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Different Weather

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On a recent trip to my home county of Cornwall, in the southwest of England, I was told a story by a retired Methodist lay preacher of his encounter, as a young man, with an older homeless person. The day was sunny, and the young preacher – keen to encourage the older gentleman of the road – greeted him cheerily with the words:

"Well, I suppose this is better weather for you than yesterday…"

"Better weather" retorted the experienced traveller. "What do you mean, *better* weather? I'm surprised that you, a man of the cloth, should speak of *better* weather. The good Lord made the weather, and he didn't make *better* weather – he just made *different* weather. And today is *different* weather…"

Different views

This article is a response to Rhoda Bernard's (2005) article, *Making Music, Making Selves.* I first met Dr. Bernard several years ago in the UK, at an international music education research conference at the University of Exeter. Without realising I was in the audience, Dr. Bernard cited my 1995 article *Artist or Teacher?* as an early example of research in the field of musician-teacher identity, an area on which she had focused during her doctoral studies at Harvard University. The citation was expressed positively and our subsequent conversation was congenial and productive. Some years later I was scheduled to chair a conference session in which Rhoda Bernard presented another paper on her developing work in the field of teacher identity. I was intrigued, therefore, to read her critique of my position in *Making Music, Making Selves* – something that was not evident during our earlier discussions. Rhoda Bernard's article contains some interesting perspectives, although I do have reservations concerning some of her observations and conclusions.

At the start of her article, Bernard describes a familiar scene of people gathering for a conference. She reports distress at being able to provide only a limited picture of her perceived identity during the inevitable round of personal introductions. The purpose of such introductions, however, is not intended to provide a full biography, any more than an article can provide a definitive account. Just as reductive analysis reveals only partial insight into the 'meaning' of a composition, so any analysis of human identity must be incomplete. To define a person in terms of chemical constituents does not touch the depths of relationships, character and emotion; to use the measure of possessions or employment to define identity misses the intrinsic value of an individual; to focus on culture and geography locates us in time and place, but still remains inadequate in defining who we are.[1] Such attempts to capture identity are like photographs – brief snapshots of moments in our lives. Even the clarity of the image is dependent on the skill of the photographer, the equipment used and the quality of light shed on the subject. Bernard's view of 'identity as shifting positions' (p. 5) would concur with this multi-dimensional view of identity. Indeed, given her recognition of identity being 'constructed on multiple levels' and 'evolving in response to our experiences and to the social context' (p. 5), it is surprising that she is overly concerned with the inadequacies of conference introductions to reveal her identity. Even if a whole conference were devoted to presenting individual identities, the very nature of the 'problem' (multiple levels and evolving identities) would leave the story unfinished – each day providing material for further consideration. Can any of us be confident in knowing ourselves well enough to portray a complete picture, or even an acceptable representation, of our true identity?

The identification of a 'musical' intelligence in Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligences has raised the status of music for many people. There is, of course, a danger that the theory might be interpreted as *limiting* our perspective on music by portraying only one such 'intelligence'. It may be more helpful to consider a range of musical 'intelligences' – varied capacities for understanding and action that differ for the composer, performer and listener. Indeed, a case could be made for further fine-tuning, in identifying a range of *'performance* intelligences' whereby the 'intelligence' required of a flautist, for example, would be different to that of a pianist or guitarist. 'Intelligences' depend also on a prevalent musical and cultural context –

something discovered in traditional IQ tests, where natural intelligence was considered incorrectly to be lower for one cultural group than another. Some educational administrators, unfortunately, viewed the IQ test as a fixed indicator of intelligence. In England, for example, the 1944 Butler Education Act[2] determined children's secondary education on the basis of their results in the 11-plus examination. During the 1960s, the assessment took on more of the objective character of an IQ test, in order to avoid some of the cultural bias of certain questions. But even if absolute objectivity could be assured in a test, it is important to ascertain what exactly is being tested; 'intelligence' might be too wide a claim. Just as one's IQ rating could be increased through training and practice, so any natural ability we might possess can be improved through exposure to appropriate stimuli. To refer to 'capacity' rather than 'intelligence' in this context might avoid some of the misunderstandings that result from considering 'intelligence' in a restricted manner.

'Intelligences' (or capacities) could be considered wider than particular disciplines or skills and capable of development through teaching and learning. Similarly, we might refer to a spectrum of musical identities, from a 'personal' or 'individual' identity, to a 'collective' identity (as a member of a group) to 'negotiated' identities that require us to compromise in our interaction with others in different contexts and situations. This spectrum includes distinctions of gender and nationality, and reveals itself variously in different musical genres. Within the broad area of musical performance, the rock group promotes and celebrates individuals, whereas jazz groups (like classical ensembles and orchestras) promote a collective, team identity and approach. Early influential musical experiences shape our individual identities (Burnard, 2000a and b; Burnard, 2003), just as our experience of life's rich tapestry affects our perception of others and our developing identities as music teachers (Dolloff, 1999). In discussing our personal and professional identity, therefore, the issue is one of deciding on an acceptable level of *incompleteness* rather than attempting and failing to provide a full account. Acceptance of the former reality would avoid the disappointment and frustration Rhoda Bernard seems to experience with the latter condition.

