down the gauntlet to certain praxial ideas and to demand more finely wrought and unambiguous theories than are currently available. Theory should flow from empiricism and should in turn fertilize practice. But it appears to the writer that the relationship of music and art is not satisfactorily resolved in Elliott's philosophy; he consistently uses

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terms in reference to music making (musical, expressive, artistic, interpretation) which are redolent of art contexts, yet he shies away from the aesthetic connotations, for reasons that have become obvious.

2. The distribution of talent, interest and commitment amongst the student body. This is typically Gaussian and makes a strong case for streaming.
3. The nature of performing and listening, how each contributes to overall musical refinement as a product of teaching/learning, and the possible dominant reliance on one or the other as a vehicle for instruction and participation.
4. Whether to have one or two programmes and the relationship between them (see 2 above).
5. The availability of relevant teaching expertise.
6. The realities of the terms competent, proficient and expert and the associated time constraints in the acquisition of these skills.

The remaining so-called ‘myths’ to which Elliott has responded will now be examined. Reimer claims that ‘whatever learnings do accrue from performance are learnings unavailable to the vast majority of people, in our culture, very few of whom become, or choose to become, competent, proficient, or expert performers, despite Elliott’s illogical premise that this is achievable simply by involving them in the exploratory performance experiences in schools (what he terms “curriculum-as-practicum”)’. Elliott’s response runs as follows: ‘Reimer seriously underestimates people’s musical capacities and the expertise of music educators past and present. The vast majority of people have sufficient musical intelligence to achieve competent (if not proficient) levels of musicianship through systematic programs of music education. Musicianship is a form of knowing that is accessible, achievable and applicable to all. ... Reimer’s tendency to undervalue the artistic potential of music students and music educators is a major weakness in his philosophy’.

The realities and the statistics are overwhelmingly against Elliott’s theory. It is not a question of doubting people’s musical intelligence or the expertise of the best music educators. It is just undeniable that propensity seldom runs to the commitment of time to acquire serviceable skills of performance (Elliott’s ideal); the Gaussian distribution will ensure that performance is exploratory (to use Reimer’s word) for the vast majority, even if they are forced into it. And its exploratory nature will undoubtedly limit it as a vehicle for even modestly sophisticated learnings and exposure (through the music making itself) to the wealth of music to which they should have access. It is not valid for Roberts to cite ‘the most impressive successes of our profession [as having] already proven his [Elliott’s] case’. The music programme has to be implemented within the capability of the average teacher. The levels of expertise assumed in Elliott’s philosophy (and he has admitted it to the writer in

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an interview [Fort Worth, Texas, September 1995]) are aspirational and therefore idealistic. And even if all were paradigmatically excellent, it is still impossible ‘to make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear’ when attitudes are indifferent and time is wanting, especially in a performance programme.

The writer contends that the skill element, in which time dominates over levels of commitment, interest and talent, militates against the potential of Elliott’s curriculum-as-practicum, in spite of his sanguine assertions to the contrary. And Stubley’s words, quoted by Elliott in his own favour: ‘[t]his perspective differs from pragmatic approaches in that the problems to be solved arise in and evolve through the music making itself ... through exploration and interpretation of musical works as multidimensional challenges’, would not define a real Elliott/Reimer difference if listening were to be considered as an act of music making with all its wealth of musical problems to be solved; the flattering proposition of ‘listening as vicarious performance’ is not lacking in distinguished advocacy. Finally the writer, who has a lifetime of experience in the teaching of performance up to the highest international standards, can attest to its value and suitability as a vehicle for exposing learners to the most transcendental musical experiences but, at the levels typically attained in school settings, it is so hampered, as it is dominated, by the multifarious tasks of mere technical control that it is severely limited in its scope to maximize other musical achievement outside of itself.

Myth 10 - ‘that Elliott makes clear his aversion to language to clarify musical structure’ may be taken as a misapprehension on Reimer’s part in the light of Elliott’s response, which simply denies the claim, providing ample quoted material from *MM* to reassure us on the question of the undeniable usefulness and, indeed, the indispensability, of language in music education. It is on the question of using verbal concepts as organizers of the curriculum that Elliott takes his stance, leading us to consider Myth 11 (Elliott’s curriculum ‘in its massive concentration on performing as the only proper way to encounter music ... allows for only the performer’s perspective on what musical experiences can properly consist of’). Reimer’s accusation clearly overstates the case here, by stressing the bias on performance and ignoring the other activities which Elliott almost always includes, albeit usually parenthetically, leaving himself, withal, open to facile misinterpretation.

