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## Memories from VII World Congress of Music Therapy, Vitoria Gasteiz, 1993

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## Memories from VII World Congress of Music Therapy, Vitoria Gasteiz, 1993

By Heidi Ahonen, Diane Austin, Ruth Bright, Leslie Bunt, Ginger Clarkson, Janice Dvorkin, Jane Eisler, Suzanne B. Hanser, Sarah Hoskyns, Joanne Loewy, Joseph Moreneo, Helen Odell-Miller, Serafina Poch, Jackie Robarts, Clive Robbins, Patricia L. Sabbatella, Marilyn Sandness, Alan Turry, Gabriela Wagner, Auriel Warwick, Barbara L. Wheeler



Heidi Ahonen, Ph.D.,  
MTA, Professor of Music  
Therapy, Wilfrid Laurier  
University

### Memories from Heidi Ahonen

The photo is from the Mayor's reception for the presenters: Clive Robbins, Amelia Oldfield, and me. We all look so young there, but it was 18 years ago... I remember they served different colors of drinks that night. The conference setting was spectacular and the whole city was so interesting and



Clive Robbins, Amelia Oldfield and Heidi Ahonen at the VII World Congress of Music Therapy, Vitoria Gasteiz, 1993

gorgeous. I remember walking through narrow streets with Amelia Oldfield, Tony Wigram, Gialuigi DiFranco, Patxi Del Campo, and others.

The World Congress 1993 was my very first world congress. I will always remember the particular spirit of Vitoria Gasteiz... I took a lengthy bus ride through the mountains to get there and it was all so stunning. It does seem like ages ago... I remember conducting a panel discussion of my early phases of my PhD research. I wanted to investigate what is the role of music in different music therapy approaches. I found that people either speak about the same issues, using different concepts, or they use the same concepts meaning different things. I also did a workshop: cross-artistic music therapy... The room was loaded, approximately 40 participants... People were sitting on the floor as they were painting something, I don't really remember what...

So many nice memories! And, I remember the food as delicious!



Dr. Diane Austin, ACMT,  
LCAT, Director The  
Music Psychotherapy  
Center New York, NY

### Memories from Diane Austin

It was my 1st world congress and I was very excited to be there. I met many international music therapists for the first time. I remember standing outside of the main building where we registered and meeting people who were talking about "The Case Studies" book and identifying each other by the chapters we had written. "Oh, didn't you write the chapter on Narcissism?" "I wrote the Borderline one!"

I remember the warmth of the Spanish music therapists and their hospitality. I remember the vast array of different and exciting presentations and thought, "I will never miss another World Congress." The level of work I witnessed at this congress seemed more advanced than the presentations I had seen at conferences in the USA. Of course there were some of the most experienced and well known music therapists in the world presenting at this Congress.

I also loved being in such a multi-cultural atmosphere, meeting people from other countries, finding ways to communicate when there were language difficulties. Learning, laughing, enjoying new tastes, new sounds, new ideas.

I also have a very vivid and delightful memory of an after dinner stroll with Clive Robbins and some new and old friends. Clive wanted to hear songs by Rodgers and Hart and we sang our way through the streets. It was a magical night.

### Memories from Ruth Bright



Ruth Bright

I had been elected President in 1990 at the Congress held in Rio de Janeiro; this was both a great honour and a large responsibility too because I was the first Music Therapist to hold that office. (The founding President, elected in Genoa in 1985, was Dr Rolando Benenzon, a psychiatrist who specialised in work with children.)

The 1993 Congress took place in Vitoria, in the Northern part of Spain; I had been there three times previously: two of those visits were to be present at special music therapy courses, and one visit was part of a holiday through Europe which my husband and I arranged in 1992. (Because of my association with WFMT and my then-position as President, we were given a wonderful reception by the city's administrators – who were keen to show us what would be arranged for the Congress the following year!)

The Congress itself went well: the interpreters did an excellent job, and the programme was an interesting one. (But I felt that it emphasised the view of music therapy as performing rather than having therapy. But that was just my view – others would have differed!)

I do not know what my Presidential Address said, but evidently (by my diary notes) it was well received.

My paper was on music therapy and dementia, and – at the end of the paper – a woman stood up, speaking in a very animated way (in Spanish - which was translated for me) about her husband's condition, and of her own poetic compositions. The outcome of this was astonishing and, I am sure, unique!

It was obvious that she wanted to be able to talk to me at length, and the translator asked me whether I would like him to forego his lunch break so that he could enable us to have a proper conversation!

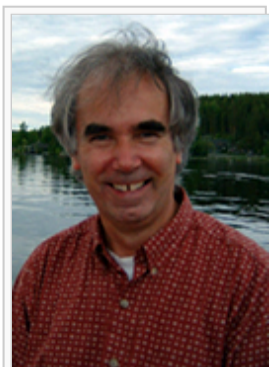
This we did, and although I cannot recall all the conversation, it was a most moving experience to be able to talk freely with someone from another culture, sharing our ideas about dementia, creativity and relationships. (She sent me some booklets of her poetry later in the year.)

I am sorry to say that I cannot recall the title of papers that were given – they were the usual mixture of highly professional and not-so-professional!

There had been much discussion beforehand as to who would take over the Presidency, and Cheryl Dileo was elected. So, at the final session, we had a 'handing-over' ceremony. I had managed to buy a candle-stick for her in Vitoria, and presented this to her (complete with candle!) saying that I was handing this over to her as a symbol of the light continuing to burn under her guidance (or words to that effect!).

