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The Road Goes Ever On: Estelle Jorgensen's Legacy in Music Education

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Section I - The Past is Our Future / The Past is Not Our Future

Chapter 5

Transforming Music Education Re-Visited: The Significance of Internationalization and Mentoring

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Abstract

This chapter returns to Jorgensen's 2003 publication *Transforming Music Education*. Kertz-Welzel revisits significant aspects of transformation in music education which Jorgensen suggests, and which are still important today. The author also emphasizes additional dimensions that are critical in the 21st century, such as internationalization and mentoring. Through the formation of the *International Society for the Philosophy of Music Education*, philosophy of music education was significantly transformed. Internationalization in a respective field is always connected to the engagement of individual researchers who shape it and attract others to become part of it. Therefore, mentoring young scholars is an important aspect of successful internationalization.

Introduction

Transforming music education has been a recurrent topic in music education. The feeling of living in times of changes and new challenges, facing new societal, political, educational, or technological developments—all of this creates the constant need for transformation. While

this is a positive development, emphasizing the dynamics of the music education profession and its interest in improvement, it also raises questions: What does transforming music education mean? Are we really interested in a substantial transformation or rather in a superficial elimination of uncomfortable aspects of music education? In her book, *Transforming*

Music Education,¹ Estelle Jorgensen provides inspiring answers to these questions. Jorgensen’s sociological and philosophical analysis of the nature of transformation breaks it down into specific categories, thereby opening empowering perspectives. Above all, it provides a positive vision for music education—something that tends to be often overlooked in the sometimes highly critical discourse about what needs to be changed.

There are, however, two aspects that do not play such a significant role in this publication but are crucial for transforming music education today: internationalization and mentoring. This chapter therefore investigates the meaning of internationalization and mentoring for transforming music education based on Jorgensen’s book. It starts with revisiting significant ideas of this publication and continues with an analysis of the transformative power of internationalization and mentoring. Suggestions for future transformations in music education conclude the chapter.

Transforming Music Education Revisited

Transforming music education is for Jorgensen multifaceted. First, it is a most natural process because each generation must change the way music education is taught.² Second, due to general changes in society, there is a need for specific transformations, considering new developments in education, music, or

policy. These might also include the goals of education or society regarding the “normative objectives of music education—that is, those to which groups, institutions, and societies ought to aspire.”³ This means that education should be humane, trying to implement social justice, freedom, diversity, and inclusion. The struggle for these goals is ongoing, and each generation must make its own contribution. Having positive visions in music and music education, even in the arts in general, is important and should guide transformations in music education. Jorgensen states:

And the only reason I can see for engaging in artistic and educational activity is the hope, even the belief, that somehow one can make a difference, improve the situation, enrich human experience, and foster and celebrate the good, the true and the beautiful, wherever they may be found.⁴

However, it is crucial to avoid simplistic solutions⁵ and anti-intellectualism⁶ and be prepared for the long run. Sustainable changes might take time. But this does not mean that those who work on transforming music education will not at all see the results of their labor. Transformation concerns various aspects in different ways. Jorgensen distinguishes six problematic areas on which transformation should be focused. These crucial areas are gender, worldview, music, education, tradition, and mindset. This concerns, for instance, analyzing and considering what music means: Is it an aesthetic object, a symbol, a practical activity, experience, or

agency?⁷ Transforming music education might also be related to changing the mindset that represents a frame of reference and a lens through which a profession, institution, or individual see the world of music education. For Jorgensen, transforming music education can only be successful if the general notion of transformation is broken down into respective aspects. Generally claiming that transformation is necessary without clearly stating what it is related to and how things should be changed is rarely effective.⁸

This indicates that there is a need for a deeper analysis of what transformation means. It can either be a smooth or a radical process, as Jorgensen tries to capture in her nine images of transformation that are modification, accommodation, integration, assimilation, inversion, synthesis, transfiguration, conversion, and renewal.⁹ These images describe the way in which changes happen, sometimes only rearranging things despite promising profound new orientations. In her book, *Pictures of Music Education*,¹⁰ Jorgensen describes the very nature of transformation with metaphors such as revolution or transgression. This indicates that transformations oscillate between different oppositions. They might be a dynamic process or rather static, can concern individuals, professions, or societies, might be guided by reflective action (or active reflection), might not only have positive but also negative aspects. All these considerations illustrate the complex nature of transformations.

