MP:2.4: Writing about music: Is it beyond words?

Music Performance Teaching Strategy Workshop 2
Sunday 28 February 2016
At Trinity Grammar School, Kew
Roland Yeung

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"Music expresses that which
cannot be put into words
and cannot remain silent." - Victor Hugo

2

Abstract

- How do you teach students to describe their responses to music heard and performed?
- What are the characteristics of responses to music listening?
- The elements of music are terms that describe music that is written and created by composers.
- How does a listener show higher level responses beyond describing how elements of music are used?
- What is the separation of what the creator/composer sets, what liberties the performer takes in interpreting the work, and what life experiences the listener draws on to make a response to the aural experience?
- How is it that academics says that music is "beyond words", yet we challenge students to write about music listening and discuss performance interpretation?
- What is appropriate vocabulary and content for examination answers. Social media approaches music as showing passion - how do students write about their passion when responding to music listening and interpreting performances?
- How do you teach "expressive outcomes" (VCE Music Study Design Performance Unit 3&4 Key Knowledge Outcome 3)? The workshop session will discuss these challenges to your course design and teaching practice.

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Music is beyond words!

- What makes music different to other disciplines and areas of study?
- Does this activity form the beginning of making music listening responses and shaping music performance interpretations?
- How do the elements of music focus responses?

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What is music?

- 'Music is the universal language of mankind' penned by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow who was one of America's most popular 19th Century poets
- Ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle Plato, is credited with saying, 'Music gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything'
- The Chinese philosopher, Confucius, informed us that 'Music produces a kind of pleasure which human nature cannot do without'
- According to the German novelist, Berthold Auerbach, 'Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life'
- "So it follows that according to Longfellow, Plato, Confucius and Auerbach, music gives us the gift to speak a universal language, to bring insight and pleasure into the souls of those nearest us and of those we reach out to, and refreshes and uplifts daily life." Phillip Charles Anderson OAM retired Director of Music Royal Australian Navy 2014.

Music Therapy: An Art beyond Words by Leslie Bunt
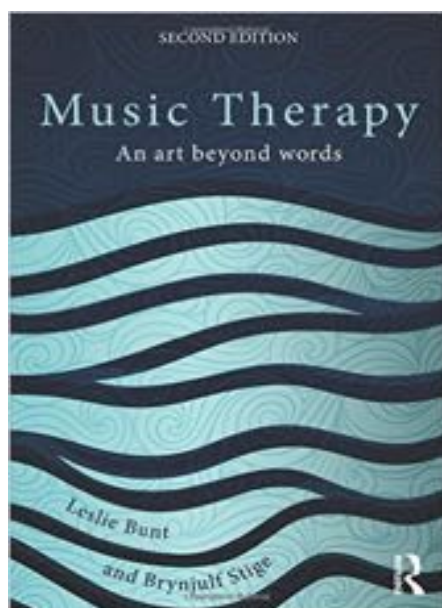
Music therapy is recognised as being applicable to a wide range of healthcare and social contexts. Since the first edition of Music Therapy: An art beyond words, it has extended into areas of general medicine, mainstream education and community practice. This new edition revises the historical and theoretical perspectives and recognises the growing evidence and research base in contemporary music therapy.

Leslie Bunt and Brynjulf Stige document the historical evolution of music therapy and place the practice within seven current perspectives: medical, behavioural, psychoanalytical, humanistic, transpersonal, culture-centred and music-centred. No single perspective, individual or group approach is privileged, although the focus on the use of sounds and music within therapeutic relationships remains central. Four chapters relate to areas of contemporary practice across different stages of the lifespan: child health, adolescent health, adult health and older adult health. All include case narratives and detailed examples underpinned by selected theoretical and research perspectives. The final two chapters of the book reflect on the evolution of the profession as a community resource and the emergence of music therapy as an academic discipline in its own right.

A concise introduction to the current practice of music therapy around the world, Music Therapy: An art beyond words is an invaluable resource for professionals in music therapy and music education, those working in the psychological therapies, social work and other caring professions, and students at all levels.

What Words Can't Describe

The Streeton Trio at the Melbourne Recital Centre 1/8/2015

http://www.melbournerecital.com.au/events/2015/
whatwordscantdescribe/

"These pieces move, transfix and transport you to another world."

"Music has ways of touching us that words cannot express. No words can describe the naïve simplicity of in Mozart's Piano Trio in C, nor the deep emotion felt when listening to Mendelssohn's beautiful Songs without Words, nor the solemn tragedy of Smetana's dramatic Piano Trio in G minor. Let these pieces move, transfix and transport you to another world in a way that only music can."