At the outset of my response, I would wish to make two things clear. Firstly, it does not trouble me if someone criticises my ideas. Debating ideas is a healthy academic pursuit and one that should not provoke the need to take sides or create opposing camps. In the end, such pursuits

can be unproductive and unhelpful; they distract from rational debate and foster pride rather than humility. They can lead to simplistic conclusions and entrenched positions, and possibly prevent us seeing anything constructive in the position taken by our 'opponent'. Such positioning can even spoil friendships. When issues are polarised in this way, we can forget that viewpoints depend on where we are standing; a shift in perspective and the view changes. Secondly, none of my writings is intended to be (or could be) the last word or even the 'best' perspective on a subject – however much I might seek to establish sound principles that could be considered useful within a wider context. An exhaustive treatment is not possible; the best we can do is offer ideas that, hopefully, will contribute usefully to the debate.

Artist or Teacher? was written in the early 1990s, initially as a paper for an EAS[3] conference in Belgium in January 1994, and later published in the International Journal of Music Education (IJME 25, 1995) – more than ten years before Rhoda Bernard's article. After such a time lapse, even *I* might take issue with what I had written! On a personal level, it is gratifying that *Artist or Teacher?* still provokes interest, is cited in articles and conference papers, and is referred to in several university music education programmes internationally. As with any article, consideration of its content should encourage the reader to engage constructively with ideas and perspectives, and so take the debate forward.

Different conflicts

My 1995 article considers some salient issues in the area of artist-teacher identity, with particular reference to the preparation of music teachers. There was no intention to suggest a negative conflict between an individual's personal musicianship and his or her role as a teacher. *Artist or Teacher?* simply highlights different emphases and perspectives in the areas of personal development and professional application. Indeed, the two areas of musicianship and teaching are considered to be complementary, and my conclusion is that there can and should be a synthesis between the identities of 'artist' and 'teacher':

> We are all 'Teachers' from whom others learn – the effectiveness of our message will depend on whether or not we are also 'Artists' (p. 13).

This resolution, in effect, holds the different identities in necessary tension. Such conflicts between identities should be viewed positively rather than negatively. My resolution recognises a need for professional balance between our different identities and roles, but such balance should not be read as diminishing or negating any part of who we are or what we do.

Rhoda Bernard is concerned to resolve what she perceives to be a problematic situation, where one's 'identity' is challenged because of tensions between different self-images or roles. Life is full of such tensions, however, as we seek to balance our responsibilities as parent and teacher, worker and carer, child-minder and executive. Some dual 'identities' are closely related; some are also 'roles', involving particular expectations and responsibilities. Rather than being considered problematic, such tensions are necessary to our existence; they enrich us and build our character. Just as harmonic discord or rhythmic tension enables the music to flow, so conflicts – properly managed – can help our growth as human beings. We need not fear them or seek their removal; we just have to manage them. I remember being told of a violinist who had struggled for hours trying to achieve a perfectly executed leap in a technically difficult composition. Prior to the first performance he met the composer and discussed the problematic passage. "Oh," said the composer, "I was not concerned so much with the pitch accuracy of the leap as with your attempt to achieve it…." The first performance suffered because the violinist no longer experienced any struggle in trying to achieve what the composer had written; the performance lacked a necessary tension. The poet-priest, Gerard Manley Hopkins, explored this theme in *The Windhover* (1877), where three images of conflict are presented as positive enrichment. Whether Hopkins was referring here to his own inner conflict in his dual 'identities' as poet and priest is open to debate; the message of sacrifice and service are evident, however, and a sense of struggle and tension gives the poem a remarkable energy. In *The Windhover,* a bird in flight is made more beautiful as it 'Rebuffed the big wind'; the plough in the field is polished as it labours through the earth; the dying embers of a fire in a grate are given new life and colour as they 'Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermillion'. The poem has a sub-title, *'To Christ our Lord'* for the poet views the images of conflict in a spiritual context also; the wings of the windhover (or kestrel) make the shape of a cross as it comes up against the force of the wind. Conflict can have a positive outcome; it can lead even to our salvation.

