

## **ISME Community Music Activity Commission**

July 2008 Meeting, Bologna Italy

Emerging Themes, Issues/Challenges, Questions & Items for Action

### **Summary Points**

#### *Theorizing about Community Music*

We have a sense that we have moved beyond grappling with basic definitions of CM activities, beyond trying to differentiate ourselves through geographic and cultural traditions. Instead, we are moving towards developing rationales that can frame research and practice initiatives while embracing core values such as inclusiveness, equity, and access.

#### *Practice & Leadership*

We continue to examine how our notions of inclusiveness still carry aspects of exclusivity. We challenge ourselves to continue to engage in reflecting about the ethics of practice, which includes its effectiveness and the various relationships CM workers have. Leadership is perhaps at the heart of CM practice. While CM practitioners eschew authoritarian approaches in favor of facilitative approaches, we continue to examine the pragmatic difficulties in achieving a balance. We also recognize the need to foster long-term sustainability of projects that we initiate.

#### *Research*

We recognize the need for research to inform practice and vice versa and that a number of collaborative disciplines could aid us in researching Community Music. We also recognize a need for a meta-analysis of projects so that we could inform ourselves and others about the breadth of practice and to identify gaps in CM research literature.

#### *Issues/Challenges*

We acknowledge that in working with others we need to be sensitive to their issues, not just our agendas, and we need to allow ourselves to be named by others. We advocate having more preparation in group process skills for CM practitioners. We need to find ourselves in scholarly literature, theoretical writings.

#### *Questions & Items for Action*

We look to the continued development of regional networks to foster our practice and research initiatives during the intervening periods between ISME gatherings. We suggest seeking the perspectives of non-music professionals to frame notions of practice and areas of research. We acknowledge and embrace that we are continually “arriving”, because we view ourselves as organic and developing.

## **I. Theory – Patrick Schmidt**

- Developing a rationale/dispositions/objectives/organizing framework for Community Music
- Defining community music, re-defining it in an international setting
  - Community Music as Practice-based ethnomusicology.
  - Community music/music education as an anthropological understanding/approach.
  - Sociological aspects of CM?
- Defining what we mean by music (sonic, social, aesthetic components) in a community music setting.
  - The social and sonic spheres do not operate as binary opposites but in productive tension.
  - Understanding musicing as embodied experience
  - Community music/music education as an anthropological understanding/approach.
- Defining/Understanding the power of music
  - Power of music and social/personal/emotional effect.
  - The power of musical praxis, being aware of human interaction.
- Developing macro and micro perspectives of social capital
- Shift from epistemological to ontological perspectives in music education.
- inclusive groups, exclusive groups. Defining inclusiveness.

## **GROUP REPORT:**

### Challenging Community Music - From Veblen

- The geography of Community Music not as the defining element of the process of defining the parameters of and for CM.
- Complexity of sources and processes for dispositions and rationale for CM depart from sociological, anthropological, philosophical, ethnomusicological, sonic.
- Educational and social growth
- Defining CM by asking not merely What is CM, but also Where, In what Ways, For Whom and By whom, Despite

How do we foster.....

CM should search for theoretical notions and framings that can aid to various framings

Exemplification of practice and thinking can take place in varied modalities

Sonic, artistic, verbal

Various Technologies

CM not as a didactic notion but a praxis

- o Multiple lens of phenomenological

Are there ways to clusters and possible alignments from already existing research

- From field to theory and back
- Dynamic Symbiotic relation

New confluences...

CM and Constructivist

Better understanding how regional engagements connect to world

Which theoretical parameters seemed to be used  
How are being brought to practice?

#### Stand Point Process of Theories

Indigenous  
Feminist  
Race  
Economic  
Cultural  
Pedagogical

Movements from the epistemological to ontological  
Push for presentations to have reportive, challenging, critical, envisioning  
elements – Concern with Hawthorne effects of our research

What are the characteristics that are distinctive of and in CM?

Advocacy

Commitment of CM to a preoccupation with marginality and exclusion in society and the  
development/fomenting human dignity.