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If the meaning of music goes beyond words, is there any point in trying to analyse it?

https://aeon.co/conversations/if-the-meaning-of-music-goes-beyond-words-is-there-any-point-trying-to-analyse-it

- Music is the only art that addresses our emotions without any intermediary. …This unintermediated quality seems to be essential, and it follows that analysis, unavoidably using words, will necessarily always miss the real essence of the phenomenon. It will never quite get there. *Peter Hankins*

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The words that describe music
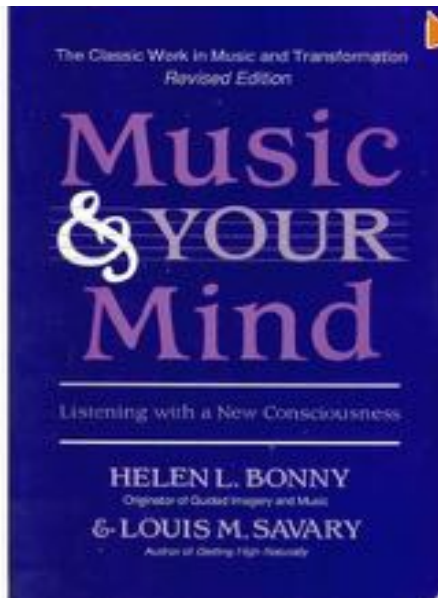
Music and Your Mind by Bonny and Savary

- This is no right answer because music means different things to people who have different life experiences – attributed meaning
- Perhaps it is more universal where responses are linked to detail in the performance/composition or ingredients in the mix – critical responses

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Heightened-awareness listening

"The presence or absence of meaning, and the particular quality of the meaning in any music is dependent on a number of factors: the form and structure of the music itself, the attitude of the listeners, their previous experience, their training, talent and temperament, and their momentary mood and physiological conditions …

"The suggestiveness of music does not depend directly on the amount of formal training which the listener has had, but is apparent both to the trained and untrained."

Kate Hevner in Bonny & Savary "Music & the Mind" 1990 p.43

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Writing about music

- VCAA documents accredited to 2016
  - Exam specifications and sample questions 2011
  - VCE Music Study Design 2011-2015 extended to 2016
    - Units 3 & 4 Music Performance pp. 28-46
    - Advice to teachers pp.47-78

School Assessed Coursework Unit 3

- SD page 36
- Outcome 2

…and describe their relevance to the performance of selected group and/or solo works, …

- Assessment Task

A description of how selected performance techniques, technical work and exercises support the student's development as an instrumentalist and their preparation of works for Outcome 1. The description may be presented in one or more of the following formats:

- oral
- multimedia
- written.

- Marks allocated

About a third of 10/20 marks (20 marks =20% of total study score) about 3.3% of study score

School Assess Coursework Unit 3

- SD page 36
- Outcome 3

    … and discuss the interpretation of expressive elements of music in pre-recorded works.

- Assessment task

    A test that includes aural, written and practical components.

- Marks allocated

    10/20 marks (20 marks =20% of total study score) 10% of study score

Aural & Written Sample Material 2011

This document is located on the VCAA website here.

http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/exams/music/musicperf-samp-w.pdf

This is the material that the setting panel use, along with the VCE Music Study Design 2011-2015 extended to 2016, to set the questions in the November Aural & Written Examination.

Written examination - November

Page 5

SECTION B

Section B will examine the key knowledge and key skills for Outcome 3 of Units 3 and 4 that focus on analysis of excerpts of pre-recorded performances by Australians of works that were created after 1910 by Australian composers/songwriters.

Excerpts of two works will be presented in the examination, each with a separate question(s) requiring students to analyse ways in which selected expressive elements of music have been interpreted to achieve expressive outcomes and create character in performance.

Students will not be asked to compare excerpts.

Information on sourcing appropriate music excerpts to assist students in preparation for the examination is provided in the online Advice for Teachers, Resources for Area of Study 3, Musicianship at

http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/

Marks allocated

20/100 marks (100 marks = 20% of study score) = 4% of study score

In the study design
Unit 4 Outcome 3: Key knowledge

This material is from the VCE Music Study Design p.42

- strategies to analyse ways that expressive outcomes in the performance of music works are realised including:
  – idiomatic qualities and variations of instrumental tone colour
  – ways in which instrumental voices blend to create tone colour
  – the relative balance of different music parts/lines
  – the structural and expressive roles of instrumental voices within the texture of the work
  – use of articulation, ornamentation/embellishment (melodic, harmonic and rhythmic), dynamic range and shape, phrasing and tempo choices
- strategies to identify and analyse interpretive decisions that are evident in pre-recorded performances by Australians of works created after 1910 by Australian composers/songwriters.

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In the study design
Unit 4 Outcome 3: Key skills

This material is from the VCE Music Study Design p.44

- listen to pre-recorded performances by Australians of works that were created after 1910 by Australian composers/songwriters and analyse ways in which expressive elements of music, including tone colour, blend of instrumental voices, balance of music parts/lines, articulation, tempo choices, ornamentation/embellishment, dynamic range and shape and phrasing, have been interpreted to achieve expressive outcomes and create character in performance
- use appropriate music terminology and language to analyse interpretive decisions that are evident in pre-recorded excerpts of music performances, and discuss ways in which these contribute to the character of the performance.