The context of my 1995 article was that of teacher education. One of its central arguments was based on the premise that – in our job as teacher educators – we need to take account not only of subject-knowledge and understanding, but also subject-application. My article considered some of the issues facing teacher education at that time. Many teacher education programmes in the 1980s drew attention to learning *in* and learning *through* music – that is, to both direct and indirect benefits of engaging in musical learning. An additional issue concerned the relative importance attached to the areas of *musical* competence and *teaching* competence. In my own institution, for example, an applicant's perceived potential for becoming a classroom music teacher was sometimes considered more significant than his or her musical competence. This position was based on a belief that one could effect a greater change in a student's *musical* 'performance' (knowledge, understanding and skill) over the course of a four-year degree programme than in his or her 'natural' ability as a *teacher* – an ability that is dependent to some extent on personality, enthusiasm and skills in communication. Such a view was not intended to diminish the importance of a student teacher's level of musicianship, but simply recognised that the best musicians do not always make the best teachers. John Stephens properly emphasised personal musicianship as a prerequisite for successful teaching in observing: "The music teacher must be a musician first, then a teacher".[4]

Swanwick referred also to the relationship between musicianship and teaching in such texts as *Music, Mind and Education* (1988) and *Teaching Music Musically* (1999). In commenting on the experience of music teachers in British secondary schools and American elementary schools, he writes:

> This teacher is expected to be a versatile musician, able to work in the music of a number of cultures and at the same time to be a systematic educator making sure that each individual is engaged in an integrated music curriculum at a challenging level (1999: 102).

In his earlier text, Swanwick helpfully relates successful music teaching to personal musicianship:

> [F]ormal music education is, inevitably, *musical criticism.* The effectiveness and insightfulness of this criticism derives substantially from the quality of the teacher's own musical encounters and the ability to reflect upon them (1988: 130).

Bernard's emphasis on the musical identity of the teacher appears to be more concerned with personal status and fulfilment than application to the classroom – that is, with preserving a life outside of work rather than being identified with the life of a 'music *teacher'*. John Stephens and Keith Swanwick focus more on the need for personal musicianship in effective music *teaching,* a view that might be considered more altruistic than Bernard's concern to preserve and celebrate an individual's *musical* identity. Notwithstanding this distinction, both personal fulfilment and applied musicianship are deemed important for the individual and the community in which he or she works.

Small's (1977/1996, 1987, 1998) reference to 'musicking' drew attention to the importance of making music over the musical object itself – a theme observed by Elliott (1995) in his emphasis on the *doing* of music ('musicing'). Elliott was concerned to reclaim the ground for practical musicianship from those who had promoted what he considered to be a less defined 'aesthetic' approach to music education. In his use of the term 'musicing', Elliott emphasised a task-oriented approach to music education, based on clearly articulated, recognisable and assessable goals. The 'musicking' model, in its various dimensions, is predicated on the importance of human relationships in determining music's effects, thus resonating with a socially constructed approach to identity. For Small (1995), musical performance is at the heart of his 'musicking' model – performance that is dependent on personal engagement and relationships within a broad social context:

> All those present, listeners as well as performers, are engaging in the encounter, and all are contributing to the nature of the encounter through the human relationships that together they bring into existence during the performance (p. 3).

Simon Frith (1996) highlighted the reciprocal relationship between music and identity, observing that not only do individuals *create* music but, also, music *creates* (or 'shapes') individuals. This view suggests that music takes on its own identity and has an 'affective' role in our lives. The impact of music upon us, and our interest in particular musical genres, is not considered to be dependent merely on our personal history or social background. The social environment, however, remains important in our consideration of this subject, for just as music

and our developing identities are closely linked, so the social environment and the individual are mutually dependent. Music and the individual exist within a cultural and historical context.

Rhoda Bernard's concern for the identity of the musician alongside that of the teacher might usefully be set within the broader sphere of this debate. Bernard would seem to be in sympathy also with John Stephens' 'musician first' model (even if her emphasis is more on personal musical identity than application); moreover, her use of the term 'musician-teacher' reflects something of my earlier term, 'artist-teacher'. Indeed, the breadth of meaning and application suggested by the term 'musician-teacher' could strengthen the relationship between personal and professional identities, although that does not appear to be Bernard's interpretation of the term. Of course, the familiar term 'music teacher' does not mean that an individual is *only* a teacher, although it suggests a professional emphasis on the classroom more than the concert hall. Similarly, the identification 'scientist-teacher' and 'artist-teacher' reflect different emphases to those of 'science teacher' or 'art teacher'. The former identities balance subject-specialization with subject-application, whereas the latter identities draw attention to a professional role.

In my 1995 article, I identify personal as well as creative attributes that define the 'artist' and 'teacher':

> Essentially we are dealing with personal qualities of perception, sensitivity, enthusiasm, skill – a way of seeing, hearing and doing which is common to Artist or Teacher (p. 7).

In that context, not all musicians might be termed 'artists' – for my definition presupposes 'a broad and creative musicianship' (p. 4). The most effective 'musician-teacher' identity, therefore, could be considered a *creative* identity. To quote again from my earlier article:

> The question, therefore, is not merely that of the level of musicianship or subject-competency which is required for a person to be an effective teacher, but whether or not the Artist (be he/she composer, poet, visual artist) possesses qualities which can enrich a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom (p. 4).