This is balanced by Elliott’s distortion of the listening issue and his pejorative description of how it is approached in MEAE; this is at the core of how these scholars can so easily misinterpret, rather than misunderstand, one another by conveying the impression that their philosophies are incompatible and mutually exclusive in application. If Reimer’s insistence on Elliott’s exclusive championship of performance is unfair, it is, on the other hand, illogical for Elliott artificially to separate listening from the other five activities and, further, to deprecate it by minimizing, if not denying, its creativity (see below). Furthermore it is misleading to claim that MEAE (only [writer’s insertion]) ‘organizes

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curricula in relation to verbal concepts about musical elements (tied primarily to recordings)' whereas, in fact, on the one hand, it is treating listening as a music making activity and, on the other, it also has a performance programme where, in all probability much of what Elliott is recommending is taken for granted as an inclusion. Is this tendency to ignore Reimer's ideas about the performance programme (see *A Philosophy*, pp. 182-213) deliberate?

Apropos, in the writer's view, amongst the music makers who do not physically make the actual sounds (composers, arrangers and conductors) it is inconceivable, anyway, that listeners should be excluded as music-makers, since, interestingly and generically, without them there is virtually no music at all. It is also true that listening is the least egotistical of music making activities; and without the 'thousand-headed public' to communicate and share with, all other forms of music making are relegated to a much smaller and solipsistic world. It is vehemently suggested, on the writer's total conviction, that if Elliott were to abandon his subconscious aversion to listening *per se* (because of its MEAE connotations?) much of the phraseology of his praxial philosophy would read more naturally and more convincingly. The feeling of an anti-MEAE (Reimer) agenda is so pervasive as to detract constantly from his plausibility. Read, for example, the following passage, in praise of praxialism, without excluding listening as a 'focused artistic transaction' (a credible and not extravagant claim): '[f]irst the values of music arise from focused artistic transactions with meaningful musical challenges. Achieving musical values depends on developing students' musicianship-listenership (forms of *working* understanding) in direct relation to excellent musical works'. Such a passage could arguably have been written by Reimer, and he would have been proud to have acknowledged it; the writer can find no incompatibility with Reimer's ideas.

It is close to dissembling when we find Elliott, again reacting to a perceived MEAE device, first legitimizing verbal knowings and then damning them with faint praise although, as 'formal knowledge', they are included in his five forms of knowing. 'The core of musical understanding is essentially tacit and procedural: it is the non-verbal know-how, intuition, savvy, and metacognitive strategies that listeners and music makers (of all kinds) use to construct musical patterns and meanings as listeners and music makers.' Again anything that smacks of MEAE lore is downgraded. But what is to be made of these passages in themselves as revealing Elliott's inconsistencies? He speaks of *excellent* musical works, explicitly declaring that judgement, valuing and hierarchy are in his educational armoury (as they should be), although he disallows them in any intercultural sense (note his insistence on the innate equality of musical practices. And see Aspin, [International Journal of Music Education, Number 27, May 1996, p. 56] for a direct challenge to what Elliott is interpreted as implying). And is he saying that non-performing listeners (who *are* validated) *do construct* musical

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patterns and meanings using all of his musical knowings (though it is derisory as to how verbal formal knowing can be selectively downgraded relative to the rest in the process)?

Surely the sensible attitude to verbal concepts about music is to see them for what they are - an aid to the better understanding, and so the more fruitful experience, of music itself. It seems perfectly normal and unexceptionable that concepts or principles would evolve naturally within any system taking a philosophy to the practical stage of methodology. This is implicit, too, in Elliott's philosophy although, because of its newness, it is perhaps less developed in this context. But reflective practitioners (Elliott's term) must be trusted to use these tools with prudence and circumspection. Concepts are not to be viewed as a set of solutions in search of problems, or, as Reimer so wisely advises, 'we do not use concepts for the sake of teaching concepts'.