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Advice to teachers

This material is from the VCE Music Study Design, but is only advice,
ie. not compulsory

http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/vce/music/
musicSD2011-2015.pdf

- Page 56 Unit 1
- compile a list of terms and definitions of musical terminology or descriptive words useful for discussing ways expressive elements of music can be interpreted to achieve expressive outcomes
- compile a workbook of writing, recognition and practical activities undertaken in class
- Page 57 Unit 1 Detailed example

Advice to teachers

- VCE Music Study Design 2011-15 Page 57 Unit 1
- Detailed example
- Task 2

  Students listen to examples of music written and/ or arranged for various types of musical ensemble; using a listening diary format, they identify the composer/arranger of each piece, the title of the piece and the type of ensemble performing it. They then list the instruments that they hear in each piece; describe the way in which texture, duration, scale forms and harmony are used in each piece; use diagrams to graphically describe the texture where possible. Students select one piece being performed by a student group and annotate a score/chart to show the composer's/performer's use of expressive elements – tone colour, blend of instrumental voices, balance of music parts/lines, articulation, ornamentation/embellishment (melodic, harmonic and rhythmic), dynamic range and shape, phrasing and tempo choices Students keep a listening diary noting use of expressive elements in works being prepared for performance and other works in similar music styles, for the same instrument or instrumental combination. They study examples of printed sheet music to ascertain conventions of musical notation for treble and bass clef such as size, placement and grouping of notes, beam and stems; placement of clef, key signature and time signature; use of bar-lines, double bar-lines and repeat signs; use of 1st and 2nd time bars; use of DC, DS and coda directions; dynamic indications and tempo indications; practise accurately hand-writing musical notation in bass and treble clefs (using a sharp pencil!).

Advice to teachers

- VCE Music Study Design 2011-15 Page 62
- Area of Study 3 Outcome 3

listen to a variety of group and solo works and analyse (either aurally or using a score) the treatment and interpretation of expressive characteristics, including idiomatic qualities and variations of instrumental tone colour, ways instrumental voices blend and resulting tone colours, balance between different parts/lines, use of articulation, ornamentation/embellishment (melodic, harmonic and rhythmic), and dynamic range and shape, use a chart to record interpretation of selected elements and resulting effects experiment with phrase shaping, articulation, dynamics, blend of tone colour and balance of musical lines/parts through performance of a homophonic work or excerpt using conventional and non-conventional combinations of instruments

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Advice to teachers

- VCE Music Study Design 2011-15 Page 76
- Area of Study 3 Outcome 3

analyse ways that expressive outcomes are realised in performance, focusing on idiomatic tone qualities and variations of tone colour, ways instrumental voices blend to create tone colour, relative balance between music parts/lines, structural and expressive roles of instrumental voices within a music texture, use of articulation, different forms of ornamentation/embellishment, dynamic range and shape, phrasing, tempo and variation of tempo; share and discuss analysis during class discussion or through a WIKI; use appropriate language and terminology to describe specific examples from the music that support analysis

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Past examination Questions

2015 VCE Music Performance Aural and Written Examination

http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/exams/music/2015/2015musperf-cpr-w.pdf

Section B

- Question 16 (10 marks)

Work: 'Stakeout'

Artist: The Tango Saloon

Track from the album: Shadows & Fog (Newmarket Music, 2012)

- First playing (2'19") – 2 minutes silence
- Second playing (2'19") – 2 minutes silence
- Third playing (2'19") – 3 minutes silence

Explain the performers' use of instrumental timbre and the blend of instrumental lines to create a sense of character in this performance

- Question 17 (10 marks)

Work: 'Sharpen the Battle Claws'

Composer: David Hirschfelder

Track from the album: Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga' Hoole

(Water Tower Music, 2010)

- First playing (1'50") – 3 minutes silence
- Second playing (1'50") – 3 minutes silence
- Third playing (1'50") – 4 minutes silence

a. Describe two ways in which performers use articulation to create character in this excerpt. 4 marks

b. Describe how the performers create balance

Past Examination Papers

2014 VCE Music Performance Aural and Written Examination

http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/exams/music/2014/2014musperf-cpr-w.pdf

- Question 16 (8 marks)

Work: 'One Hundred Thousand' (excerpt)

Artist: Art of Sleeping

Track from the album: Like a Thief (Dew Process/Universal Music Australia)

First playing (1'44") – 2 minutes silence
Second playing (1'44") – 2 minutes silence
Third playing (1'44") – 3 minutes silence

Explain how the vocal and instrumental lines create mood and character in this excerpt.

- Question 17 (12 marks)

Work: Maninyas violin concerto, movement 3 (excerpt)

Composer: Ross Edwards

Track from the album: Ross Edwards Orchestral Works (ABC Classics)

First playing (1'20") – 3 minutes silence
Second playing (1'20") – 3 minutes silence
Third playing (1'20") – 4 minutes silence

Discuss ways in which expressive elements of music are interpreted to achieve expressive outcomes in the

performance of this excerpt.

In your answer, refer to two of the following expressive elements of music:

- tone colour
- blend of instrumental voices
- dynamic range and shape
- tempo.

Exam Reports

- 2014

  http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/exams/music/2014/musicperf_examrep14.pdf

- 2015

  http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/exams/music/2015/musicperf_examrep15.pdf

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Music Reviews

Published Music Reviews can provide insight into the styles of writing about music performance.