Artist or Teacher? does not, as Bernard suggests, polarise 'music making and music teaching as opposing forces that need to be balanced in a healthy professional life' (Bernard, 2005, 7-8), but rather considers the different *qualities* of artist and teacher and how these might enrich one's personal and professional identity. A keen interest in improvising and composing was an important part of my own early development as a musician and later as a teacher. Any

perceived and ongoing 'conflict' that I might experience between my music making and my music teaching is not based on an antithetical or *philosophical* position, but is simply *practical* – namely, in not having sufficient time to do all I would wish. Moreover, the tension is not even between 'music making and music teaching', between musician and teacher identities (areas that, I would contend, can and should enrich each other), but rather is located elsewhere in the world of administration, attending meetings, completing reports and answering e-mails – even in writing this article! The tension we experience is in trying to balance all those areas and competing roles that fill so much of our personal and professional lives and impact on our identities as musicians *and* teachers! And then there is the round of daily existence, of family commitments, social interaction and pastimes. Identity is a complex matter and the conflicts we face go beyond that of trying to balance defined areas of interest and involvement.

Different perspectives

A diamond sparkles more brilliantly and with greater richness of colour as the light is reflected and refracted through its many facets and it is viewed from different positions. Similarly, we should welcome different perspectives on the identity of the 'musician-teacher' as opportunities to enlarge and enrich our understanding. Some perspectives may be more helpful than others – just as certain vantage points provide a more satisfying view of a landscape. To view an object in one way only, or to assume, on the basis of limited evidence, that one vantage point is superior to another, is potentially to deny the observer a proper understanding of the nature of the object. A designation of 'superior' – if it is to have more than personal meaning – is best arrived at through collective agreement over a period of time.

Part of the human experience is to seek answers to life's questions, to offer perspectives that inform our understanding. Even if it were possible to provide complete answers to our questions, this would likely engender stagnation rather than openness; our answers, like our conference introductions, can only be partial in many instances. Questions provide opportunities for further investigation and consideration of alternative perspectives, thus keeping the debate alive. If we are not open to considering different perspectives on musician-teacher identity, there is a danger of ignoring the benefits that each perspective provides. *Context* is important in our

consideration of relevant issues. When we simplify or polarise the issues, there is a risk of caricaturing the essential changing nature of the musician-teacher identity – of reducing the rich palette of colour to a monochrome, or blurring the surface of the diamond so that the light no longer shines through its many facets.

One question to consider, therefore, is whether or not Rhoda Bernard's article allows sufficiently, as she intends, for 'a wider range of perspectives on identity' (2005, 7), a range that recognises a richness of perspective and acknowledges the importance of purpose and context. An initial reading might suggest otherwise, as various perspectives are challenged and dismissed, and an emerging specific musician-teacher identity is promoted as a 'better' point of view. The resultant 'musician-teacher' identity clearly has merit, particularly in its recognition of the importance of personal musicianship for the individual. The question, however, is whether or not it is helpful to apply this model to the field of teacher preparation on the basis of Rhoda Bernard's limited data and her characterisation of teacher education programmes. At times, Bernard's proper concern to advocate and celebrate individual musicianship, together with her admirable enthusiasm for the subject, would appear to lead her to read more into what is stated or implied by other writers, or even to misrepresent certain views and positions. This tendency could be a consequence of not properly taking into account the *context* in which comments are made and professional courses are framed.

My response to *Making Music, Making Selves* is offered in the spirit of *different* weather rather than *better* weather. Some of the conclusions I reach are a result of my viewing the landscape from a different perspective to that of Rhoda Bernard. Notwithstanding my overall approach, there are occasions when I consider that the way in which ideas are expressed, and even the ideas themselves, would benefit from further reflection. In this regard, there could be 'better' ways of perceiving and debating issues in order to avoid a simplistic 'correct-incorrect' assessment, just as there are better and less effective ways of selecting and developing compositional ideas. Our perception of what is 'better' depends, to some extent, on context and not merely on personal preference or universal 'truths'.[5] For the holidaymaker, a sunny day might be preferable to a rainy one; for the farmer in a period of drought, the rain is undoubtedly better than unbroken sunshine. If the farmer and holidaymaker reside in different locations, then

both parties might be satisfied or dissatisfied; if the holidaymaker camps on the farmer's land, however, then one individual is sure to be disappointed. For the drifter, happy to take each day as it comes and content with 'the good Lord's' dispensation of weather, the notion of 'better' might even be an inappropriate concept. And what of 'the good Lord's' perspective? Matthew records Christ's words on the subject in the context of love for our enemies – a revolutionary perspective that challenges us to take a radical view of identity and relationships:

> He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous (Matthew 5: 45).