Swanwick is even more pragmatic in observing that 'the only good reasons for choosing anything are that it has musical potential'. But let Elliott have the final word, which does not, in the writer's view, contradict the clear intent of MEAE as articulated by Reimer. Here is what Elliott says: 'the praxial philosophy advocates a context-sensitive use of all forms of language and conceptualization; *MM* gives verbal concepts an important but contributory role in music teaching and learning'. In any pragmatic approach, not influenced by bizarre and far-fetched interpretations of what aesthetic theory is proposing, the two philosophies being compared here are not appreciably at variance. If indeed MEAE is as narrow in its outlook and method as Elliott is claiming (and this is open to question if we are to credit the profession with a thoughtful and analytical approach to the implementation of the curriculum and the primacy of the music itself over method), it is high time that the underlying philosophy be reappraised and modified as appropriate.

There is clear evidence that this has been done. If the 1992-94 National Standards (Music Content Standards) in the US are scrutinized, they can be seen to reflect federal approval for the idea that students will no longer have the option to minimize their participation in performance; nor will educational strategists be faced with the impossible and depressing task of coping with that option. In this sense American public opinion itself (and Reimer is the first to draw attention to it. See his response above [MEND 402] to Harry White's paper *A book of manners in the wilderness*), in confronting and defeating government on its initial failure to include the arts in the *Goals 2000* legislation, has finally brought about a review of the worst features of the dual system. It is to be hoped that in the state-by-state enactment of the Standards a more balanced approach to music content will be possible - one that neither reaffirms the predestined failures of MEAE (in the general programme) to cater effectively for the non-performer, nor swings too far towards a skill-intensive

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praxial approach which places impossible constraints on student availability of time to cope with even the performance component.

In this sense Swanwick is justified in claiming that ‘music education as aesthetic education [but only in its attempt to save the general programme (writer’s insertion)] seems indeed to have had its day’. And in this context Humphreys’s comment (MEND 416, 19) acquires real significance, though not necessarily that envisaged by Elliott: ‘Elliott is so convincing in his numerous discussions about the narrowness of MEAE and the inadequacies of its handmaiden - listening-centred general music curriculums - that music educators should settle the arguments about the utility of MEAE as a comprehensive philosophy for the field once and for all’. Humphreys, perhaps unknowingly, is confirming the fact that MEAE indeed has and had *two* forms (performance and general), which together comprised its comprehensive form. It will be interesting to see how the aesthetic principle enshrined in Reimer’s work can metamorphose in practice to match the as yet undefined mode of reformed American music education in schools. The burning question will centre, as it always has, around the nature of performance and its accommodation and growth without loss of the outstanding and historical achievement of a talented and committed minority cohort of learners in this branch of music making. This, too, is a problem for Ireland, though the scale and the context are obviously different.

In spite of Reimer’s claim that Elliott has ‘contempt for any interest in the idea that music might be fruitfully studied as one part of a larger family of the arts’, they are found to be of one mind. The question arises because of the provision in the National Standards for students ‘understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts’. One would expect music educators to insist that inter-art collaborations or the study of music which is combined with other arts (dance; poetry; drama) should not unduly dilute the intrinsically musical components in the hybrid study. In fact, Elliott is perhaps a little too accommodating (when the time element is considered in relation to what can be achieved within a limited allocation) by suggesting that ‘to learn how to make and listen for musical works that involve other artistic practices requires reference to the whole web of beliefs, concepts, traditions and standards that explain how certain musicians and listeners understand the contribution that other performing and non-performing arts make to their music cultures’.

Suffice it to say that in relation to the polarity of the two philosophies this is really a non-issue. It is interesting, however, to note Elliott’s heading for this section - Music and the other Arts - which can only mean that he considers music to be an art; if this is so it would be equally interesting to have clarification on the aesthetic theory that he espouses. Aesthetics is, after all, the theory, not of beauty,

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but of art (Collingwood)¹⁰⁴ and exists in a massive corpus which predates Reimer's excursions into the field. In this respect, Reimer's derivations are admirably lucid. To reject them in the name of music 'in the broader sense of musical practices, cultures, works, processes and more' is acceptable as a thesis only if the earlier aesthetic theory is suitably revised and presented in a modified form which satisfactorily explains the artistic connotations of music that aspires to the condition of art.

Even in this context, it has to be stated that Elliott's pejorative description of the aesthetic concept (21 *et seq.* of *MM*) is not flawless as to accuracy; the sweeping statement that 'music is a collection of objects or *works*' is immediately challengeable, and he plays down the insistence on response, which concentrates the value of the experience in the person and not in the work. Elliott himself has conceded that product and process are inseparably interpenetrated, so whatever his aesthetic stance, he, too, is bound into the idea of music as works. Elliott's code of values (implicit in his treatment of the aesthetic concept) includes 'social religious, political, personal or otherwise practical connection these qualities may embody, point to, or represent'. He is therefore enmeshed in the technical theory of 'art' as the useful arts. But there is that marked preponderance of reference to artistic and musical interpretation which constantly confuses the picture.