Unbelievably, she had bought a pair of candlesticks for me, and she spoke of my having lighted the Federation on its way for three years - so we had the same symbolism in mind!

I was also presented with a wonderful bunch of flowers from the host committee. (Because I was setting off for home next day, these were not of any real use to me, so I went to the local hospital and asked that they be given to someone who had no visitors – and there was such a person there! I did not hand them over personally but was glad that someone would get them.



Leslie Bunt

### Memories from Leslie Bunt

I think that this photo was taken at the beginning of the closing ceremony during which I remember Tony Wigram as Co-ordinator of the International Scientific Committee and Patxi del Campo as General Co-ordinator thanking colleagues for their presentations and for attending the congress. This seventh World Congress of Music Therapy also doubled as the first of the World Federation. It was a very well-attended event with Tony referring in his greeting in the conference brochure to the 200+ presentations from over 30 countries.



From the closing session

The four overall themes of the congress were: 'Clinical Music Therapy; Music Therapy and Experimental Research; Music and Music Therapy; and Training and "Role" of the Music Therapist.' I tried to attend some sessions from each area but, as at all of these big gatherings, could only make a small selection from the many fine presentations. That is not forgetting all the musical and social events on offer. So when I look again at the programme of events here are some of my personal memories:

- listening to Karl Pribram exploring links between physics and music in his opening address
- hearing presentations of such a wide range of clinical work
- appreciating the evolving mixture of research approaches in music therapy, recalling particularly the "framework for qualitative research" presented by Kenneth Bruscia, not knowing at that time the important rôle he would soon play in my future career as my Primary Trainer in Guided Imagery and Music
- becoming more aware of the different approaches to training throughout the world and the need for open discussion on levels of competencies and standards
- hearing Brynjulf Stige talk for the first time about "music therapy as cultural engagement" and discussing with him my vision for community-based music therapy centres as part of MusicSpace, the topic of one of my presentations
- appreciating the song that Gianluigi Di Franco composed specifically for the conference
- as always at these events spending time catching up with friends and colleagues from around the world and meeting new ones
- enjoying the warmth of the Basque hospitality epitomised by Patxi and his team
- and finally enjoying the beautiful city of Vitoria, in particular the old part of the city with those lovely first floor balconies



Ginger Clarkson

### Memories from Ginger Clarkson

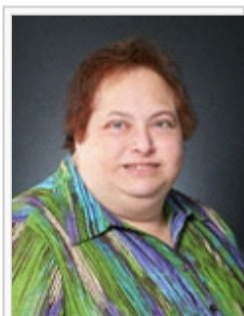
Aside from the warm welcome by Patxi del Campo and Esperanza Torres to beautiful and historic Vitoria, Spain, one of my memories of the 1993 World Congress of Music Therapy is attending an introductory GIM workshop led by Fran Goldberg. Although I was already an AMI Fellow at the time, I had received my training from Carol Bush, Sierra Stokes and Jim Borling in the Mid-Atlantic Institute, and I wanted to have a taste of Fran's expertise. Little did I know how that workshop would change my life.

When Fran asked the participants to pair up for short musical journeys, I happened to choose Irina Schlesinger as my partner. After we had accompanied each other as GIM travelers and guides, Irina and I talked about her valiant trip from Sofia, Bulgaria to attend the Congress. She said that she was the only trained music therapist in her country, which was emerging from forty years under a communist dictatorship, and that she was desperate for contact with colleagues in her field. By the end of the World Congress, Irina was committed to joining Fran's GIM seminars in Germany and Sweden.

Years later, after graduating from Fran's GIM training, Irina contacted me, wondering if we could organize a pioneer GIM program in her homeland. The obstacles were enormous. Under the communist regime, the only psychotherapeutic interventions were electroshock and behavioral therapy. There was very little funding. After consulting with Fran, I decided to fly to Bulgaria free of charge and to give a GIM Level I seminar to twelve interested psychology and music students recruited by Irina, who served as my assistant.

Synchronically, Fran received a phone call from a former GIM client in San Francisco. The woman had just received a large inheritance from her deceased father. As a single person without children, she proposed giving Fran a generous grant to support the spread of GIM in the world, because she herself had benefited so much from the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music. Fran wrote me and Irina to announce that an "Anonymous Angel" would support an entire GIM training in Bulgaria. Together Fran and I planned and taught the advanced GIM seminars. She flew from California, and I flew from my home in Puebla, Mexico. Amazed that we were able to realize her dream, Irina organized venues for our teaching and therapy sessions. Visiting professors, books, recordings, personal sessions, and supervisions were subsidized by the woman we all referred to as our "GIM Angel." Seven years later, Fran and I graduated a small group of Bulgarians who, against all odds, became Fellows of the Association for Music and Imagery. The World Congress of Music Therapy in 1993 unleashed a chain of karmic events that greatly enriched my life.

A further karmic twist in the story about my memories of the 1993 World Congress of Music Therapy is that, for the past six years, I have been leading GIM trainings in Spanish in Vitoria, Spain, initially as a co-teacher with Denise Grocke, and now with the assistance of Esperanza Torres, who became an AMI Fellow after the first generation of GIM in that country. This summer I plan to start helping Esperanza train a third generation of Spanish GIM students, as she completes her requirements to become an independent AMI Primary Trainer. Our GIM training programs are sponsored by the Instituto de Música, Arte y Proceso (MAP), under the direction of Espe's husband, Patxi Del Campo, who hosted the World Congress there in 1993.