This could be named in various ways

Concern with capacities to facilitate a direct encounter between individual and musical  
*lifeworlds*

Not capacities *of* music but *in* music

Geography not as the defining element, but the social fact of various geographies

Music always as social interaction and condition – Values

Inclusiveness and exclusiveness

Consciousness of the multiplicity of the various modes of inclusion/exclusion

Equality is not equity – Clarification of meanings

Recognition of power differentiations

Professional as an ethical being - connection to Ethics

## II. Practice and Leadership– Kathryn Deane

- Making time to think about practice
- Effectiveness – defining, measuring
- Excellence – what is it? Who decides?
- Relationships
  - to community of CM activities. Being organic/fundamental to community.
  - among CM practitioners
  - between university and community
  - Relationship building in the concept of music making
  - Relationship of the CM workers and the community
- Institutional constraints and demands
- Possibilities of collaborative efforts/Partnerships. How and where are they forged?
- What makes us suited/suitable for multiple roles (e.g., social work expertise and music expertise)?
- Community Music as Practice-based ethnomusicology.
- Promoting musicing as embodied experience?

- Community music/music education as an anthropological understanding/approach.
- Sociological aspects of CM?
- Creating a space for individuals to be protagonists within the CM activity.
- Shift from epistemological to ontological perspectives in music education.
- inclusive groups, exclusive groups. Defining inclusiveness.
- Giving back. And defining what you leave behind. Building a continuing , sustaining relationship. Making others aware of models of sustainability (of labor, social relations, capital).
- What leadership skills/dispositions does one need to be a CM leader?
- Leadership includes envisioning a future, using imagination.
- Leadership transition – creating a successful environment for the “next” leader

### **GROUP REPORT:**

- Ownership/stakeholders. Determine issues. Who has the permission. Effectiveness/excellence/relationships/partnerships. Need to recognize these differences/tensions
- Recognise exclusiveness with CM’s inclusiveness
- Reflective practice (runs through everything)
- Construction of individual’s and group’s identity
- Community Music ←--→ music in community spectrum
- Bounded with in ethical practice
- international call for actions and values:
  - space values, non-judgmental. Interactive. Acceptance. Reciprocal. Humble. Commitment. Passion. Integrity. Fundamental to the community, inclusive.
  - Values adapted internationally
- Vision/importance
  - Allowing people to contribute to vision. Person-centered. Relate with defining effectiveness
  - Sustainability in the Goodbye (vs. Welcome)

### **IV. Research – Mary Cohen**

- Possibilities of collaborative efforts
- Document the histories/developing historiographies of community music in our various cultures.
- Developing a bibliography & discography of articles/books/dissertations and media materials related to CM.
- Foster studies of comparative music education/community music concerns.
- Think about social differences/cultural differences and the effect on community music, creating spaces for research.
- Space within CMA to hear research on children’s musicking in different settings around the world.
- Documenting pedagogical expertise of community musicians. Advancing acceptance.
- Community Music as Practice-based ethnomusicology (or ethnobiography?).
- Giving back. And defining what you leave behind. Building a continuing , sustaining relationship. Making others aware of models of sustainability (of labor, social relations, capital).

### **GROUP REPORT:**

- Collaborative disciplines
  - Applied ethnomusicology

- education
- popular music
- media studies
- cultural studies
- sociology/community studies
- historiography
- combine teaching and research
- applications of music learning approaches (Orff, Dalcroze, creative motion, Kodaly, Carabone-Cone, Gordon)
- philosophy
- historical research
- Content gaps in CM research
  - Recognize children activities as CM
  - Dynamics of promising practices (actual groups)
  - Meta-analysis/global projects
  - Virtual music-making communities
  - Leadership styles in CM
- Methodology
  - Interactive research designs
  - Symbiotic relationship between researcher and communities
  - Ethics of care
  - Reflective research frameworks

## **V. Issues/Challenges – Cathy Benedict**

- Ethics of community music/music ed/research.
- Ethics – pluralities & fluidities of ethics, how we engage ethically.
- Issues around power and reciprocity
- Doctrinal differences in communities, breaking down of dichotomies.
- What are the politics of community music and how do we engage them?
- Values. How do values (in various communities) come to be values? What are the implications of this for community music?
- Who own the community music project?
- Issues of technology creating a global community in real time. Using the computer as a musical instrument.
- Giving back. And defining what you leave behind. Building a continuing, sustaining relationship. Making others aware of models of sustainability (of labor, social relations, capital).