Jorgensen's efforts to unfold the complex matter of transformation in music education, going beyond the unreflective use of this term, is most valuable. It helps us to understand how transformation works and what we can do to initiate or support a sustainable and promising process. But this also constantly reminds us that we need positive visions and alternatives to the current situation, so that, after criticizing the status quo, we do not stand there empty-handed. Transformations need to be guided by imagination, spirituality, particularity, embodiment, dialogue, agency, and high expectations. It is important to see the perspectives of others and to envision a better future, even though we know that transformation is a complex endeavor and an ongoing process.¹¹ To create alternatives, we need to change our ways of thinking, being, and acting. Regarding our thinking, we need to "break out of the little boxes of restrictive thought and practice and reach across the real and imagined borders of narrow and rigid concepts."¹² This includes reconsidering the goals of music education and overcoming dehumanizing theoretical, practical, or institutional restrictions. Ethical ideals such as justice, civility, goodness, fidelity, and mutuality should guide transforming music education—and be implemented in music education theory and practice.¹³ But transforming music education likewise concerns "ways of being" in terms understanding it metaphorically as being alive, relying on empowered students and engaged teachers. Jorgensen asserts:

Transforming music education is alive; its institutions are vital and relevant to individual members and public alike; its teachers are imbued with energy, passionate about their art, and eager to communicate it to others; and its students embrace knowledge as a living entity that is central to their lives. Its influence is directly felt on society as it ennobles humanity, enriches culture, and promotes civility.¹⁴

This is a clear statement about music education as a dynamic endeavor, being shaped by engaged individuals, having a positive impact on a society and its people. It encourages teachers and students to embrace the dynamics of change, the diversity of voices, and the richness of culture brought to classrooms by everyone involved. For Jorgensen, transforming music education also concerns ways of acting in terms of understanding our work as part of changing the society towards social justice and inclusion.¹⁵ This includes understanding teaching in a dialogical and open way, accepting people's fears of change. This likewise concerns understanding learning as discovery, giving students room to learn more about themselves, their interests, musical culture, and ways of learning, while at the same time supporting respect, freedom, and happiness of those being involved.¹⁶

This raises the issue of what transforming music education looks like. It means preparing people "to live in an uncertain and changing world by helping

them forge a basis for personal faith and conviction and cope successfully with the changes and uncertainties they confront in their lives."¹⁷ Accepting the fact that there is no final security leads to the need for guidance and orientation. This includes spiritual values that give meaning to individual lives and acknowledging and accepting diversity, in music and elsewhere. It encompasses understanding music education and learning as a personal encounter of teachers and students, a constant dialogue that is fostered by respect and acknowledgement of the others' views. Individuals and personal relationships are for Jorgensen a key element to successfully transforming music education: "Transforming music education begins with individuals."¹⁸ Daring to be different, looking beyond the usual and having high expectations clearly distinguish the kind of music education Jorgensen envisions from other approaches. For her, it is important to stress out that music education should not only be about becoming better musicians but about becoming better people.¹⁹ This concerns both teachers and students—and the various people involved in this endeavor. Jorgensen's ideas offer a much broader approach than usual concepts of music education that often just aim at musical excellence—although it is certainly not unproblematic to utilize music education to transform people and the society.²⁰

Thus, transforming music education is not easy to accomplish, challenges individuals and the profession to go beyond their comfort zone. Jorgensen correctly

states:

There is no room in transforming music education for laziness and lack of carefulness, anti-intellectualism and lack of learning, narrowness and rigidity of thinking, opportunism and lack of professionalism. Rather, transforming music education appeals to the highest aspirations of musicians, educators, and their public. The richness of its conception meets the challenges of our time and offers hope towards enriching human experience.²¹

Transforming music education challenges individuals and the profession and certainly also affects institutions and music education policy:

It calls for a revolution in the institution of music education; a pervasive, systemic, ongoing, and radical intervention in the status quo; a conversion of the hearts and minds of all those involved in its work.²²

There is no easy way to change music education. Rather, transforming music education means being involved and challenged, leads to a changed mindset on an individual or professional level and to changes of music education policy. Internationalization is therefore also a significant aspect that should be considered regarding transformation.

The Transformative Power of Internationalization and Mentoring

Music education has for a long time been focused on national systems, traditions, and approaches. Certainly, each country has its own history of music education, often related to patriotism and religion as main rationales for introducing it as subject in public schools.²³ There are preferred approaches such as general music education in German schools or performance-based music education in American secondary schools. Additionally, each country has its own history of music education as a field of research, often closely linked to neighboring disciplines such as musicology or pedagogy. In each country—or sometimes even language area—there are prominent researchers whose ideas have been significant in the respective music education tradition. For Anglo-American music education, researchers such as Bennett Reimer, Patricia Shehan Campbell, and Estelle Jorgensen have played important roles. Especially Jorgensen helped shaping and transforming the profile of philosophy of music education as a field of research, firstly focused on Anglo-American music education, later broadening this focus to international music education.

Institutionalization and internationalization are two of the best indicators that a field of research is established. Through the foundation of the *Philosophy of Music Education Review* in

1992 and the *International Society for the Philosophy of Music Education* in 2003, philosophy of music education became an internationally recognized field of research.²⁴ It was significantly transformed. Particularly the international symposia that have taken place since 1990 offered opportunities for networking, an exchange of ideas, and the formation of philosophy of music education as a global field.²⁵

What would internationalization mean regarding philosophy of music education? It certainly means broadening the perspective from a rather national or Anglo-American to a global one, including voices from various countries worldwide. It also means reconsidering philosophy of music education as a global field of research, inspired by research in many countries, for instance connecting it with similar areas such as *Philosophie der Musikpaedagogik* or *Musikdidaktik* in Germany. Additionally, different scholarly traditions, ways of thinking, presenting and writing, including the use of English as lingua franca, make international conferences and publications interesting but also challenging. Scholars from various countries need to be familiar with Anglo-American standards, but Anglo-American scholars should also be interested in getting to know other scholarly and philosophical traditions. Transforming philosophy of music education to become an international field of research has certainly not been an easy process, particularly regarding the international symposium in Hamburg (Germany) in 2005, since German philosophy of music education had before

rarely been in contact with the international discourse. This and many more conferences underlined that becoming an international community in philosophy of music education, a field that is often based on strong national philosophical traditions, is a complex endeavor and an ongoing process for which intercultural understanding and open-mindedness are much needed.²⁶

Defining a field such as philosophy of music education as an international field of research transforms it. It affects the various aspects Jorgensen identifies as significant for transformations such as worldview—which becomes global and cosmopolitan—, regarding the meaning of gender or regarding music and education. The various kinds of transformation that internationalizing philosophy of music education involves, have certainly been experienced differently by individuals, particularly at the beginning when problems of understanding due to different academic cultures and scholarly practices (e. g., peer review) were usual.²⁷ However, internationalization has opened new perspectives of what is at the core of philosophy of music education. It helped to demonstrate that within the worldwide music education community there are researchers interested in more than finding the best teaching approaches or methods. It supported imagining new ways of thinking, being, and acting. It also helped understanding different approaches to philosophy of music education, often aiming towards the common good, based on ethical principles, guided by the vision of a just and fair society. Internationalization

transforms fields of research such as philosophy of music education significantly, but also individuals. Since it is not easy to become part of the international music education community, due to the socialization in different national research cultures, mentoring is an important way of helping scholars to become global.