MSO Free 1 review: Melbourne Symphony Orchestra fills Music Bowl with Gershwin jazz

The Age February 18, 2016

Read more: http://www.theage.com.au/entertainment/music/mso-free-1-review-melbourne-symphony-orchestra-fills-music-bowl-with-gershwin-jazz-20160218-gmx6vv.html#ixzz40yCmvPTq

Music Reviews

Music review: MSO's Summer Carnival celebrates masterful melodic gift

by Clive O'Connell

The Age February 22, 2016

http://www.theage.com.au/entertainment/music/music-review-msos-summer-carnival-celebrates-masterful-melodic-gift-20160221-gmzfi1.html#ixzz40yEEMWUK

Music Critics

- Tend to focus on making judgments usually to promote the concert for future box office success
- Reference people, personalities and their status
- Are judgmental and opinionated
- Author copy that is heavily edited
- Do not often describe the meaning of the musical sounds, nor link their character statements to detail in the music.

Writing about music heard

- Expressive outcomes
- Character
- Emotions/Feelings
- Moods

A taxonomy for moods in music

- Hevner's Mood Wheel can be a starting point to find words that best describe responses to music listening
- Kate Hevner published her Mood Wheel in 1936 for her work in music therapy, after which is was revised to add extra words so each category had the same number of words for measurement purposes

Kate Hevner's Mood Wheel

7
exhilarated
soaring
triumphant
dramatic
passionate
sensational
agitated
exciting
impetuous
restless
tumultuous

6
merry
joyous
gay
happy
cheerful
bright
sunny
gleeful
vivacious
entrancing
fun

5
humorous
playful
whimsical
fanciful
quaint
sprightly
delicate
light
graceful
jovial
sparkling

8
vigorous
robust
emphatic
martial
ponderous
majestic
exalting
energetic
mighty
potent
imposing

1
spiritual
lofty
awe-inspiring
dignified
sacred
solemn
sober
serious
noble
pious
sublime

2
pathetic
doleful
sad
mournful
tragic
melancholy
frustrated
depressing
gloomy
heavy
dark

3
dreamy
yielding
tender
sentimental
longing
yearning
pleading
plaintive
nostalgic
wistful
touching

4
lyrical
leisurely
satisfying
serene
tranquil
quiet
soothing
peaceful
comforting
easygoing
gentle

1937 in Appendix 8.10 Bonde 2005

www.musictherapyworld.de/modules/archive/dissertations/pdfs/Bonde2005.pdf *hevner's mood wheel revised*
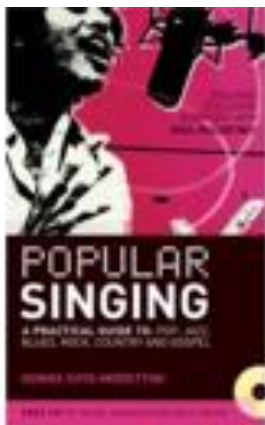
A taxonomy for detail in listening responses

- Expressive elements of music –
  - detail in the freedom of a performer in interpreting the composer/creator of the work
  - detail that is beyond the printed and notated work
  - well beyond inconsistent performing, performers use particular techniques consistently to create an individual style

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Donna Soto-Morettini

Exploring voice qualities

Aspirate quality

Elongated quality

Twang quality

Belt quality

The 'dangerous' qualities

Complementary elements of style

Onsets

Decay or release

Sustain and vibrato

Phrase weight and placement

Note attack

Breath

Diction

Improvisation

There is a second edition of the highly successful Popular Singing serves as a practical guide to exploring the singing voice while helping to enhance vocal confidence in a range of popular styles. The book provides effective alternatives to traditional voice training methods, and demonstrates how these methods can be used to create a flexible and unique sound.

This updated and thoroughly revised edition features a new chapter on training for popular singing, which incorporates recent movements in teaching the discipline across the globe, taking into account recent developments in the area. The book also features a new section on 'bridging' - ie. using all the technical elements outlined in the book to help the singer find their own particular expressive style to inspire more playfulness and creativity, both for the individual singer and for the teacher in practice and performance.

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and practising, but pulled together in the context of a great Pop/light R&B performance. It will take you a little time to get used to the shorthand for the elements I'm identifying here, but that isn't too important. If you've gone through the CD practice from the last chapter, you'll recognise most of the elements as you hear them. Because inevitably there are so many things to identify in a performance this rich, I've tried just to concentrate on the strongest sounds — you may hear many others if you listen closely.

KEY

Onset:

Aspirate   Asp

Simultaneous   ✕

Glottal

Flip

Rumble

Releases:

Vibrato fade

Vibrato compressed

Aspirate   Asp

Falling off the note

Compressed

Pushed

Gospel

Quick improvisation

Note attack:

Upward bend

Downward bend

Vocal qualities:

Neutral thick

Neutral thin

Aspirate

Belt

Twang

Elongated

A few stolen moments is all that we share

You've got your family, and they need you there

Though I've tried to resist, being last on your list

But no other man's gonna do

So I'm saving all my love for you

It's not very easy, living all alone

My friends try and tell me, find a man of my own

But each time I try, I just break down and cry

Cause I'd rather be home feeling blue

So I'm saving all my love for you

You used to tell me we'd run away together

Love gives you the right to be free

You said be patient, just wait a little longer

But that's just an old fantasy

Bloom's Taxonomy Wheel / Circle — action words

Recall Learned Material.. Exploring

Grasp Meaning

Use in a new concrete situation

Break into parts~ see relationships Organise my information

Invent new item, solve a problem based on learning, decide how to communicate

Judge value and purpose, support with relevant criteria

Knowledge: Tell, Identity, Investigate, List, Define, Listen, Locate, Select, Label, Recognise, Observe, Draw, Describe, State, Discover, Name, Write, Memorise, Recite