Janice Dvorkin, PhD,  
MT-BC, Coordinator of  
the Music Therapy  
Program, University of  
the Incarnate Word,  
San Antonio, TX

### Memories from Janice Dvorkin

This congress was the first one that I attended and presented a paper. The paper was later published in the British Journal of Music Therapy. It was an adventure getting to the conference, but once there, it was terrific. I met the British music therapists and excitedly talked about using the Object Relations theory as a basis of work in music therapy. I was invited to the house of a music therapist to go swimming in a nearby lake and dinner. I also attended Clive Robbins' birthday dinner. I was also able to hear music therapists whose work was not readily available at the time. I participated in a panel that described different ideas in music therapy education (as I was the VP of Education and Training for AAMT). I just remember that the weather was perfect, the town and countryside beautiful, and I had a opportunity to tour northern Spain and Madrid with Louise Montello. This congress set the tone for looking forward to presenting at the European conferences and future Congresses.



Jane Eisler

### Memories from Jean Eisler

My experiences and memories of the 7th World Congress in Gasteiz are very mixed. It was a splendid crowd, a lot of very interesting lectures and discussions. But I arrived to find I was to present my paper on the afternoon of the first day in the big Hall of the Gasteiz Music School with Amelia Oldfield as my moderator. Fine. I had specially asked for an overhead projector, as my lecture was based on work with a very verbal, disturbed and

abused 9 year-old, and it was important for people to catch what she was talk/singing either to me or to herself or to the world in general. During the morning Amelia discovered there was no OHP available in the Music School though she did her best to try and produce one, but without any luck.

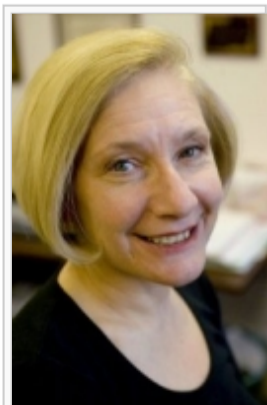
How things shouldn't happen!

I had brought a Spanish translation of the OHP excerpts and whole text with me, so in the end we were promised a postponement (I gathered there were to be several changes in the programme). We were promised a new time each morning, but unfortunately this only materialised on the last full day of lectures, and as 3/4 of an hour at 12.45 in the lunch interval time and in a much smaller venue. Also the previous speaker had been allotted a mere 15 minutes at 12.30 and over-ran by 20 minutes. However we did get going, with a very full impatient audience and myself not exactly at ease. There was an interpreter with a copy of my talk - but of course we were now pressed for time, I had to make short cuts etc etc. Nevertheless though all seemed to go very well, until I was brought down with a bump when one of a group of Spanish members of the audience defiantly asked how I managed to TEACH my very articulate and explosive 9 year-old all those songs and free singing! A lesson in never taking anything for granted and stupidly assuming that by then and after my explanations all music therapists and music students would know what I meant by improvisational music making together at least as soon as they heard the tapes and excerpts.

How right Tony Wigram had been in his opening speech to the Congress to emphasize the diversity of our profession (both nationally and internationally) and the importance of developing a tolerance and respect among therapists and between countries and the need for greater understanding and Congresses such as this one.

The Congress, indeed, gave us a splendid overview of this diversity in the profession and the importance of showing it through examples of our clinical work. Unfortunately in this respect I still had a lot to learn and had a considerable sense of disappointment from what had happened.

Luckily for me this was offset by the splendid series of excursions and social events that had been included in the programme by our hosts. These included a visit to a local vineyard and special Spanish meal, a drive through the foothills of the Pyrenees and over to the coast and a tour of Guernica that gave us a fascinating history lesson about the old town and its open-air medieval parliament that could be attended by all and sundry in the town 'forum' around the ancient old oak tree. And, to cap it all, there was the grand 'Garlic Festival' at the weekend held throughout the old town, with its wooden stalls and carts loaded with 3 - 4 metre-long ropes of choice garlic brought in by the local farmers and land owners, often carrying ten or so of these ropes on their shoulders. In addition there were many other stalls of trinkets, clothes and special food delicacies. And to keep everyone amused there were the groups of dancing girls in their colourful Basque costumes being serenaded and chased by brass band groups of young men also in national costume, and a lot of fun and laughter, being watched by the elders of the town who moved from stall to stall nodding their heads assessing the quality of the goods on offer.



Suzanne B. Hanser,  
Ed.D., MT-BC, Chair,  
Music Therapy  
Department, Berklee  
College of Music

### Memories from Suzanne Hanser

My daughter, Leora, accompanied me, and we were treated like Queen and Princess in Vitoria-Gasteiz. Our hosts were extremely welcoming and friendly. They showed us around the countryside, and I will never forget the Tapas! Inside the Congress, there were discussions of quantitative and qualitative research that could have been the impetus for an important contribution to the literature from my dear colleague, Dr. Barbara Wheeler. We delegates may have brought different languages to the conversations, but we were anxious to dialogue and learn from one another about our perspectives on the field of inquiry that we all hold dear, namely music therapy.



Sarah Hoskyns

## Memories from Sarah Hoskyns

My experiences of the VII World Congress in Vitoria, Northern Spain were a powerful blend of personal, cultural and professional. This was my first time to attend a world congress, and it was both enlightening and challenging. My most enduring memory was the sense of 'place' in Spain, the hot climate, the Spanish language, the good amount of Spanish-speaking delegates both local, and from South America, and - because I was commuting from nearby Bilbao (where my pre-school daughter and I were staying, with my parents at a family friend's house) - driving a left-hand drive car on the motorway, and in and around Vitoria. So it was real sense of newness. I had not been further south in Europe than the middle of France, and Northern Spain, with its green lushness, and lively culture was an exciting change. At the end of the conference, Leslie Bunt and I took my family to Haro in the heart of the Rioja district, drank some excellent local Rioja and we all enjoyed the pair of huge cranes who were nesting in a chimney right in the middle of the beautiful central square.