From the beginning, mentoring has been a significant part of internationalizing philosophy of music education. Particularly at international symposia of the *International Society for the Philosophy of Music Education (ISPME)*, Jorgensen has sought encounters with young promising international or North American scholars, encouraging and supporting them. Her ability to identify the promising potential of emerging researchers, but also aspects where they would need support, made her very special for many scholars in the international community. She became a powerful mentor for many, particularly for international female scholars, some of them later becoming music education leaders in their home countries as well as in international music education. Jorgensen's function as a mentor included encouraging and empowering young scholars, because often, others only saw their weaknesses, while Jorgensen emphasized their strengths and their potential. Especially for international scholars, it was important to have a mentor such as her, facilitating getting socialized into the international philosophy of music education community and also helping them to believe in their own abilities.

Jorgensen clearly exemplifies some of the characteristics of successful mentors. If mentoring means taking somebody "under the wings" of an experienced person, supporting young scholars in their career, in their visibility, and also in their ability to create and to achieve goals,²⁸ she clearly accomplished that. But she was also a mentor regarding the development of young scholars' personality and character, helping to implement an ethics of kindness and respect. At the core of mentoring are certainly two things: to share knowledge and to support the formation of the professional and the individual identity of young scholars. But in fact, the relationship of mentor and mentee is also crucial. This relationship sometimes turns from a rather professional to a personal relationship, occasionally even into friendship. A mentee who learned her lessons can certainly be a support for her mentor, empowering through refreshing ideas, the appreciation of former and current support as well as respect and thankfulness.

When considering the connection of internationalization and mentoring, some aspects are paramount: Young scholars socialized in a music education system and research community in a specific country certainly need help to understand how international music education works. Mentoring supports young scholars' professional identity formation towards being international, having a global perspective on music education. This includes coming to terms with philosophy of music education as a distinct field of research within the variety of research

areas in music education globally. When young scholars are socialized into this field, it is most natural that they consider this area their scholarly home, but also support the further establishment of this field through their research. However, above all, mentoring helps young scholars creating and becoming part of international networks, connecting people and thereby facilitating the formation of the global community of researchers in philosophy of music education.²⁹

Mentors such as Jorgensen foster developing a community of likeminded but also very diversely and creatively thinking scholars. Through their example, mentors inspire many young scholars to support a positive and ethically responsive vision of music education. The best reward for a mentor is always to see her mentees succeed. Seeing many of the young scholars Jorgensen supported becoming important researchers in their respective countries and the international music education community, being in leadership positions in the *International Society for the Philosophy of Music Education* (ISPME) and in other organizations, such as the *International Society for Music Education* (ISME), is certainly most rewarding.

Jorgensen succeeded in creating a global community of researchers in philosophy of music education. Thereby, her positive visions for music education will be part of the new generation of researchers' thinking, preparing them to work towards improving music education

theory and practice through philosophical inquiry.

Conclusion

In her work, Jorgensen redefined the role philosophy can play for music education, encouraging people to start thinking and reconsidering well-known theory and practice. Certainly, challenging common ways of thinking is not comfortable, and might lead to insecurity and the need to find new orientations. But for transforming music education, it is indispensable.