Comprehension: Describe, Restate, Summarise/outline, Confirm, Match, Defend, Distinguish, Paraphrase, Compare, Interpret, Transform, Predict, Relate, Illustrate, Extend, Infer, Express, Generalise, Change, Explain

Application: Use, Produce, Apply, Make, Dramatise, Draw, Change, Complete, Report, Model, Sketch, Classify, Solve, Construct, Paint, Choose, Collect, Show, Prepare

Analysis: Analyse, Classify, Examine, Seperate, Point Out, Distinguish, Categorise, Investigate, Contrast, Subdivide, Select, Differentiate, Explain, Compare, Take apart, Survey, Infer

Synthesis: Hypothesise, Combine, What if, Produce, Modify, Invent, Substitute, Organise, Original, Propose, Plan, Design, Develop, Imagine, Add to, Create, Rearrange, Predict, Improve, Role-Play

Evaluation: Apprise, Reccomend, Critique, Compare, Solve, Weigh, Assess, Judge, Debate, Criticise, Rate, Decide, Argue, Consider, Relate, Select

in2edu.com

St Edwards Univ www.stedwards.edu/cte/bwheel.htm

TABLE 2. The New Bloom's Taxonomy with Music Education Examples

	Cognitive Process					
Type of knowledge	Remember Recognize Recall	Understand Interpret Exemplify Classify Summarize Infer Compare Explain	Apply Execute Implement	Analyze Differentiate Organize Attribute	Evaluate Check Critique	Create Generate Plan Produce
Factual Terminology Basic elements	Recognize and recall music vocabulary, symbols, note values, instrument parts, etc.	Understand music terminology and basic elements such as time periods, styles, pedagogical concepts, etc.	Apply basic musical knowledge	Analyze basic musical elements	Evaluate music by checking for correct notes, rhythms, and other basic music elements	Improvise, compose, and perform music by using basic elements
Conceptual Interrelationships among the basic elements within the larger structure. Classification and category Principals and generalization Theories, model, and structure	Recognize and recall concepts of music theory, time periods, musical styles, specific composers, etc.	Understand, explains, and discuss music concepts and music's relationships to other areas both within and outside of music	Apply music concepts to the performing, composing, improvising, or listening to music	Analyze music concepts in a variety of ways such as music theory analysis, ethnomusicology, philosophy, music education, transcription, etc.	Evaluate music through conceptual critique	Improvise, compose, and perform music by using principles, theories, and multiple musical concepts
Procedural Skills Techniques and methods Performance criteria	Recognize and recall basic procedures for musical notation, instrumental and vocal performance skills, and other musical methods and techniques	Understand, explain, and discuss performing, composing, improvising, or listening to music using correct procedures	Apply certain skills, methods, techniques, and performance criteria to music	Analyze how to apply specific types of skills, methods, and techniques to music	Evaluate music through checking and critiquing whether certain techniques, methods, and skills were used correctly	Improvise, compose, and perform music by using a variety of skills, techniques, and methods
Metacognitive Knowledge of self and personal cognition of music Strategic knowledge Knowledge of cognitive demands Self-knowledge	Recognize and recall self-knowledge and personal cognition in music; strategies for remembering musical symbols, procedures, facts, techniques, etc.	Understand, explain, and discuss self-knowledge and personal cognition in music; personal strategies for listening to music, "audiation"	Apply metacognition ability to musical tasks	Analyze how metacognition assists in understanding a given piece of music or analyzing a musical problem	Critique and self-evaluation of performances, how music is personally perceived	Improvise, compose, and perform music by using self-knowledge and personal cognition

http://www.academia.edu/875401/The_new_Blooms_taxonomy_Implications_for_music_education

Analyzing Popular Music by Allan Moore:
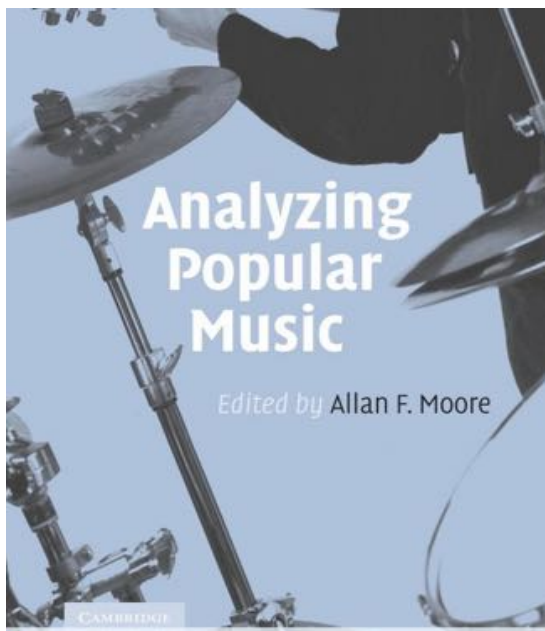
- How do we 'know' music? We perform it, we compose it, we sing it in the shower, we cook, sleep and dance to it. Eventually we think and write about it. This book represents the culmination of such shared processes. Each essay is analytical in some sense, but none of them treats analysis as an end in itself. The book represents a wide range of genres (rock, dance, TV soundtracks, country, pop, soul, easy listening, Turkish Arabesk) and deals with issues as broad as methodology, modernism, postmodernism, Marxism and communication.