At the congress, I particularly enjoyed hearing Inge Pederson's presentations (lecture and workshop) about "self experience", as I had just begun as a programme leader in London in 1991, and was really keen to develop experiential group work there. We were experimenting with ways to deliver this on our programme, but Inge's presentations emphasized that other settings valued this way of working and that felt encouraging. Presentations on research by Aigen and Bruscia also spoke strongly to me. It was really exciting to blend hearing colleagues I knew well (Jacky Robarts, Helen Odell Miller, Ann Sloboda, Tony Wigram) with other names I had heard of in the field but not heard or met before (for example, Patxi del Campo, Janice Dvorkin, Gabriella Perilli, Joanne Loewy and Gianluigi di Franco). It was really lovely too having some social time with people I had been honoured to meet before, and to be treated in such a friendly way. A spontaneous breakfast with Ken Bruscia was one such highlight! In [delivering my own paper](#), I learnt fast about managing with simultaneous translation: you have to read your paper straight and not interact so much with the audience, which I had been more used to being able to do at English-speaking conferences. That felt hard, but it was good learning.

It was also quite difficult to combine being at a conference, giving time to one's paper, and the vibe of engaging with colleagues from round the world, with having my family at home in the evenings. In one sense I enjoyed coming away and just switching off in the evenings (as lots of papers and workshops are hard to absorb for five days solid); but my daughter needed friendly attention and I somewhat regretted missing out on evening entertainment, as I was juggling family life alongside. I suspect that this is a reality of many music therapists, who have young families and want to attend conferences at the time of a family holiday. However I vowed at the time that I would try to keep the two a bit more separate in future - so in the end did not go to another world congress for another nine years as I then had two young children (Oxford in 2002). That was shame, as the memories are vivid and positive, but there are times for these experiences, and I have had more opportunities in recent years, when my older children have been more than happy to let me go and "do my own thing."



VII World Congress Welcome Desk (Sarah Hoskyns with 4 year old daughter Dorothy).



Visit to the town of Haro: (from left to right) Sarah's late father Benedict Hoskyns, Leslie Bunt, Dorothy Hoskyns, Sarah Hoskyns.





Joanne Loewy DA,  
LCAT, MT-BC, Director,  
The Louis Armstrong  
Center for Music &  
Medicine, Beth Israel  
Medical Center, New  
York.

I remember submitting 2 papers for this congress and I had not heard back about it. It was several months prior and a few of my colleagues had received acceptances or rejections. I was scared to find out what would have become of mine. I had just read Dr. Cheryl Dileo's green Music and Medicine Book because a new grant (the first one I ever wrote) had looked promising from the Louis Armstrong Educational Foundation and this book was like 'the bible' in preparing for that. I noticed Cheryl Dileo's name on the scientific committee and decided—why not call her? Perhaps she could find out what had happened to my proposals. Cheryl was as nice as could be on the phone and said she would look into it, Two days later I received a call back and she said both of my proposals had been accepted—"Song Sensitation: and "Story Song." I use both of these in practice today---Judi Bosco wrote about 'Story Song' in the Caring for the Caregiver AMTA 9-11 (2002) Book and I published 'Song Sensitation' in the same text. Nice to have 'christened' this important work for me at such an amazing World Congress.

I have been to many conferences. This one was MAGICAL. First of all-the briefcase...if I were handy, I could post the insignia. It was brilliant. Mine is finally worn out, but for years I had carried it to meetings. I remember an APA Philadelphia conference, just some 5 years ago, where Bryan Hunter had invited some MTs to speak—and Ken Bruscia, Paul Nolan and I were each carrying this briefcase....how many years later. We giggled and acknowledged. (I know one should love more than a tote from a conf!) but these were smashing. Just saying!

The congress was incredibly well organized from beginning to end. I still have my aqua green abstract book—all in Spanish and English. I think this is in part, how and when I fell in love with Spain. I travel there to teach regularly.

What I wrote above is the hors d'oeuvres-the unbelievable element that remains true about this congress are that the ties I made there have shaped my development as a music therapist. My first connection with Cheryl, who still today is a gate keeper, and door opener—for me and so many others....and then, I signed up for a Pre-Institute 2 day workshop on voice with Silvia Nakkach before the congress. I think I was the only American in the large group of about 50 people. It was a magnificent training. We were all mesmerized. I made friends with several music therapists from Japan, Poland, Argentina and Spain. Strangely, they did not speak English and I did not speak Japanese, Polish or even Spanish...but we had fun throughout the congress—a clump of 6 MTs who had sung together. Completely bonded-just through the deepest level of sharing that Silvia Nakkach provided. ALL SINGING. No words-just voice-many many voices-hours and hours...music of the world with people from everywhere. Maybe the most magical experience of voice for me-of all time. Thank you Silvia.

Today I teach in Silvia's program in California at SIO. And she has provided workshops for our program 6 times in the past 19 years. Her chanting work and Indian vocal influences and her Vox Mundi-world knowledge of voice and song have transformed vocal work in MT. She is a close friend and colleague.

The workshops I gave were well attended. Alicia Lorenzo translated for me-and she is now the Director of Music Therapy at the University of Madrid-where I have been invited to present several times in the past few years. She is a wizard of Spanish MT and a close friend and colleague. It really began in Vitoria.

