

Editorial

Technology has historically presented music educators with myriad challenges, and it is perhaps salutary to recollect that back in the 1920s and 1930s the development of the gramophone generated considerable misgivings amongst music teachers. As Colin Symes points out in his paper 'A Sound Education', many feared that recorded music would discourage individuals from reading books, and it was a commonly held view that the phonograph was counter-educational. With hindsight we know that this new technology affected music education profoundly, contributing to the rise of the music appreciation movement and the central place afforded to listening. It enabled music educators to broaden the tastes of the population, and eventually made accessible a range of music that had remained a closed book to Western ears.

Today it is computer technology that offers education a tool for change. But as Tim Cain argues in his 'Point for Debate', there is a fundamental need for clearly defined theory to support and justify the role of music technology in the classroom. Teachers have an essential role to play in shaping this theory from within their practice, and *BJME* is committed to fostering communication between practitioners and researchers on this and other points. Potentially, as Wai-Chung Ho asserts in her paper, music technology has the power to motivate students' musical learning. In her Hong Kong-based study she emphasises that gender, age and grade levels all need to be taken into consideration when changing institutional paradigms and practices. Her findings are encouraging: in primary schools boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 9 are equally convinced about technological effectiveness, confident in using technological facilities, and motivated towards learning about music using IT. Ho makes recommendations for policy makers that could help to extend these positive approaches to older age groups, where her study found IT to be more problematic.

There is much discussion of attitudes in this issue of *BJME*. This is a relatively recent research phenomenon, although it has a much longer history in good teaching practice. But in these days of media and government distortions of the educational landscape it is important that the voices of learners and educators within the profession are also clearly heard. Janet Mills investigates the careers of conservatoire teachers, a group sparsely represented in the literature. Her study provides valuable insights on the relationship between teaching and performing in the lives of these individuals at different stages in their careers. We could do with more such studies of occupational groupings within music education.

This issue also reminds us of another function of music education research: to offer ideals to consider in a professional world where the immediate practicalities and pressures can threaten to overwhelm debate. Marja-Leena Juntunen and Leena Hyvönen consider the work of Dalcroze and his writings on music education, examining the central notion of embodiment, whereby it is bodily experience that provides access to musical knowledge. Their paper provides a reading of Dalcroze in relation to the philosophical ideas of Merleau-Ponty, and causes us to reassess Dalcroze Eurhythmics in terms of addressing the fundamentals of musical knowing.

The diverse research traditions, international viewpoints and historical perspectives represented here reflect our commitment to wide-ranging and challenging debate in the

field of music education. As always, we welcome responses from readers, particularly to our 'Points for Debate', and look forward to continuing in purposeful dialogue with practitioners and researchers.

Professor Robert Mawuena Kwami (1954–2004)

The untimely death of Robert Kwami on 12 March came as a great shock. As a member of this journal's Editorial Board since 1994, and of the International Advisory Board since his move to the University of Pretoria in 2002, Robert proved to be a steadfast supporter of *BJME* and what it stood for. He wrote some key articles for the journal concerning West African musical traditions and their classroom potential, and the wider issues of the problems and possibilities of non-Western musics in education. He was particularly concerned that non-Western musics were not seen as curriculum add-ons or tokens; consequently he called for 'strategic change including an attack on the beliefs and assumptions that have perpetrated the prevailing paradigm' (*BJME*, 1998: 169). His interests were not confined to non-Western musics, however, as demonstrated in his co-authored paper on the use of information technology to raise students' attainment in music (2002). In recent communication with us, he was preparing to write an article about meeting the needs of music education in the 21st century, drawing upon his unique experience which encompassed fieldwork in Nigeria and Ghana and teaching and researching in schools and universities in the UK and South Africa. Robert will be remembered not only for his scholarship but also for those personal qualities of warmth and gentleness which endeared him to his many colleagues and friends in the international music education community.

GORDON COX
STEPHANIE PITTS