- 2003 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Analyzing Popular Music by Allan Moore:

Ch.6 The determining role of performance in the articulation of meaning: the case of "Try a Little Tenderness" by Rob Bowman

- Try a Little Tenderness
  - Composers Reg Connelly and James Campbell 1933
  - Covers by these performers analysed
    - Bing Crosby
    - Aretha Franklin 1962
    - Sam Cooke 1964
    - Otis Redding 1966
    - http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=1778

Song Means: analysing and interpreting recorded popular song by Allan Moore
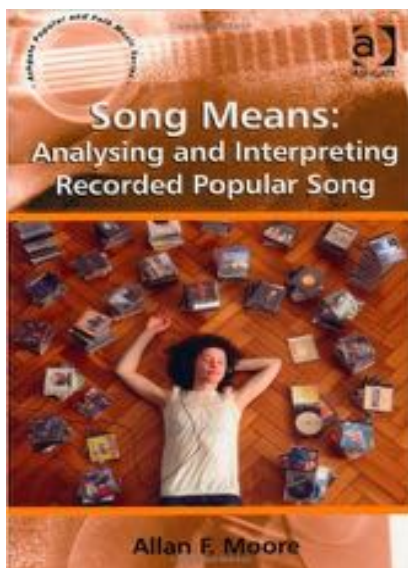
The musicological study of popular music has developed, particularly over the past twenty years, into an established aspect of the discipline. The academic community is now well placed to discuss exactly what is going on in any example of popular music and the theoretical foundation for such analytical work has also been laid, although there is as yet no general agreement over all the details of popular music theory. However, this focus on the what of musical detail has left largely untouched the larger question â€" so what? What are the consequences of such theorization and analysis? Scholars from outside musicology have often argued that too close a focus on musicological detail has left untouched what they consider to be more urgent questions related to reception and meaning. Scholars from inside musicology have responded by importing into musicological discussion various aspects of cultural theory. It is in that tradition that this book lies, although its focus is slightly different. What is missing from the field, at present, is a coherent development of the what into the so what of music theory and analysis into questions of interpretation and hermeneutics. It is that fundamental gap that this book seeks to fill. Allan F. Moore presents a study of recorded popular song, from the recordings of the 1920s through to the present day. Analysis and interpretation are treated as separable but interdependent approaches to song. Analytical theory is revisited, covering conventional domains such as harmony, melody and rhythm, but does not privilege these at the expense of domains such as texture, the soundbox, vocal tone, and lyrics. These latter areas are highly significant in the experience of many listeners, but are frequently ignored or poorly treated in analytical work. Moore continues by developing a range of hermeneutic strategies largely drawn from outside the field (strategies originating, in the most part, within psychology and philosophy) but still deeply relevant to the experience of song.

2012 Ashgate Publishing, Surrey England

Slide 39

Table 8.2   Lacasse's timbral modification qualities

	Benevolence	Potency	Naturalness	Temporality	Stability	Distance	Religiosity	Happiness
Normal	2	0	3	0	2	-2	0	0
Reverb	1	1	-1.5	-1	-0.5	2	2	0
Echo	1	1	-1.5	-1	-1	3	1	0
Slap	0	1	-1	0.25	-1	1	0	0
Telephone	-0.5	0	-1	-0.75	0	3	-1	-1
Flanging	-1	0	-2	1.5	-1.25	-1	0	0
Harmonizer	-2	0.5	-3	1.5	-2.5	1	-2	-1
Distortion	-3	0.5	-2	0	62.5	2	-1	0

In this table, the higher the figure, the stronger the effect, negative figures giving negative effects. Thus, slap-echo sounded slightly futuristic to Lacasse's respondents, echo a little more dated. Distortion sounded highly malevolent, reverb strongly religious, telephone compression slightly sad, and so on. Such findings as this again represent a useful starting-point, but need to be read in context. For example, distortion has become a fundamental stylistic sign of metal – within that style, it no longer carries the disruptive function it once had for all styles. So, at the end (3'37") of Trivium's 'Ignition', a song that simplistically expresses anger at the duplicity of a social establishment, distortion is somewhat impotent simply as a means of expression, and so they resort to the effective gradual detuning of a synthesized guitar arpeggio to convey a similar affect. Lacasse's list is useful, but what is perhaps surprising about it is that it is self-evident; his respondents feel about these forms of distortion pretty well exactly how one might imagine. This is not the place for an extended discussion about the value (or otherwise) of lengthy reception tests, but it seems to me that the result of work like this (and also, for example, the much more extensive work reported in Ten little title tunes) tends to be somewhat superfluous in that it simply confirms what competent musicology assumes anyway. Such confirmation is of course welcome and initially necessary, but does not necessarily repay anything like the effort required to discover it.