## **GROUP REPORT:**

- Apologizing:
  - Working with indigenous peoples (for instance) exclusively and finding a need to apologize for not being more inclusive about working with other cultures. Whether that means working with ethnic cultures, or aboriginal (people native to one's own country), or even working with white disenfranchised working class males, etc
  - Or even community work as played out in school music populations and feeling the need to apologize for not engaging in community work that might be interpreted as a 'more needy' community.

Seeing community music on a continuum—reactivity and thus intervention in cultures who are at risk of losing their community, and going into communities and doing, giving, providing something not there.

- Professional development:

- Problematics of working with (or preparing, 'training') community facilitators/leaders when they have been "trained" in particular musical systems. i.e. trained in conservatories, 'trained' in a rock band, or jazz, or whatever... (which of course, BEGS the usage of the word "training" which has to be problematized! We train animals, not humans)

In our work with community music facilitators/leaders often the music tasks, rather than the process is a focus. More work on group process skills and reflective practice rooted in practical work is necessary.

- Naming ourselves: "Allowing" ourselves to be named by others, our value of ourselves to be named by others, and then living and taking on that naming. Rather than seeing the complexity and plurality of our engagements

- Not just finding ourselves in our musical engagements, or even our social engagements, but also finding ourselves in a literature base. For instance, feminist literature, or critical theory (NOT just (or even!) music education literature)

- Funding...of course.

## **V. Questions & Items for Action – William Dabback**

- In what ways can CMA systematically inform ISME and the wider profession of insights of CM?

- What/how can CMA contribute to the other ISME commissions, such as a social justice component?

- How do we transfer elements of CM/insights from CM to Music education?

- How do we broaden ISME to think about or recognize cross-sectoral partnerships?

- What can we learn about ourselves and our practices by examining our various endeavours? Examining our similarities and differences.

- What role can CMA play in helping people have access to their folk traditions and to various folk, pop, and art musics (Including western art music.)?

- Language of CMA should remain inclusive of doers, but strike an appropriate balance between practice and theorizing. Stressing that theory informs practice. How do we do this?

- Find a way to bring participants (via technology?) of our CM efforts to CMA presentations (e.g. Devito/Rodriguez/Kleber project).

## **GROUP REPORT:**

1. In what ways can CMA systematically inform ISME and the wider profession of insights of CM?

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- How do we transfer elements of CM/insights from CM to Music education?

- Use ISME communications tools (e.g. postcards, listservs)

- Electronic flow through keywords

- Remain engaged in off-years (e.g. regional networks)

- Propose ethics and values statement to commission so that ISME can address and respond.

- Investigate funding sources with an eye to developing role of commission.
  - More days with other commissions. Dialog moving towards the larger conference
2. How do we broaden ISME to think about or recognize cross-sectoral partnerships?
    - Through examples and models
    - Invite and engage non-music professionals who can inform the commission/ISME regarding shared work practices/values
    - Looking for a wider range of keynote speakers at ISME
  3. What can we learn about ourselves and our practices by examining our various endeavours? Examining our similarities and differences.
    - Define ourselves/we – information bearers/conduits
    - Networking. Resource for ideas, modification of ideas to local contexts, place of affirmation, exchange of expertise
    - How do we approach? Identify similarities and differences.
    - Promote non-arrival concept of CM. continual group reflection.
    - Questioning of boundaries and norms.
  4. What role can CMA play in helping people have access to their folk traditions and to various folk, pop, and art musics (Including western art music.)?
    - Get out of the way after setting up channels of communication (e.g. website of excellent culture bearers)
    - Technology demonstrations, e.g. Skype
  5. Language of CMA should remain inclusive of doers, but strike an appropriate balance between practice and theorizing. Stressing that theory informs practice. How do we do this?
    - Potential alienation of practitioners through academic institutionalization (and vice versa?)
    - Can't forget fundamental roots
    - Flexible vocabulary – reciprocal – partnerships
    - Vocabulary – objectivity?
    - Each have an on-going role to play, particularly with focus on which outcomes shared and which are different. Ongoing dialog. Recognizes the balance.
    - Theory informs practice and practice informs theory. E.g. ISME session featuring both research and practice, sharing relevant information both musically and from an academic perspective.
  6. Find a way to bring participants (via technology?) of our CM efforts to CMA presentations (e.g. DeVito/Rodriguez/Kleber project).
    - 2-way flow.
    - Vision – initiation.