The town and the salmon-oh how delicious and charming-and the great presenters: Olav Skille, Fausto Russo. Diana Facchini, Claurice Costa. The music-drumming of large percussive claves by an Asian group (?) to open, was heartfelt. I remember a dapper Tony Wigram, and how kind and proud he was when I introduced myself to him, to thank him and Patxi del Campo for such a great congress.

As a first congress. I was completely satisfied and enamored. Obviously things went well—as major ties that began to become strung together, have had a lasting impact personally and professionally--so many years later. I was young in the field then-but this congress shaped my interest on many levels.

Memories from Joseph Moreno



Joseph Moreno

I recall the 1993 congress in Vitoria, Spain, as one infused with much creative energy. I remember the kind and caring role of Patxi del Campo, the local organizer, seeming to somehow be looking after everyone at once.

I recall giving a presentation with Edith Boxill titled "Music Therapy for Peace: A Global Imperative". Edith, who passed away in 2005 at the age of eighty eight, was one the great visionaries of our field who never lost her hope that music therapists might play a role in promoting world peace. Unfortunately I feel her ideas were never fully appreciated in her lifetime. Today, nearly twenty years since that congress, world peace seems more elusive than ever. In 1993 who could have imagined events such as those of September 11, 2001?

Yet now, as we look forward to the next world congress in the great city of Seoul, South Korea, it is sobering to recall that only very recently the long simmering tensions between North and South Korea had reached a critical point. This only serves to remind us of the continuing need for finding peaceful means of international conflict resolution, and today Edith`s ideas seem more relevant and urgent than ever.

I enjoyed interacting with so many wonderful colleagues in Vitoria, particularly Clive Robbins, Tony Wigram, Ruth Bright, Olav Skille, and Serafina Poch. Just recently, during the Eighth European Music Therapy Congress in Cadiz, Serafina was honored for her pioneering role in first establishing music therapy in Spain. I also fondly remember two wonderful colleagues who were part of that congress, Graziela Gomes of Lisbon, Portugal, and Harry Nishihata of Osaka, Japan, both now deceased.



From the left, Olav Skille(Norway), Vida Celarec(Slovenia), Edith Boxill, Joseph Moreno.



Moreno in a vibroacoustic session in the congress with Olav Skille



Professor Helen Odell-Miller, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK

### Memories from Helen Odell-Miller

I was on the scientific committee and very involved with planning the academic side of the conference.

I remember a brilliant voice workshop run by Gianluigi di Franco in which I met Diane Snow Austin for the first time. There was also an excellent paper by Pilgrim, and overall very good organisation by Paxti, and a great atmosphere. There were some great evenings with extensive food and dancing, and also some good papers.'

### Memories from Serafina Poch



Serafina Poch

That World Congress was for Spain a great opportunity to can relate with great professionals from around de world, especially from Europe and Latin America.

At that moment, the first Postgraduate Music Therapy Course at the University of Barcelona, Faculty of Medicine,

Psychiatry Department (1992-94), had just begun. It was directed by Psychiatry Prof. Carlos Ballús, MD, and Serafina Poch, PhD. This Postgraduate music therapy course was the first course in one Spanish University.



Serafina Poch and Auriel Warwick

The Vitoria World Congress gave us the opportunity to invite three Music Therapy Professors from the USA, on the way to the Congress, to come to Barcelona to attend our “I Jornada Internacional de Musicoterapia” (I International Conference of Music Therapy), organized by the “Associació Catalana de Musicoteràpia” (Serafina Poch, PhD, Founder and President) and the Psychiatry and Medical Psychology Unit of the University of Barcelona (Prof. Carlos Ballús, MD, Director), at the Palau de les Heures, UB, on July 14, 1993. The participants were, from Spain: Prof. Carlos Ballús, Dr.Serafina Poch and Dr. Melissa Mercadal (Willamette University). The outside participants were: Jayne Standley, PhD (Florida State University); Judith Jellison, PhD (University of Texas at Austin); and David Wolfe, PhD (University of the Pacific). We appreciated very much these presentations because they were an important reinforcement in support of the scientific bases of music therapy for the academic and government authorities.

From Barcelona, Melissa and I drove together to Vitoria for the Congress. After so many years, I remember it as a well organized congress by Patxi del Campo and Tony Wigram.

### Memories from Jackie Robarts



Jackie Robarts

This was the first World Congress of Music Therapy at which I presented my work. I remember this conference for two reasons: I met Barbara Wheeler who has remained a good friend and colleague over the years - albeit we have met too infrequently. I now rarely attend music therapy conferences, as I teach abroad, or present at small symposia, interdisciplinary ones in particular. At this event Barbara chaired my paper (and that of another UK music therapist, Penny Rogers), both discussing music therapy with sexually abused children. Although by 1993 I had practised music therapy for 12 years, established a music therapy service in a large children's hospital and adult learning disabilities unit, and presented widely, this was the first World Congress I had attended. Barbara was a warm, supportive chairperson, who saw to it that everything was in pplace and ready for the presentations. As I recall, even to this day, she complimented me on my timing - something I don't always achieve nowadays to that degree of perfection. Barbara skilfilly facilitated the discussion that followed my presentation. A challenging question came from one of three (rather well-known) American music therapists, sitting together in the far back row, I remember. I can see them now - and of course they shall be nameless. I had wondered during my presentation what the movement and whispering at the back was all about! Apparently, my psychodynamic and developmental perspectives had surprised them all, running counter to expectations of clinical work by a Nordoff-Robbins trained music therapist. Up until then I had not realised that NR had such a distinct 'branding' or stereotype. I always hoped that I would grow as a therapist, and had always been interested in children's internal worlds and psychic structure, having benefitted from psychotherapy myself during the 1970s and 80s. I worked on developing my psychodynamic understanding through years of independent study (which continues to this day) and supervision from both music therapists and child psychotherapists. I began to meld psychodynamic and developmental concepts intuitively in my music therapy work - they seemed so naturally linked with music therapy processes. By 1993 I was also using art and song writing too, to expand the symbolic expressive 'palette' of music whenever this seemed useful to bypass or alleviate defences, which sometimes music itself triggered. So that first lively 'heckling' from the back row at my first World Congress I now remember as a warm, invigorating welcome to the fold of music therapy. Barbara steered the discussion to more

