



MAiA | Music & Arts in Action

Editorial

Welcome to the newest issue of *Music and Arts in Action* (MAiA), published by the SocArts Research Group, University of Exeter, UK. The articles included in this volume explore a wide range of topics: the role of music and the arts in the social and musical development and in peacebuilding in Ghana and the Nile Basin Region, respectively; how making and performing songs together in a homeless choir may strengthen social bonds and identities and foster social inclusion; how music technologies and performances can challenge the dominant epistemology of 'disability' and help envisioning a different future; and how support personnel – usually not seen as artists – actually shape artworks artistically. The commitment to reality and the potential of impact for change stand out in these contributions.

In *AUMI-Futurism: The Elsewhere and “Elsewhen” of (Un)Rolling the Boulder and Turning the Page*, Jesse Stewart, Sherrie Tucker, Peter A. Williams and Kip Haaheim discuss two performances that used the movement-to-music technology ("Adaptive Use Musical Instrument" AUMI) to allow differently-abled participants to collaborate with one another. Combining disability studies and Afrofuturism, the authors present these performances as "AUMI-Futurism". They examine the collaborative and improvisatory processes while exploring AUMI's role for imagining and performing new communities, and overcoming discrimination.

Nola Marshall, in *Testing Musical Traditions: For social and human development amongst Ga people in South-East Ghana*, explores different genres of performance arts that were developed or adopted and maintained by the Ga people in Greater Accra in South-East Ghana to create solidarity, enhance personal and group identity and assist in collective problem identification, decision making, and conflict resolution. Using ethnographic interviews, observations, and insights from ethnomusicology literature, this paper explores how some of the traditional Ga practice that have a history centuries old continue to be used for self-help and social and human development.

Gregory T. Kordsmeier, in *How Support Personnel Shape Artworks: The case of stage managers*, focuses on the ways in which stage managers affect the artistic outcomes of theatre plays. Through in-depth interviews, participant observation and qualitative content analysis, he analyses the role they play during the different phases of a production. Kordsmeier builds on the sociological idea that artworks are created through a negotiation process between the individuals involved, be it the artists themselves or the support personnel. The author discovers two distinct ways through which stage managers have an artistic impact on the plays: they make artistic choices, and they affect the work of others through non-artistic inputs.

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Graça Boal-Palheiros, in *Singing Against Loneliness: Songs of a homeless choir in Porto*, investigates the community music project *Som da Rua* ('Sound of the Street'), an ensemble of homeless adults created in Porto by Casa da Música in collaboration with several social institutions. The article focuses on the rehearsals and the songs they create and perform collaboratively with the project leader, professional musicians and social workers. Special attention is given to the songs, seen as having a key role in the construction of the group's identity. The essay reflects on the positive consequences the project may have for the participants, by building resilience, developing their skills, and fostering social inclusion.

Kelly Becker, in *The Nile Project: Using music making to practice peacebuilding in the Nile Basin Region*, investigates a collaborative project in East Africa that brings together musicians from the countries that border the Nile River and aims to find a solution to the water crisis in the region. The article explores how these musicians collaborate to create a unified sound despite their linguistic, cultural, musical, and political differences. The effort of playing together encourages musicians to alter and adapt their musical scales to one another. The author argues that making music with those from diverse musical traditions may be a way to practice peacebuilding skills. As such, this project may give musicians a chance to embody "unity in diversity".

Finally, this issue includes Eva Schurig's review of the book *Artistic Practices: Social interactions and cultural dynamics*, edited by Tasos Zembylas (Routledge, 2014).

**PEDRO S. BOIA, EVA SCHURIG, CRAIG ROBERTSON,
AND PINAR GURAN-AYDIN, ROSANNA MEAD, RITA GRÁCIO**

FORTHCOMING SPECIAL AND THEMATIC ISSUES

In 2018 *Music and Arts in Action* will be celebrating its *Tenth Anniversary* since the publication of its first issue in 2008. We will keep committed to publishing exciting and innovative work of interest both to researchers and practitioners. In the meanwhile, the Editorial Team has the pleasure to announce the publication of two volumes during 2018-19:

Music in Peacebuilding: Keywords (Special Issue)

Edited by Min-On Music Research Institute

Call closed, volume currently in preparation, publication expected in 2018

We would like to thank all the contributing authors.

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*El Sistema, Youth Orchestras and Ensembles as socio-artistic intervention:
Exploring contradiction, ambivalence and complexity (Thematic Issue)*

Edited by Pedro S. Boia, CIPEM/INET-md

*Target date extended, submissions currently open (see call in this volume,
<http://musicandartsinaction.net/index.php/maia/article/download/171/pdf>)*

We thank all those who submitted an abstract already and invite other interested authors to send a proposal.

We plan to form a *study group* and organize a *meeting* (conference-symposium) associated to the publication of this volume (to be announced).

Music and Arts in Action permanently accepts new submissions of articles as well as book review proposals, and invites readers and potential authors to check MAiA's website regularly for Calls for Papers. The journal also welcomes inquiries for guest-edited special issues and expressions of interest to translate relevant out-of-copyright work that is under-served in the English-language literature.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Our thanks to Sophia K. Acord and Arild Bergh for their commitment to the MAiA project and technical support, and also to Simon Procter.

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