The question of musical creativity is another issue on which there is a considerable difference of opinion (between Elliott and Reimer) but it is not one on which either philosophy will stand or fall. It really arises from Reimer's situated view that the recognition of creative effort in school music contexts should be as flattering and encouraging as possible to students over the widest spectrum. Creativity is arguably an artistic term as it is certainly subjectively loaded and refractory to exact definition. We may take it that Elliott is correct when he says that originality is necessary for creativity, but it is not sufficient; however, he also refers to originality (see the quotation in his essay from p 221 of *MM*) in a way which seems to imply otherwise. In responding to Reimer he is impaled unnecessarily in contradiction.

First there is a vast difference in degree between Elliott's relatively modest idea of creativity, as arising from 'a person engaged in thoughtful processes that result in a tangible achievement judged as innovative (or not) by people who know the standards and history of a domain', and the supporting statement he offers from Csikszentmihalyi, who insists that 'the creative individual is a person who regularly solves problems, fashions products, or defines new questions in a domain in a way that is initially considered novel but that ultimately becomes accepted in a particular cultural setting'. The matter can only be solved by agreement on a definition and these two do not coincide. Elliott tells us that 'musical creativity and musicianship are mutually interdependent and interactive' and that

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

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‘creativity and musicianship should be taught concurrently’; he illustrates musicianship on a continuum (novice to expert. See p132 of *MM*), yet he denies creativity the same continuum. He also states that ‘children (and all music students) can achieve creative musical results in their performing (*et al*). ... because developing students’ musical creativity overlaps and extends the process of developing students’ musicianship’.

Elsewhere Elliott claims that ‘musical creativity is not something that a novice can achieve’ yet musicianship is, and the two are inseparably bound; there is something very arbitrary about this distinction. The writer struggles to equate this view with those of Gardner and Csikszentmihalyi in Elliott’s further invocations. It appears that the real crux of the matter is not Elliott’s own views on creativity (which merit Aspin’s praise [MEND 415], without pontificating between Reimer and Elliott) but his insistence that creativity can only occur at the higher levels of achievement (competent is one suggestion [see MEND 416, 19]), and his aligning himself with Gardner and Csikszentmihalyi in adopting a highly sophisticated definition such as the ‘best professional examples’ but also descending to ‘what expert music educator’s recognize as good artistic and creative secondary-school jazz improvising, middle school composing, children’s choral singing, and so on’.

Holding Elliott’s own views up to Collingwood’s artistic theory might help to place the matter in true perspective. Collingwood demands something more than means and end or the exercise of skill or craftsmanship; and he expects a feelingful element that is not equivalent to emotional arousal (expressiveness is the Langerian word). What is involved here are artistic choices (and not just random decisions) by the use of intuition and indeed by the skilful combined use of Elliott’s own five ways of knowing that constitute musicianship in its development and achievements and at whatever level. It is inconsistent and educationally questionable to set a lower limit on when the mutual inclusivity of musicianship and creativity has its earliest manifestations. There is, of course, no question of suggesting that the judgement of creativity is a self-congratulatory process at the disposal of every musician who makes music. What Csikszentmihalyi calls social validation (Kant calls it universal validity) is necessary, but this should not arbitrarily exclude part of the musicianship continuum. It is perfectly plausible (and is enacted typically every day in the examination of performance candidates in the British system) that a cohort of reflective music practitioners (teachers/ assessors) would individually agree that the performance of a child at the most rudimentary level can be particularly musical (the writer has observed copious examples of this) and, therefore, that the performance can be artistic and, by definition, creative too, because of a unique combination of craft, feeling and musical intuition.

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As to the denial by Elliott that there can be such a thing as creative listening, this obviously is influenced by his exaggerated aversion to his own interpretation (and distortion) of MEAE's so called 'listening-centred general music curriculums'. To deny that listening has no tangible musical achievements that can be witnessed and measured is a denial of the whole purpose of listening and its educational potential. Why would anyone want to listen or teach listening if it represents no achievement, educational or otherwise? The most rudimentary popular perception immediately debunks Elliott's assertion. This is also a denial of one of the most serviceable of all teaching strategies in or vocal teaching - that of modelling. If a teacher, by a practical illustration or by using a recorded performance, stimulates a student to an immediately more artistic/creative performance, the creativity is the direct (measurable/witnessable) result of the listening itself, which by any reasonable interpretation would itself have to have been open to creativity. Creativity is, in the end, merely a matter of definition but it should surely hinge on educational usefulness in a philosophy of education. Elliott is not convincing in the defence of his definition of creativity as to its serving the education of the young in the most encouraging way.