Some scholars have the same ability as artists, uniting the power of the intellect with imagination. In describing the imaginative power that a scholar's research and publications can have on the profession and individuals, Jane Kenway and Johannah Fahey's offer interesting perspectives in their book, "Globalizing the Research Imagination":

Certain people take us to . . . untraveled worlds. They provoke us to ponder. Their ideas and images make our ideas spin with possibility. They entice in us fresh flights of thought.³⁰

Estelle Jorgensen is certainly one of these scholars who inspire imagining new thoughts and possibilities, helping us to develop positive visions for music education. In today's music education world, people who are able to do that are rare. It is much easier to destroy through

uncontrolled, so-called “philosophical” critique, leaving behind broken fragments and despair. We need more scholars and mentors, helping us to see a bright future, in spite of all the challenges we are facing. Through her mentoring and her engagement in internationalizing philosophy of music education, Jorgensen paved the way for people to continue her work globally. Sustainably transforming music education is certainly something that

cannot be accomplished by one generation. Each generation has to transform music education and to adapt it to the current circumstances. However, considering the close link between transforming music education, mentoring, and internationalization is something that is much needed today and crucial for the promising future of music education that Jorgensen envisioned

Notes

1 Estelle R. Jorgensen, *Transforming Music Education* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003).

2 Jorgensen, *Transforming Music Education*, 8.

3 *Ibid.*, 20.

4 *Ibid.*, XV.

5 *Ibid.*, 9.

6 *Ibid.*, X.

7 *Ibid.*, 80-92.

8 But certainly, only transforming single aspects, without having a broader picture in mind, can also not be successful.

9 *Ibid.*, 48-50.

10 Estelle R. Jorgensen, *Pictures of Music Education* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2011).

11 *Ibid.*, 61.

12 *Ibid.*, 119.

13 *Ibid.*, 120.

14 *Ibid.*, 124.

15 *Ibid.*, 129.

16 *Ibid.*, 139.

17 *Ibid.*, 140.

18 *Ibid.*, 144.

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- 19 Ibid., 141.
- 20 For more information about this topic, see: Alexandra Kertz-Welzel, "The Pied Piper of Hamelin: Adorno on Music Education," *Research Studies in Music Education* 25 (2005): 1-12.
- 21 Jorgensen, *Transforming Music Education*, 146.
- 22 Ibid., 146.
- 23 David G. Hebert and Alexandra Kertz-Welzel, *Nationalism and Patriotism in Music Education* (Farnham, United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishing, 2012).
- 24 Estelle R. Jorgensen, "Roots and Development of the International Society for the Philosophy of Music Education (1985–2015)," *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 39, no. 1 (2017): 25-50.
- 25 Ibid., 30.
- 26 Alexandra Kertz-Welzel, *Globalizing Music Education: A Framework* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2018).
- 27 Peer review has long been unknown to German music education. The first publication explaining peer review to German music education scholars was published in 2006 (Andreas C. Lehmann, "Peer-review: Eine Information zum international üblichen wissenschaftlichen Begutachtungsverfahren für wissenschaftliche Publikationen," in Nils Knolle, ed., *Lehr- und Lernforschung in der Musikpädagogik* (Essen: Blaue Eule, 2006), 325-332.
- 28 Madeline M. Crocitto, Sherry E. Sullivan, and Shawn M. Carraher, "Global Mentoring as a Means of Career Development and Knowledge Creation: A Learning-based Framework and Agenda for Future Research," *Career Development International* 10, no. 6/7 (2006): 523.
- 29 It might be important to point out that mentoring not only concerns young scholars, but scholars of any age. Mentoring young scholars, however, is the most common way of mentoring.
- 30 Jane Kenway and Johannah Fahey, *Globalizing the Research Imagination* (London, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2009), 1.

About the Author

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Project Links

This chapter comes from a book titled *The Road Goes Ever On: Estelle Jorgensen's Legacy in Music Education*. The philosophical essays contained within focus on themes that have intrigued Estelle Jorgensen whose forty years of scholarship have strongly influenced music education research and practice: the transformation of music education in public schools; feminist and LGBTQ voices; mentoring; the unfinished search for new ways of seeing, hearing, and doing; multiple and intersecting musical identities; the tension between tradition and change; and activist practice in music education.

The complete book can be found at the following link: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/jorgensen/>