interesting, less contentious territory. I remember a friendly meeting of us all afterwards which has continued over the years, renewing our acquaintance at subsequent conferences and visits, home and abroad. That's what World Congresses are all about.

I think that the 1993 World Congress was the first where simultaneous translation was provided at an MT conference, in a very fine modern conference hall, with vibrant green furnishings like the lush green of the Basque region we were visiting. Certainly, we were all very appreciative of this to Paxti del Campo and his team. It was very unifying (and edifying) for all the delegates, and meant that presentations could occupy a normal 30-45 mins slot.

I believe the first election of representatives to the World Federation of MT took place here on the final day of the Congress. There was an 'incident' during the formal proceedings: In a most spontaneous and enlivening fashion, a fracas broke out in the auditorium amongst representatives from one country, all trying to commandeer the microphone to respond to the Chair. It was only momentary, but, at the end of days of presentations, symposia, and round tables, this raw energy surging out of the tidy rows of delegates was a welcome 'reality check' within all the formalities, revealing that passion, politics, and more or less containable chaos are also part of establishing a profession and growing up.



Clive Robbins

### Memories from Clive Robbins

About the 1993 World Congress in Vitoria-Gasteiz: I remember how distinctly European it felt rather than "World."

Carol did not go, and for me the most distinctive experience was teaming up with Alan (Turry). It was the first overseas team teaching we had done and there was a very strong feeling of continuity in carrying the work and presenting it as I had for so many years with Paul and then with Carol. It felt right and strong. Alan and I gave two presentations. The first we called "A Prelude: Poised in the Creative Now." We presented the working model

diagram that Alan later included in his contribution to Michele Forinash's book on supervision, with Alan illustrating by playing some of Paul's work with Anna. We had the audience participate by singing. The musical technicality of the improvisational approach was a new concept for many but seemed to capture people's interest. In the second presentation to all conference attendees, we mainly presented Alan's and Walter's, then my work with Joshua Shaw, which I followed with some of John Buchanan's and Carol's work stressing the importance of improvised songs. Ann (McCrary) was there (this was before she and Alan married), and we put her up in the projectionist's booth high up at the back of the auditorium where we could signal to her to raise and lower the playback sound. The operating technical had no clue as to the sound levels we needed to communicate the content of the tapes, so we improvised a way of signaling to Ann and she guided the technician to raise and lower the sound levels as we needed. Otherwise it would have been a very quiet dull presentation. It was well received particularly by Giulia Cremaschi Trovesi and her students—I remember how they spontaneously applauded a striking piece of Alan's clinical improvisation that resolved an outburst of temper from Joshua. Joshua was blind and had ASD and I knew that Alan had been unsure how his strongly challenging response to Joshua's tantrum would be received by the Congress attendees. Giulia's immediate recognition of the musical and clinical rightness of his courageous intervention carried all the vindication he needed. This started a relationship between the Nordoff-Robbins Center and Giulia that continued and which I would like to have seen developed further.

We also met Iliana Polychroniathou, who later arranged for Carol and me to give a week's course in Athens. This was translated by Dora Psaltopoulou from Thessaloniki.

Among the other colleagues there were Ken Aigen, Barbara Hesser, Dorit Amir, and Diane Austin.

I very much enjoyed the Congress, but the more mature global cosmopolitan feeling of the later congresses was only beginning to develop. But nevertheless it was an important gathering and I believe that many found it a positive affirmation of our profession and an exciting step toward the future.

### Memories from Patricia L. Sabbatella



Patricia L. Sabbatella at the conference

The VII Music Therapy World Congress held in Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain was the first international music therapy congress I had ever attended. I moved to Spain in 1989, and was very exciting for me the opportunity to share experiences and knowledge with music therapists from different regions of the world. During the

congress I met music therapists from Spain, who became close friends and co-workers. Good memories come back to my mind, as I met again with music therapists from Argentina (on the photograph, from left to right, Silvia Jensen, Patricia Sabbatella, Gustavo Rodríguez Espada, Juni Pezzone, Gabriela Paterlini).



From left to right, Silvia Jensen, Patricia Sabbatella, Gustavo Rodríguez Espada, Juni Pezzone, Gabriela Paterlini

The Scientific Program covered an amount of interesting topics connected with different areas of the profession. My contribution was about the analysis of musical process in music therapy practice. An extended version of the presentation is published at: Sabbatella, P. (1993). Un Modelo para el Análisis del Discurso en Musicoterapia. *Tavira*, 10, 95-103. ISSN: 0214-137 X. (attached pdf file or the article).

