



EDITORIAL

It is with profound thanks that we pay tribute to the excellent work of our Book Review Editor, Professor Karen Burland Clark, who recently stepped down from the role after many years leading this important aspect of *The British Journal of Music Education*. Book reviews bring our readers into contact with scholarly works they might not otherwise find and explore, and also provide different perspectives on works they may have read. In short, book reviews provide crucial critical analysis of the work from the book review author's perspective. A great book review isn't just about looking back and commenting on what has been written; it opens up new avenues of exploration, reflection, thought and debate, raises questions and perhaps provocations for the reader and contributes to dissemination of works and the potential future generation of knowledge and practice.

The multidisciplinary nature of music education, weaving interlinked fields around education, learning and participation, psychology, sociology, policy and across the sphere of music itself have all found a place in the focus of a book review in the journal under Karen's leadership. As a prolific researcher, educator and author, Karen has brought to this role the ability to garner reviews from across the broad church of music education, written by professionals working across the field and from around the world. She has been passionate about bringing forth and supporting early career colleagues alongside established colleagues to provide a wide range of views on publications and opportunities for our readers to engage with arguments, consider new perspectives on a debate and promote engagement in scholarly conversations. We wish Karen well with her future endeavours and are indebted for her work on the journal, supporting and guiding this work with us and the journal's previous editorial teams. Karen has handed over the role to Dr Elizabeth Haddon from the University of York. We look forward to working with Elizabeth over the coming months and years and are delighted to welcome her to the *British Journal of Music Education* team.

And so to the current edition. We are always delighted with the geographical and musical reach of the *British Journal of Music Education*, and this edition is no exception in taking our readers across the world and back. To open this edition, Ruth Atkinson shares music education research from a group of six special schools in the West of England where school-based colleagues worked alongside musicians from a community music organisation on a folk music project. The research considers the question 'What might generalist teachers and teaching assistants learn about music education from a practical music project for pupils run by professional musicians in their schools?' The article tackles some important points around the potential for 'incidental' professional development, highlighting some of the 'complexities and ambiguities' within the roles of teaching assistants in supporting and sometimes leading music education. It encourages further exploration of how co-working may offer opportunities to provide agency and boost the confidence to join in and lead aspects of music education to staff who have not specifically signed up for music education-focussed professional development.

In the article '*Silent stages: COVID-19 as a catalyst for change in Canadian El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes*', Sean Corcoran, Benjamin Bolden and Alana Butler explore the research question '*how has the experience of the pandemic influenced El Sistema programming?*'. The article briefly acknowledges some of the widespread criticisms of the El Sistema programmes around the world and examines aspects of these through a Canadian-specific lens.

The authors report on some of the changes that have come about through those involved in the programmes reflecting on these issues and how the COVID-19 pandemic gave a unique opportunity for new practices to emerge. The findings are explored under four key headings: Social Curriculum, Structural Shifts, Diverse Musical Voices and Anti-Racism; some of the points raised in the findings may provide provocation for music educators to reflect on work across a wide range of contexts.

Our next article explores conservatoire music students' understanding and use of early twentieth-century recordings. In this interesting study, Massimo Zicari and Michele Biasutti present a case for such recordings to be more widely used as part of the teaching and learning process, identifying how this might benefit students in the future and offering areas for further exploration of this fascinating topic.

The next two articles come from authors in China. In the first, Katy Leong Cheng Ho Weatherly *et al.* present '*A scoping review of empirical studies on informal music learning*'. In the conclusion, the authors highlight the importance of ongoing professional development; a theme prevalent across so many of the articles published in the British Journal of Music Education and the focus of the next article. Le-Xuan Zhang and Bo-Wah Leung's article '*Defining music demonstration lessons: a unique performance-based lesson type improving teachers' instructional skills in Chinese mainland education*' candidly describes the music education context in schools and teacher education in this context. Through their research, the authors draw out tensions between teacher-centred education and student-centred education and ways in which they can come together to enhance musical learning. The article raises important questions about the potential of using demonstration lessons for bringing together different models of learning and the potential further use of demonstration lessons with pre-service teachers.

Patrick Freer's article '*Singing is my superpower*' presents a study from 'a private male-only Catholic school with a long history of educating clergy, seminary students and, more recently, grammar school students aged 5–17', with an emphasis on music and technology. Freer explores adolescents' thoughts about singing in and out of school now and in the future. His findings around the need for adolescents to feel in control, to feel successful and to stay motivated, which sometimes means looking beyond music education, will be of interest to music educators beyond choral education.

Our final three articles relate to music education research in Australia. Bronwen Jane Ackermann, Suzanne Wijsman and Mark Halaki's article '*The Australian Music Students Health Survey: impact of past experience on student attitudes to health education*' offers an insight into how tertiary-level students in Australia perceive health education and the value they place upon it within their own studies. Jennifer Carter's article '*The times, they are a-changing: Australian secondary classroom music teachers reflect on their early career 40 years on*' does exactly what the author intended, capturing the "authenticity, richness, depth of response, honesty and candour" and "gems of information" from highly experienced teachers in New South Wales. From a UK perspective, there is much in this article around the article's key emergent themes of 'resilience in building teacher identity' and 'adapting to change and strengthening pedagogy' that are still crucial considerations for today's teachers. From a sociocultural and policy perspective, the changes and the impact of teachers' thinking and practice, as well as the evolution of the curriculum, this is a fascinating read.

And finally, as if to remind us that 'the times, they are a-changing', the edition concludes with an article that literally spans the world. '*Digitally mediated collaboration and participation: composing 10,427 miles and 11 hours apart*' reports on a unique lockdown collaborative composing project incorporating music and video for music teacher education students in Scotland and Australia in response to the theme: *My Life in Isolation: A World*

Apart or Same Difference? The challenges of participatory music making are given due consideration in relation to this distinctive time period and the project serves as a reminder of the creative ingenuity of music educators across the world in the most challenging and unexpected of circumstances.

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