Reimer's deconstruction of Elliott's six dimensions of music to point out their flaws is one of his less successful critical ventures. He is, in a sense, hoist with his own petard when he acknowledges 'the growing literature of music in which performance is absent' and suggests that it threatens the survival of Elliott's performance-rich strategies. It is surprising that Reimer does not refer to the aesthetic barrenness of this type of music, which is 'devoid of affective consequences' because the production is pure craft, which is necessary but not sufficient for an artistic event. Elliott is much more focused here in stating that 'even in those very few musical practices where compositions are made "directly available" to listeners through technology, composers are inevitably concerned with much more than producing patterns: they are concerned with the artistic and creative presentation of musical events.'

Elliott does speak of *performance-interpretation* which not only establishes that quality of performance which uniquely distinguishes it from technologically produced sounds, but gives it artistic credibility and integrity. And it also makes the provision for feelingful content which then allows him to separate the idea of syntactic and non-syntactic parameters without incurring the allegation of not taking affect into account. But he goes on to explain (what is not obvious from his terminology) that 'cognition and emotion are interdependent. There is no such thing as emotion without cognition (of some sort) and vice-versa'. So listening to musical structure or 'listening deeply to excellent music demands the full range of our conscious powers (attention, intention, cognition, emotion [feeling?], memory)'. The affective content, therefore, is implicit. The difference between Reimer's and Elliott's views here is not a matter of the subtle distinction, drawn by Elliott, between pleasure and enjoyment, but rather of that between emotion and feeling.

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There is a vast literature on the nature of expression; it is a quintessential quality of the arts which has occupied philosophers, aestheticians and other thinkers for centuries; it is epistemologically rich in potential but it is unlikely that agreement or even consensus will be reached on its matrix of characteristics. However, much is made of the distinction between the direct *expression of* something and simply being *expressive of* its qualities. Thus, whatever about Elliott's real intentions here, he uses the terminology that a performance-interpretation can be an 'expression of emotion' (*MM*, 155). In his essay (MEND 416, 22) he modifies this to 'music being *expressive of* [writer's italics] ordinary human emotions'. And the authority he quotes (Davies) is circumspect about phraseology, which can hardly corroborate Elliott's ambiguous stance: 'music is expressive by presenting not instances of emotion but emotion characteristics in appearances. ... Emotions are heard in music as belonging to it, just as appearances of emotions are present in bearing, gait, or deportment ...' Much depends here on an understanding and definition of what constitutes emotion and/or feeling. There is little doubt that both are cognitive and thoughtful. But if emotion is thought of as the *demonstrative partial* of feeling - something which craves discharge, while feeling is embraced as something to be retained in and by the thought processes, it is unexceptionable that Reimer should take Elliott to task and demand greater clarity in relation to this artistic concept. But it is clear from this and other passages that these scholars differ radically in this aspect of how music functions.

The question of 'musical representation', listed by Elliott as one of the six possible dimensions of a Musical Work (*MM*, 155), is tied into another philosophical stance - that of simple Referentialism, which has been rejected by all schools of Absolutism from Hanslick to Langer. As its name implies, referents outside the music are constantly being searched out; this extrinsic interest distracts the listener from the sounds themselves - or so the aesthetic lobby would claim. Harold Abeles (MEND 302), who is very eclectic in his philosophical preferences, states in *Foundations of Music Education* (p.57) that 'not only does it focus attention on things other than the music itself; it also doesn't work'. But if one ponders the claim that probably more than 90% of music experience and participation is non-aesthetic in intent (though this does not mean that it fails as art or that there is no aesthetic experience), there is a case to be answered.