The 1993 World Congress was an important event for the development of music therapy in Spain. After the congress there was a growing interest in music therapy as profession in the field of special education, elderly people, neurological rehabilitation and psychiatry. In the nineties, music therapy services at private or public institutions, and training programs started in different cities (Sabbatella, Patricia L. (2004). *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*. Retrieved February 23, 2011, from [http://testvoices.uib.no/?q=country/monthspain\\_march2004](http://testvoices.uib.no/?q=country/monthspain_march2004))



Marilyn Sandness

### Memories from Marilyn Sandness

As Chair of the National Association for Music Therapy (NAMT) Education Committee, I helped to organize a Round Table discussion focusing on standards, curricular structures, and competencies for music therapy education and training programs at the World Congress in 1993.

Representatives from education and training programs from around the world served on the panel, including Marilyn Sandness and Barbara Wheeler of the NAMT (USA); Janice Dvorkin, American Association for Music Therapy (USA); Connie Isenberg-Grzeda (Canada); Denise Erdonmez (Australia); Gianluigi di Franco (Italy); Patxi del Campo (Spain); and Tony Wigram (UK and

Denmark).

As a participant in this World Congress, I was enlightened to learn more about the philosophy and models of music therapy education and training in other countries, as well as the cultural differences. Whereas the entry-level training in music therapy in both the USA and Canada is still at the undergraduate level, I learned that in many other countries it was at the graduate level with degrees or post-graduate diplomas in music therapy. In particular, I was impressed that music therapy students were often required or encouraged to take psychotherapy for one's self-development and that, in fact, many education and training programs were based on a psychoanalytic model. Some other issues that were of great interest to me related to experiential training in music therapy, supervision of music therapy students, and external evaluation of persons completing their music therapy education and training. There was also much discussion about differences in entry-level and advanced training, which interesting enough, is currently being considered by the American Music Therapy Association in 2010. I was most impressed with the number and extent of music therapy education and training programs around the world, including the wide variety of academic and clinical training requirements, including competencies.

In considering how these requirements compared to music therapy programs in the USA and whether any could be applied to the standards of NAMT, it seemed to be a real challenge due to the very large number of academic and clinical training programs already established in the USA.

As a result of this wonderful opportunity to share with other music therapy educators and clinicians and expand my knowledge, I was invited to join the World Federation of Music Therapy's Education Commission (which later became the Commission on Education, Training, and Accreditation) on which I served through the World Congress in Washington, DC, in 2000. I placed high value on the personal relationships that I developed with such dynamic music therapists from other countries and the future networking that occurred in the subsequent years. I was also pleased to be able to participate in the early development of the WFMT Guidelines for Education and Training.



Alan Turry

### Memories from Alan Turry

The first thing I remember is the bus ride to the conference site. The winding roads seemed to bring us right to the edge of what seemed like an endless turn as we went down a mountain! I was praying we would make it to the World Congress alive!

It was so elegant, and the support staff was absolutely impeccable. What an exciting feeling to be around colleagues from around the world in a place that was so interesting, and where we were being stimulated and challenged by sharing our ideas.

When presenting at an international conference, the translator is so important- how you work together, the timing, the sense of understanding emotional content and conveying it, trusting that your ideas are being understood. We had a wonderful translator.

It felt very exotic, especially at night, and the way it was a part of the culture to stay up late into the night. Lots of wine drinking - it seemed to be on restaurant tables like pitchers of water would be in the States.

It was an intoxicating experience, one that I will always think back to fondly.



Alan Turry, Clive Robbins and Ken Aigen in Vitoria.



Gabriela Wagner in Vitoria, 1993

### Memories from Gabriela Wagner

There is no doubt about the growth of the WFMT during the three year period in between Rio de Janeiro and Vitoria Gasteiz. The preparations for this congress organized by the WFMT and the Association for the Study and Research of Music Therapy and

Communication, School of Music Therapy and Group Techniques involved colleagues from many parts of the world. Thanks to Ruth Bright, President of the WFMT and its Council, Patxi del Campo San Vicente,



From left to right: Gabriela Paterlini (Argentina), Mariela Pietragalla (Argentina-Mexico), Diego Schapira (Argentina) and Claudia Mendoza (Argentina)

General Coordinator of this event, Tony Wigram, Coordinator of the International Scientific Committee and all those who collaborated with them this congress was an amazing opportunity of meeting colleagues and exchanging ideas about the diverse spectrum of music therapy.

Carl Pribram's opening lecture was a super promising beginning.

Taking a short look at the book of abstracts, many of today great ones of music therapy presented their professional experience as clinical music therapists, researchers or musicians and music therapists. As you know, the main subjects dealt by this congress were: Clinical Music Therapy, Music Therapy and Experimental Research, Music and Music Therapy, Training and role of Music Therapists. I think that you might have more information on this issue so I will focus on my personal impressions, especially the ones dealing with Latin American Music Therapy.



Cecilia Conde (Brazil).



Denise Grocke (Australia), Brynjulf Stige (Norway), Gabriela Wagner (Argentina) and Cheryl Dileo (USA).

As representative of one of the Latin American countries I would like to mention July 21. The book of abstracts includes a work group led by Claudia Mendoza, Roberto Reccia and Diego Schapira, all of them from Argentina. The possible constitution of the Latin American Secretary of the Music Therapy World Federation was one of the goals of this proposal. The result was the organization of the Latin America Committee of Music Therapy. The motion was voted and Cecilia Conde was elected as President and representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. The last IV Congress of the Latin American Committee of Music Therapy was held in Bogotá, Colombia in July, 2011.

Cheryl Dileo coordinated a round table focused on the draft form of the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct developed by the Commission of Ethics of the WFMT. The proposal was approved. It was a very important step. Rolando Benenzon, Cecilia Conde and I worked on a Code of Ethics before but Cheryl's experience and the fact that English became crucial for international communication.