Different purposes

The opening section of *Making Music, Making Selves* raises some interesting issues concerning the purpose of introducing oneself at social gatherings. Beyond any natural anxiety that many feel in having to speak in public, Rhoda Bernard suggests a deeper concern – that of presenting only a partial view of individual identity. But introductions simply provide opportunities to set a basis for what follows; they are polite social exchanges that enable the conversation to begin. Just as 'Hello', 'Good morning' or 'How are you?' are not intended to be profound or complete statements about greetings, times of day or states of health, so our introductions should not be considered to be anything more than a beginning to a conversation. Our conversations develop through relationships and our relationships are enriched through conversations, and both processes take time. More often than not, it does not matter what we say about ourselves in a conference introduction – the context and the agenda will determine the nature of the meeting. Out-of-context introductory comments would, at the very least, engage an audience, whereas so many conference introductions fall on deaf ears – not least because individuals may be more concerned with *composing* and *performing* their own introductions than *listening* to others!

Moreover, there is a sense in which we already 'know' what our colleagues will say, and so we do not listen closely; our interest is not captured in the way it would be during an unexpected announcement. A broader, personal *identity,* therefore, is not (or should not be) under scrutiny on such occasions; the introduction allows us to note names, locate workplace, or identify common areas of interest. Admittedly, some may be tempted to use such introductions as opportunities to *impress* others – almost as if they are being interviewed for a position, or see

themselves in competition with their colleagues. But such attempts are unnecessary; we have intrinsic worth, dignity and value as human beings, irrespective of what we do or how we see ourselves. Our identity is not simply bound up with our jobs, our social interactions or how others perceive us. To be overly concerned with these things – especially in a focused professional meeting – suggests undue anxiety over who we are, while a need to elaborate on personal identity is likely to be more for our own benefit (to bolster self-esteem) than for the edification of the gathered assembly.

Bernard's composite identity of 'musician-teacher' is not actually an *integrated* identity, but two separate identities that depend on context for their meaning. The illustrations she provides (for example, on pages 17 and 18 of her article) refer largely to musical experiences in a musical context:

> All six of the musician-teachers in this study talk about ways that musical experiences are *personally relevant to them* (p. 17 – italics mine).

Only Anne's summary links her love of music with the relationships she is able to forge between music and her students. For the others in the group, there is no evident integration of their musician-teacher roles; the individuals are teachers (by profession) who make music (by choice). They were musicians before they became teachers, and while their teaching is likely to be enriched by their love of music, it is not the focus of Bernard's analysis. Rather, it is 'about their experiences making music' (p. 18). If one substituted 'farmer' or 'executive' for 'teacher' in the composite identity of 'musician-teacher', one might arrive at similar conclusions.

There would appear to be a need, therefore, to clarify the relationship between identity and context. Bernard's concern appears to be that of retaining and acknowledging musical identity *apart* from professional identity, of not diminishing our musical lives through programmes of professional training. This perspective offers two separate possibilities:

- Being a musician in a musical context;
- Being an educator in an educational context.

There are two further possibilities that represent a more integrated approach to personal and professional identity. Here, the focus is more on application of skills within a professional arena:

- Being a musician in an educational context;

- Being an educator in a musical context.

In these cases, the identities of musician and teacher are closely related; the descriptions would appear to represent more closely what some might expect from Bernard's composite identity of 'musician-teacher'. Such cases are based on an *applied* model of being a musician in the classroom or an educator in the concert hall. It is here that some of the confusion arises, for Bernard's criticism of literature on teacher education appears to treat the *professional* model of musician-teacher identity as if it were the same as the *personal* model of musician-teacher identity.

Different interpretations

Just as a piece of music can be interpreted in many ways and yet still retain its integrity and identity, so what might appear sometimes as 'evidence' remains open to interpretation. In the case of Lorraine, a musician whose father encouraged her to pursue a career as a teacher rather than a performer, my interpretation of the situation would not lead me to Bernard's conclusion:

> At the same time, however, Lorraine's father's advice to her about reconsidering her career aspirations echoes the widely held notions about music teachers: the idea that "those who can't do, teach" (2005, 22).

Bernard treats this example as one where music performance is set against music teaching. For my part, I see a different domestic situation unfolding. Lorraine is portrayed as someone for whom music making and music teaching exist alongside each other. This position is considered by Rhoda Bernard to run counter to the literature, which in her view is deemed to set the two areas in opposition to each other. I would suggest that such a perspective on the literature is open to debate, and propose to return to a consideration of this later in my article.

Lorraine's narrative (2005, 19-27) is set within her role as a teacher – albeit, a music teacher. The description identifies Lorraine as both a teacher *and* a musician, where her professional and personal lives are essentially separate. Notwithstanding this description, there would appear to be some link between Lorraine's musical performance activities (her 'musician identity') and her professional activities (her 'teacher identity'), even if this relationship is not a direct one. Lorraine applies musical and educational principles to her work in order to engage pupils in meaningful experiences. Her own *musical* identity as a pianist does not feature largely;

the song is *accompanied* on the piano, the music supporting the activity. She may not '*speak* [italics mine] about those activities [i.e. teaching and making music] separately when she discusses her work', but effectively they operate in separate contexts – that of the classroom and the concert hall, or other venue.