Whether Elliott's laudable attempts to recognize and obliquely to point out this fact will succeed in changing the educational approach, and open the school repertoire to all kinds of Musics, is not clear at this stage. The argument that teaching music as art is educationally straightforward, well developed methodologically, and prepares the student for the accommodation of most, if not all, other forms of music, is a comfortable and robust stance, although one that is being increasingly challenged by idealists, Elliott included. But the idea that art can be useful and functional too, without ceasing to be art, is not incompatible with aesthetic theory. While it is inaccurate to claim that in Reimer's

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philosophy ‘everything “outside” structural elements is stigmatized as “extramusical”’, especially if the argument above as to the relationship between cognition and feeling is taken into account, there is still a need to relax the canons of aesthetics if music in education is to have a real significance, at all times, to life as lived, in whatever community. Reimer’s response (MEND 402) to Harry White’s *A book of manners in the wilderness* is a very candid comment on the difficulties to be faced in effectively widening the repertoire and providing for the expert and effective teaching of music in the general school programme with this expanded brief.

Elliott responds very convincingly to Reimer’s suggestion that he (Elliott) misses ‘the sensuous dimension, in which what we experience as we listen is, in important ways, experienced in, through, and by the body. Without this dimension the experience can be conceived of as entirely cerebral and therefore devoid of an essential aspect of its pleasure and meaning’. This tit-for-tat recrimination on the subject of the lack of appreciation of sensuous qualities or affect, quite apart from being mildly puzzling, is another example of how these two writers regularly choose to misinterpret and misrepresent one another’s pronouncements. Reimer’s mistake is that he finds Elliott’s six dimensions of a Musical Work too bland in failing to emphasize the affective (Reimer does not accept the validity of ‘expressions of emotion’); this is perhaps a plausible view until Elliott’s response, linking cognitive and affective responses inseparably in a general phenomenological way, corrects the misunderstanding.

Elliott’s theorizing, if it did not have such an air of assumed infallibility, and were it not couched in such dismissive terms (an attitude all too prevalent also in Reimer when addressing Elliott’s claims), is compelling in relation to a widely held belief that ‘the mind and body are one’. But Reimer makes this very point in his essay (MEND 403, 10) when claiming that performance is ‘giving sounds meaningful form - a condition shared with composers and listeners - form and action, product and process, are inseparable ... mind and body, or thinking and doing, are also unified’. Bearing this in mind, his statement that ‘sound is experienced and enjoyed with the body as well as with the mind’ is confirming that belief, not contradicting it, as Elliott seems to think. Reimer is not trying to separate body and mind, but emphasizing that the integrated bodily experience should be artistically rich, a view with which it may be assumed Elliott would concur, since he constantly stresses the artistic dimension in performance as in all musical experiences. The outcome of this altercation is to confirm that both Elliott and Reimer value the affective and artistic in music, in all its forms, and that this artistic criterion is insufficiently served by certain kinds of cognition, such as the recognition of syntactic and non-syntactic elements alone, devoid of their feelingful charges. In other words the intensity of the feeling must be concentrated in the artistic, if the performance and listening experience is to be an artistic one. Presumably neither is denying that there is a vast difference in essence between

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the feelings generated by structural elements only and those that are produced by an interpretation which discovers and celebrates their artistic relationships.

Elliott's response to Myth 15 is probably the best example in the whole essay of the way in which these adversaries can be at cross-purposes. Here Reimer levels one criticism and Elliott seems to answer a different question. According to Reimer, 'self-growth, enjoyment, self-esteem, and optimal experience' [ends highly prized by Elliott as outcomes of music education] are 'bereft of qualities unique to music'. He charges that the praxial view of musical values puts our profession 'in a more vulnerable position to being perceived as unnecessary in education'. The intrinsicity of music, in an aesthetic sense, has always been a crucial part of the Reimer philosophy; it is therefore not surprising that he should have challenged Elliott's intentionally more liberal view of the meaning of music in human discourse - 'the situated nature of music cognition and musical works, the social and cultural ingredients of particular musical ways of life, the affective specificity of musical enjoyment, and the centrality of artistically produced sound - all these differentiate music and the values of music from all other human pursuits.' Elliott's response goes on to define many aspects of how engagement with music is to foster unique experiences; as he defines these involvements, their properties and their significance, he succeeds in giving a revealing précis of the basis of his whole philosophy, which is not wanting in conviction, post-modern novelty (gleaned and gathered from a variety of sources-psychological, ethnomusicological and philosophical, enriched by his own persuasions) and plausibility.