What is important is to recognize that not every element partakes of this sort of meaning. The model of communication developed by Roman Jacobson

20. The original table can be found in Lacasse, 'Listen to my voice', p. 161.

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Song Means (2012)

Ch.8 Reference pages 231-2

Specific connotations using timbre. Timbre has taken on the quality of clichés. Serge Lacasse support the notion that particular modifications of timbre imply common readings (by listeners).

Lacasse compared 8 types of timbral modifications with eight types of connotation. The connotations are:

benevolence, potency, naturalness, temporality, stability, distance, religiosity, happiness.

Slide 40

Pressure's On: vocal production, paralanguage and meaning in hardcore punk by Dave Easley 2014

PRESSURE'S ON: VOCAL PRODUCTION, PARALANGUAGE, AND MEANING IN AMERICAN HARDCORE PUNK (1978–86)

Dave Easley, Oklahoma City University (dbeasley@okcu.edu)

2014 Society for Music Theory National Conference, Milwaukee, WI

Figure 1: Paralinguistic features of (a) speech and (b) hardcore vocal production, and (c) paralinguistic markers of intensity in hardcore
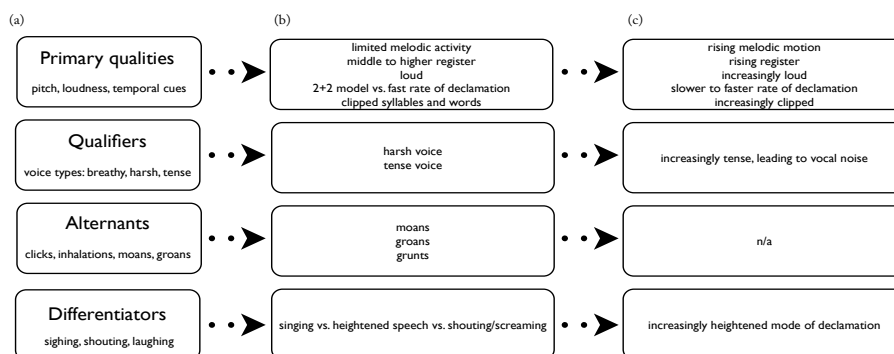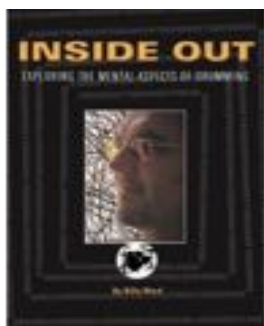
(a) **Primary qualities** — pitch, loudness, temporal cues
(b) limited melodic activity / middle to higher register / loud / 2+2 model vs. fast rate of declamation / clipped syllables and words
(c) rising melodic motion / rising register / increasingly loud / slower to faster rate of declamation / increasingly clipped

(a) **Qualifiers** — voice types: breathy, harsh, tense
(b) harsh voice / tense voice
(c) increasingly tense, leading to vocal noise

(a) **Alternants** — clicks, inhalations, moans, groans
(b) moans / groans / grunts
(c) n/a

(a) **Differentiators** — sighing, shouting, laughing
(b) singing vs. heightened speech vs. shouting/screaming
(c) increasingly heightened mode of declamation

Figure 2: Definitions of paralinguistic categories (all from Poyatos 2002 and Lacasse 2010)

Category	Definition
primary qualities	Characteristics of voice that differentiate individuals: timbre, resonance, intensity or volume, tempo, pitch (level, intervals, range), intonation range, syllabic duration, and rhythm
qualifiers	Modification of verbal utterances. Includes breathing effects (e.g., whispery voice), laryngeal effects (e.g., creaky voice, harsh voice, tense voice), and others created by pharyngeal control and nasality.
alternants	Vocal sounds that occur independently of verbal utterances. Includes moans, groans, hisses, snorts, etc.
differentiators	Modification of verbal utterances or occurring independently. Includes sound constructs such as laughter, crying, shouting/screaming, sighing, gasping, etc.

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https://societymusictheory.org/files/2014_handouts/easley.pdf

Interpretation – drumkit players say …

- How do performers execute these different ways?
  - Duration inc articulation
  - Tone
  - Dynamics
  - Pitch

Inside Out: Exploring the mental aspects of drumming
by Billy Ward
(Hal Leonard)

1. "I tend to appreciate the **colors** a drummer has chosen more than the particular right-hand/left-hand beat he or she is playing" p.24
2. "Knowing different styles is important. Knowing **extreme** styles is like spices in cooking" p.32
3. "Is it possible that when we work hard at our practicing, we're only becoming better **practicers** rather than better players?" p.36
4. "How do we keep an open mind to new ideas in art when it's so darned comfortable to stick with what we **already** know?" p.59

Develop music language across all areas of study

- In solo lessons, ensemble rehearsals, music theory and aural comprehension classes, analysis classes, listening activities
- Be in a dialogue with students constantly asking them to explain what they mean
- Refer to glossaries, in particular the one in the VCE Music Study Design pages 99 – 102
- Seek taxonomies, heuristics and other lists
  - Blooms Taxonomy – levels of learning action
  - Hevner's Mood Wheel – adjectives to describe moods
  - Elements of music, expressive elements of music
  - Adam Yee's Listening Heuristics 2012
- Transfer learning in music language to other works, to other activities, and use VCE music language in every lesson.