I would suggest an alternative explanation for Lorraine's father's perspective on music teachers:

> Lorraine's father took on the common understanding of music educators as failed performers (p. 27).

His advice to his seventeen-year-old daughter could be seen as part of a normal family conversation, where the parent – responding to the disappointment experienced by his child – simply asks:

> "What do you *want* to do?"
> "You are good at 'teaching'." (This could have been any one of many other things.)
> "Would you prefer to do this rather than pursue a career as a performer?"

After all, to keep the situation in perspective, Lorraine did not 'fail' as a performer – she merely came second in one competition, having already built up confidence and experience in winning many other competitions. Indeed, she considered her 'failure' to be a result of insufficient practice as a result of looking after her father, rather than a comment on her ability as a performer. No doubt, this was a significant event in her early life, but one that need not have altered her career aspirations if she did not want it to do so. Moreover, her father did not suggest she stop performing; rather, he encouraged her to perform in her spare time. In this, he was simply reflecting his own experience, of performing part time with his band. One might ask, "Did he see himself as a *failed* musician?" Most likely not – undoubtedly he continued to enjoy his music!

Lorraine's reference (p. 27) to overcoming hardships in order to make music is possibly nothing more than a common experience of a conflict of interests – of trying to balance the demands of employment and other areas of daily life with her aspirations as a performer. The portrayal of Lorraine's teaching of an action song (pp. 25-26) is described as 'her enactment of a narrative of overcoming obstacles' (p. 26) – an unusual description of what many would

recognise as a familiar approach to teaching a song. The description of the activity seems to imbue it with a misplaced metaphorical significance. A problem-solving approach is one of many ways of introducing a lesson; for Bernard, it was recognised as atypical (p. 27), although it is unclear whether or not her assessment is based on local or wider reference points. And what of Lorraine's other 'identity' as a musician? Throughout her college life, she continued to play the piano in a variety of contexts – an experience that enabled her 'to "play for people"' rather than try 'to "have a big winner's medal"'. Such a shift in perspective might be considered as evidence of Lorraine's increased maturity as an adult – of a focus more on others than on herself. Her approach to performing and teaching would appear simply to be an extension of this healthy change in perspective.

Different identities

Bernard refers to the concept of 'multilayered' identities (p. 4) – a term she considers synonymous with the social constructionist term: 'multiple identities' (p. 6). 'Multilayered', however, could suggest a view of identity in which – like the rings of an onion – one layer *covers* another, whereas the term 'multiple identities' allows for different identities to coexist and to come in and out of focus as appropriate. This semantic distinction might, at first, appear insignificant. However, since Bernard is concerned with perceived conflicts between, for example, musical identity and professional identity, the image of 'layered identities' could be considered less helpful than that of 'multiple identities' in her consideration of the subject. The latter term has the advantage of avoiding perceived negative tensions between our musical and professional identities. Swanwick usefully brings the two identities together by drawing attention to the fundamental link between them:

> Every musician is also a 'teacher' at one time or another and every effective teacher of music is inevitably a musician (1994: introduction).

This position echoes my own independent observation from the same period:

> We are all 'Teachers' from whom others learn – the effectiveness of our message will depend on whether or not we are also 'Artists' (1995: 13).

In this instance, Swanwick does not make a clear distinction between the two roles of teacher and musician (the context does not require this); my observation recognises the importance of a creative, artistic or musical identity in effective teaching.

The human need to be accepted, affirmed and loved is a natural part of our individual identity – something that has become more important within a postmodern, individualistic society. For those of a different time or culture, individual identity might be less of an issue than *collective* or *communal* identity. In such contexts, a community identity might be considered more important than a need to assert who we are. Stålhammar (2006) observes:

> Musical experience – indeed, aesthetic experience in general – is linked with both individual and collective identity. A piece of music not only reflects the person or environment that has produced it, but also creates and shapes identities (p. 170).[6]

Considering identities within a social context, as a changing phenomenon resulting from social interactions (Hargreaves, Miell and MacDonald, 2002) is part of the social constructionist perspective on identity.[7] My reading of this perspective does not preclude individual and cultural dimensions – areas that Bernard considers to be additional (Bernard 2005, 6). From birth, we define ourselves in relation to others; our individual (reflective) identities are constantly being shaped by our relationships. Language has an important place also in how we perceive ourselves, defining cultural aspects as well as our thought processes and ability to relate to and comprehend the external world. The pre-linguistic infant understands the world and relationships through sound, sensation and image; as we develop linguistic skills and greater maturity in our understanding, so our thinking about who we are becomes more dependent on language. The richer our vocabularies, the greater the opportunity we have to reflect on, define and express our identity on many levels. Those who lack speech and language skills (through inadequate education, low ability level, or illness) often experience diminished self-esteem and frustration in expressing their sense of who they are as individuals and in relation to others. Confidence develops as we become more comfortable with our evolving identities and are able to express ourselves satisfactorily. Bernard recognises 'discourse' as an important component of the social constructivist position – where 'discourse' is 'broadly defined as what people say and do (O'Neill, 2002)' (pp. 6-7). Bernard's consideration of discourse as being 'one of many means by which identity is constructed' allows her to refer to 'personal associations, meaning, and

experience' (Bernard 2005, 7) as additional vehicles. Of course, such vehicles rely also on language to articulate identity, although not exclusively so. Commenting on effective music teaching, Swanwick writes:

> For ultimately, teaching music *musically* can only be done by those who care for and understand that the human activity we call music is a rich form of discourse (1999: 109).