Elliott's theories are compelling in the current climate of searching - for ways to bridge the gap, in western society, between school and community, without excessive erosion of traditional and cherished educational values; to bring about a revolution leading to a utopian multicultural democracy without overstraining the resources of student capability and interest, teacher expertise and available time; for a formula to endow music as a subject (within the arts programme) with a benign ambivalence and adaptability to function as art, within the canons of aesthetics and all that they entail, while ministering to the unarticulated and subconscious demands of a much wider dispensation which, on the one hand, may be pseudo-art and on the other a social/cultural construct which is not without validity as an objective of education in the broadest sense. Elliott's philosophy has many suggestions to contribute to this massive problem-solving exercise which currently preoccupies the music education lobby at the beginning of a new millennium.¹⁰⁵ But so, also, does aesthetic theory when permitted to make its case, fructified (see Reimer, *A Philosophy*, rev.1989, xi) by its own adaptability to metamorphosis, whether attributable to honest and frequent self-appraisal in the light of imported

¹⁰⁵ Elliott's ideas may not constitute a panacea for music education, and they are not so advanced in this thesis; but neither should their fertility and usefulness, in the ongoing debate, be gainsaid.

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progressive thinking or to a survival instinct that recognizes a threat. The motivation matters little if the modifications are educationally consistent and convincing.

Since Elliott's philosophy is the one on trial in this review of the literature in relation to it, the question must be asked as to whether it is internally consistent; this criterion can be applied to Myth 15. Elliott, it is assumed, would acknowledge that he has written what is, in essence, an anti-aesthetic philosophy. And yet his work is permeated, if not dominated, by aesthetic references which leave an aura of ambivalence that is difficult, and would be misleading, to disregard. Consider Elliott's definition: 'The term aesthetic experience refers to a special kind of emotional happening or disinterested pleasure that supposedly arises from a listener's exclusive concentration on the aesthetic qualities of a musical work [note that Reimer uses the words *musical*, *artistic*, and *intrinsic* interchangeably with *aesthetic* <writer's insertion; Reimer, *A Philosophy*, rev.1989, xiii>], apart from any moral, social, religious, political, personal, or otherwise practical connection these qualities may embody, point to, or represent' (*MM*, 23).

It may be assumed that these other connections are valued equally by Elliott. This is a clear discriminating factor between the two philosophies. But Elliott's uniqueness of music is so redolent of aesthetic theory, in its articulation, as to be deeply indebted to it, as, for example, his reliance on 'the situated nature of music cognition and musical works, the affective specificity of musical enjoyment and the centrality of artistically [aesthetically?] produced sound'. It is not even clear whether the social and cultural ingredients of particular [not all?] musical ways of life are without artistic connotations. The precise nature of these social and cultural interactions is rather vague and is certainly not covered in any great detail in Elliott's essay, and yet they seem to be the key to the essential difference between Reimer and Elliott.

To return to Myth 15, Elliott does not address the question that Reimer puts. He admirably gives his version of the intrinsicality of musical experience, and this is well done, but he does not justify 'self-growth, enjoyment, self-esteem and optimal experience [perfectly valid *educational goals* though they may be, as Bruner (1996) confirms]' as intrinsically musical. Here again is Elliott's 'technical' theory of art which, if it be insisted that he should also invoke the truly aesthetic, comfortably aligns the two philosophies - one (Reimer's) as a pragmatically modified version of strict aestheticism, and the other (Elliott's) as an expanded variant and derivative which seeks to open music (and education) to a considerably wider and, incidentally, a more refractory brief, in an artistic sense. As Reimer wrote in 1989: '[w]hile many of the concepts of aesthetic education remain imperfectly understood and many of its implications remain imperfectly applied, the general view it proposes has become the bedrock upon which our self-concept as a profession rests'. While the assertion may be gratuitously self-

congratulatory, and while the time may be propitious to reappraise the tenets of MEAE, it is not without truth.

5.6 Rationalization

Although there can be little doubt that Elliott's and Reimer's philosophies would have had North American practice as their primary target, it is equally obvious, from readings of their work, that they had a much wider sphere of influence in mind. Besides, the relevance of American practice to global concerns has been argued vehemently in this thesis. It has also been suggested that both philosophies have pretensions towards a species of universality. In taking the analysis further, it is intended, first, to rationalize the outcomes of Chapter 5 more clearly to consolidate the reconciled features into a workable rationale, and to establish guidelines for its applicability in a real situation of school music education, that in Ireland being chosen because of its claims on the second strand of the thesis. This will be undertaken in Chapter 6. The universality hypothesis (see Research Question - 1.2) is a separate issue; this will be tested in Chapter 7 (Overall Conclusions).