The attendance to this world congress was incredible. The fact that both Spanish and English were official languages was one of the reasons.

I think that this congress was also an opportunity of getting to know each other better. Different ways of working towards the professionalisation of music therapy were exposed, and diverse forms and levels of getting organized as associations were shared. There were a lot of misunderstandings too. In order to be inclusive no accreditation was required at the WFMT general meetings, or to be recognized as a representative or as a delegate of a country. Of course voting became complicated.

This congress was definitely a turning point for WFMT. New voting procedures were introduced. The idea of a World Federation of Music Therapy was recognized as a goal among music therapist of different parts who attended this congress but the parliamentary rules for procedures were unknown to many of the representatives. There was also some inconsistency in voting due to the fact that there were countries with several associations and other one without any because they were doing their very first steps in music therapy. Regulations on this issue were approved during the meetings.

The discussion went on after each meeting. My experience as an American Field Service, AFS scholarship student during my senior high school year turned out to be very useful not only in translating discussions but to help to communicate and to recognize diverse ways of consensus building. There were many exciting moments and today I am happy to see that the changes made then by the old and the new Council have been demonstrated to be useful for WFMT's development.



From the the closing dinner

I would also like to recall the closing dinner. During this dinner Cheryl, already President of the new Council announced that its members voted to include three co-opted members: Gianluigi di Franco from Italy, Zhang Hong-Yi from China and Gabriela Wagner from Argentina. It was a great moment for me. Since then I have served the WFMT Council in different periods. (Next July when I will conclude serving as Past President it will be a total of 15 years.)

The hospitality was remarkable during this congress. In order to obtain lower costs a students' dormitory was proposed as one of the options for staying. We had a very good time. There were quite a few funny stories too. For instance stepdaughter Cecilia, a lovely 18 years old girl came with me to Spain. Of course we shared the room. One night she went out dancing with a group of students. When the group returned Ceci asked for the key. The answer was that it was impossible to get it because Gabriela (that was me) was sleeping with Alejandro, one of the music therapy students from Argentina. Imagine her and the other student's face!!!! She insisted that this was impossible. Since there were no phones in the rooms she had come up with the night watchman to the second floor to wake me up. We ended up laughing a lot. Next morning we found out about a new romance.



Auriel  
Warwick

### Memories from Auriel Warwick

Memories of Vitoria? Apart from that excellent meal we shared (Clive Robbins, Barbara Wheeler, Auriel's husband), the over-riding memory for me was when I was to present my paper and video. The chair was 10 minutes late and the room was locked. Yours truly dug her toes in and decided she was giving the full paper, come what may! 10 minutes before the end (which was the time I would have finished had we started on time!), I was told I must conclude. There was a roar of disapproval in the hall and the chair had to allow me the full time. I was both upset and very angry at what I perceived to be lack of professionalism with the late start - and found consolation and relaxation in Olav Skille's vibro-acoustic chair! The congress was great as far as meeting people was concerned - but I did have some issues with aspects of the organisation.



Barbara Wheeler,  
University of Louisville,  
Louisville, KY USA

### Memories from Barbara Wheeler

The 1993 World Congress in Vitoria-Gasteiz was my first world congress of music therapy. I had done a few things internationally in the late 1970's and then taken an intentional break from international activities, but I wanted to become more involved internationally and decided to start with this congress.

I did not have anything in particular to present, so was pleased to be included as a member of a round table that Marilyn Sandness was organizing. The round table discussion focused on standards, curricular structures, and competencies for music therapy education and training programs. While I asked to be on this panel and was glad that it provided a way for me to get to the congress, I ultimately wished that I had presented some of my own material, as I will explain in the next paragraph.

I found the congress overwhelming!! I knew very few people, which made it more difficult, and it was hard to think of what to talk with people about. It was at this time that I realized that I would have been better off if I had prepared my own material for a separate presentation, as this would have given people something to talk with me about and given me my own (though small) identity as I spoke with people. I have never forgotten this and, since that time, have always made a presentation at a large conference such as this.

I traveled with Marilyn Sandness from the U.S., and we chose to stay in a hotel that was quite a distance from the conference center. We did this to save money, but - again - I feel that it was a mistake. We were too far from the conference center and missed out on much of the enjoyment that went on. This is another lesson that I learned (or at least a step in learning it): There are many good reasons to stay at the center of where the conference is taking place and it helps in being involved!



Although I do remember these problems with my attendance at this congress, several very important things occurred in conjunction with the congress. Prior to the congress, I had gotten a call from Tony Wigram, Scientific Chair of the Congress. Tony was calling from the UK, so this in itself was exciting, and I remember that we talked for quite a while. I do not think that I knew Tony or anything about him prior to his call but my relationship with him grew over the years and we have had a good friendship and many good collaborations. Tony asked me to chair a session in which Jacqueline Roberts and Penny Rogers were presenting. This opened up two wonderful professional and personal relationships in my life. My friendships with both of these women (both fine music therapists) have developed over many years and opened up new professional possibilities. I have always been very grateful for getting to meet them through this congress.

One other thing that I remember—not related to the congress content but that influenced my experience—was the very late schedule for evening meals. Restaurants did not even open for dinner until around 9 p.m.! Although the food was really good when they did open, this was very late for me to wait to eat, particularly considering the long walk to our hotel. I found this difficult. I do remember one nice evening meal with Clive Robbins and Auriel Warwick and her husband. I know that I had other good meals with good company but do not remember them as well.

Overall, I am very glad that I attended this congress. It was very nice to be in the Basque area of Spain and experience the culture there. I also felt good about beginning my international “journey” in music therapy at this time.

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