Music therapy recognises the importance of additional areas of music's 'rich form of discourse' for those whose language and other skills have been diminished.

Bernard's article properly emphasises the importance of celebrating the 'musician' identity of elementary general music teachers, of acknowledging this important part of their life outside the classroom. Her concern would appear to be more with the musician-teacher's own *perception* of identity within the elementary school than with the *effect* of that identity on students. Davidson and Burland (2006) recognise the importance of the teacher's personality characteristics in initiating and sustaining a child's interest in music. As the child moves from elementary to secondary stages of education, so he or she becomes less dependent on the teacher. Erikson (1959) identified adolescence as a period where the individual confuses identity with role. Security at this stage is bound up with one's peers, far more deeply than at other stages of development. Whilst Davidson and Burland are more concerned with the emerging identity of the adolescent musician than the teacher's perception of his or her identity, like Erikson, they recognise that the teacher continues to have an important role in shaping students' identity. The way that teachers perceive themselves, therefore, is important not only for themselves but also for those in their care. In their research, Davidson and Burland discovered that the way teachers interacted with their students was a key factor in the successful development of the learner. For the elementary or primary stage student, a teacher's friendliness was considered important, whereas for the adolescent student,

> the role model of the teacher as a professional player seemed more important than personal dimensions such as friendliness (p. 476).

Bernard's emphasis on maintaining one's musical personality as a teacher has an important place, therefore, in shaping the musical development of others – particularly at later stages of music education. Davidson and Burland further support this view in stressing the

importance for the learner in feeling 'valued' as a musician by those in his or her circle. One part of this social support network, particularly for adolescent students, is that of the teacher's own celebration of a personal musical identity. In the development of individual perception of being 'musical' or 'unmusical', the way music is taught in schools can have an important influence (Lamont, 2002). Both personal musicianship and appropriate models of teaching and learning, therefore, are important for the development of the identities and confidence of others as well as for defining our own identities.

Different values

One of the concerns Rhoda Bernard is keen to address in her article is that of the perceived *value* attached to the different roles of music educator and musician:

> Simply put, those working and writing in the field of music teacher education place a higher value on the teaching of pre-service music educators than on their music making (2005, 10).

By simplifying the debate in this way, I would suggest that Bernard does not properly represent the situation. John Stephens' 'musician first' model and Swanwick's comments on the importance of 'musical encounters and the ability to reflect upon them', together with the evidence of many programmes of music teacher education, emphasise the importance of personal musicianship as an essential factor in the teacher's daily professional life. Part of my own job is to educate and train musicians, while another part is to equip individuals for their role as music teachers. In one context, as a composer, I teach composition to a group of students, and then – in another class – teach those same students how to *teach* composition. For my students and myself, there is no conflict in this, no opposition between these two roles, no suggestion that the teacher is pitted against the musician. It is simply a matter of adopting different *roles* at different times – and the roles we adopt should not be confused with a broader *identity*. I remain a composer when I am a teacher educator – just as I am, coincidentally, a husband, father, friend and taxpayer! Inevitably, not all aspects of my identity are directly in focus at all times. Nevertheless, they remain part of who I am, and in varying ways inform my approach to everything I do – including my music making *and* my teaching.

Over-stating perceived conflicts between being a musician and becoming 'socialized as effective teachers' (Bernard 2005, 13) leads, I would suggest, to a distortion of the picture. One of my concerns about the way Bernard develops her argument is that many of her interesting observations are affected by a tendency to polarise issues. A central matter concerns one's interpretation of the literature or evaluation of music teacher education programmes. A statement such as

> Contrary to the discourse in the field, experiences of making music are not in conflict with effective music teaching (p. 13)

is predicated upon a perspective on the literature that, I would suggest, is not properly representative. If the literature definitely *asserts* that making music 'should be abandoned by pre-service music teachers so that they can become socialized as effective teachers' (p. 13), then Bernard's case is well made. If, however, that position is *inferred* or observations are taken out of context, then the case is less secure. Interestingly, Regelski (1997) employs the term 'musician-teacher' (advocated by Bernard in her 2005 article) in a paper delivered at the Oklahoma Symposium for Music Education in April 1995. His comments reflect a balance between musician and teacher identities. He writes:

> 'Musician-teachers', thus, must undergo countless nerve-racking episodes of various kinds of public performance to earn the 'musician' part of their role. Then, in 'student-teaching', they learn how to feel, think and deport themselves as 'teachers' (p. 99).