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Emotion, feelings and moods

- "Music is what feelings sound like"
- Feelings is one way that meaning is found in music
- Elements of music often can be identified as creators of the feelings, and the emerging meaning
  - By identifying ways particular elements of music are associated with feelings and moods, can bring added purpose into develop performance technique and stage a performance
- The teaching of describing emotions in responses to music needs a smaller set of adjectives to get going
 - The Mood Wheel by Kate Hevner.

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Kate Hevner's Mood Wheel

6
merry
joyous
gay
happy
cheerful
bright
sunny
gleeful
vivacious
entrancing
fun

7
exhilarated
soaring
triumphant
dramatic
passionate
sensational
agitated
exciting
impetuous
restless
tumultuous

5
humorous
playful
whimsical
fanciful
quaint
sprightly
delicate
light
graceful
jovial
sparkling

8
vigorous
robust
emphatic
martial
ponderous
majestic
exalting
energetic
mighty
potent
imposing

4
lyrical
leisurely
satisfying
serene
tranquil
quiet
soothing
peaceful
comforting
easygoing
gentle

1
spiritual
lofty
awe-inspiring
dignified
sacred
solemn
sober
serious
noble
pious
sublime

3
dreamy
yielding
tender
sentimental
longing
yearning
pleading
plaintive
nostalgic
wistful
touching

2
pathetic
doleful
sad
mournful
tragic
melancholy
frustrated
depressing
gloomy
heavy
dark

1937 in Appendix 8.10 Bonde 2005
www.musictherapyworld.de/modules/archive/dissertations/pdfs/Bonde2005.pdf *hevner's mood wheel revised*

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Character Traits vs Character Emotions Adjective Lists

https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Character-Traits-vs-Character-Emotions-Adjective-Lists-1298528

- From Teachers Pay Teachers website

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Writing about Expressive Elements of Music

- Reference listening responses to what the students listen to and know.
  - These standards are likely to be different to those of trained classical art musicians, in particular composers
  - Study the musical style and listen to a wide range of sample recordings of music made by Australian since 1910
- Form critical responses to link the student's feeling response to the ways expressive elements are used in a recording,
  - Use the Mood Wheel and other word lists as a starting point for making the statement
- Consider the Expressive Elements of Music as the elements that performers have the freedom to use
  - Study musical style in works using the elements of music
  - Use textbooks such as Kamien *Music: an appreciation* with accompanying CD recordings
  - Build the vocabulary in the learning in all Outcomes for this subject.

Susanne Langer – philosopher d.1985
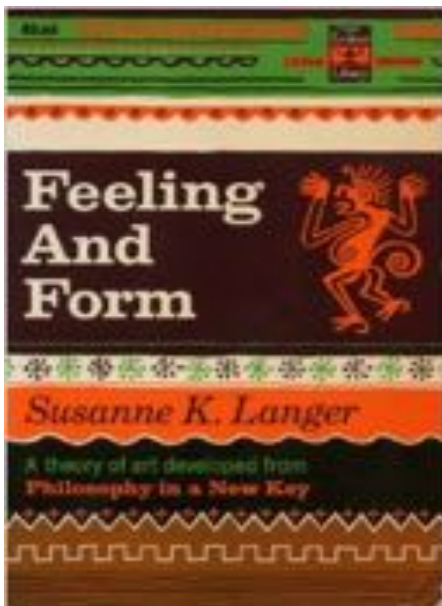
- An American philosopher of mind and of art
- "Philosophy in a New Key", "Feeling and Form" 1948, "Mind: an Essay on Human Feeling"
- Langer's philosophy explored the continuous process of meaning-making in the human mind through the power of "seeing" one thing in terms of another
- Her last book was an attempt to establish a philosophical and scientific underpinning of aesthetic experience.
- "feeling is associated with spontaneity … an absence of form" "Feeling and From" p.17
- She submitted that "art, especially music, is a highly articulated form of expression symbolizing direct or intuitive knowledge of life patterns"
- "Listening is the primary musical activity. The basis of all musical advance is more comprehensive hearing. And the one support that every artist must have if he is to go on creating music in a world that listens." "Feeling and Form" p.148
- "Susanne Langer denies that a work of art is only an expression of the artist's personal feelings and argues that artistic import has no characteristic logical forms. She insists that significance is not limited to the literal meanings of factual statements, but extends also to the art symbols objectifying the patterns of feeling found in man's inner life" "Realms of Meaning" Philip Phenix 1964 p.42

Writing about music - summary

- Encourage your students to develop their responses to music listening in ways that uses their senses and helps develop their sensitivity and aural perception, without risk of any "wrong" answer
- Use word lists to stimulate discussion of feeling, mood and emotional responses to music listening such as Hevner's Mood Wheel
- Use structures and terms from VCAA documents about music listening responses, build and understanding of what facts can be associated with this vocabulary, differentiate the elements of music in different styles
- Provide clarity in what is an expressive element of music to a performer
- Use text resources such as Kamien "Music: an appreciation" to know the foundations of the music that may be selected in the examination and learn the factual vocabulary that describes it
- Understand that music meaning is also associated with man's inner being
- Form critical response statements, review, refine, and drill it.

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Have a great year.

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- Any questions? Please contact Roland Yeung
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