This description reflects my own perception of many music teacher education programmes, where the personal musical identities of those training to be teachers are recognised as an important part of their professional development.

Evidently, in order to be an effective teacher, it is essential to have something to teach; knowledge, understanding and skill in one's chosen discipline, therefore, are taken for granted. Elsewhere (Stephens, 2003) I have referred to difficulties that some teachers appear to experience in deciding on appropriate models for developing musicianship in music education programmes. The problem emanates from what might be considered undue concern for 'political correctness' in our curricula, whereby inclusion or exclusion of a musical genre could be interpreted as a comment on its perceived value:

> Musical purpose and content are not the same in each tradition, so it would seem an unnecessary distraction to argue either for a hierarchical view of music or for equality between all music. If everything is of equal importance or worth, the basis for defining value becomes less clear. The issue is a complex one, for music is essentially an expression of a personal and communal identity…. It is this association of music and identity, I would suggest, that makes us uneasy in discussing music in hierarchical or value-laden terms within our contemporary, politically correct society (p. 281).

Increasing demands on music teachers to address a range of musical genres and approaches in curricula have impacted on the design of teacher education courses. For many, there are additional pressures to teach students less and allocate more time to research. Inevitably, with limited time to prepare student teachers, decisions have to be made concerning the balance of musical and professional inputs in music teacher education programmes. I would suggest that this situation should be viewed pragmatically and not as a comment on the value attached to individual musical identity in such programmes.

Models of teacher preparation cater for the development of personal musicianship in different ways, although the variations may be summarised in two basic approaches: development of personal musicianship *followed* by professional training; and a concurrent model, whereby a student's personal musicianship is developed *alongside* his or her education and training as a teacher. Of course, neither area should cease to be developed once the music teacher is employed in a school or college. Programmes of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) encourage teachers to keep up-to-date with teaching practice, while many teachers continue to lead active lives as musicians, both within and outside the school. If the teacher is employed in an institution of higher education, the development of personal musicianship may be required through the pursuance of an active professional life as a performer or composer, or through research. Even at school level, enlightened administrators can promote a healthy balance of personal and professional development. In the 1980s, an artist friend of mine was appointed to a famous Public School[8] in England. His teaching timetable was restricted to mornings, on the understanding that his afternoons would be devoted to the development of his life as a practising 'artist'. This model was based on the premise that, to be an effective 'teacher', one should continue to practise as an 'artist'. The Head Teacher of the school, together with many of my fellow musician-educators, would concur with Bernard's assertion that

Stephens, J. (2007) "Different Weather" *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education,* 6/2:
http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Stephens6_2.pdf

experiences of making music are absolutely central in the way that musician-teachers make meaning of who they are and what they do' (Bernard 2005, 13).

Teaching music is not something that exists within a void, divorced from a love for and engagement with one's subject. To separate subject-engagement from subject-application reflects an impersonal model of teaching and learning rather than one that emanates from a dynamic human exchange between teacher and learner – an exchange that draws its life from music itself. Unmusical teaching, in whatever musical style or genre, should be challenged wherever it occurs.

In her enthusiasm to state the case for the importance of music making, Bernard criticises several writers (including Cox, 1997; Roberts, 1991a and b, and 2004; and Woodford, 2002). Whilst it is not my place to speak for these authors, my reading of their work would not lead me to the same conclusion as that reached by Bernard:

> They aim for their programs to take individuals who come to them as musicians, and to transform them into teachers. Behind this point of view lies the implication that, somewhere along the way (and certainly by the time the students in these programs complete their studies), *pre-service music educators' music making ceases altogether – or certainly that it ceases to matter in terms of who they are as professionals.* (2005: 10 – italics mine)

The 'certainty' with which Bernard expresses her critical evaluation suggests an intimate knowledge of the programmes in which the authors are employed and of the students who study at their institutions; possibly it reflects a negative experience in her own training as a teacher. Paradoxically, Bernard's observation of the professional identities of music educators once they are *qualified* would appear to negate her criticism of teacher training programmes. In the next paragraph, she writes:

> Regarding who music teachers are and what music teachers do, I developed the term "musician-teacher" to refer to school music educators, *illuminating and celebrating the fact that making music is so important to music teachers that many, if not most, also make their own music and live rich musical lives outside the classroom* (Scott-Kassner & Kassner, 2001; Strauss, 2001; National Center for Education Statistics, 2002) (p. 10 – my italics)

From this observation, it would seem that there is no problem: musicians are educated and trained, engage in active musical lives, take time to prepare for a chosen profession as teachers,

become employed as teachers, and continue to 'make their own music and live rich musical lives outside the classroom'. Clearly, their period of preparation as teachers did nothing to reduce their enthusiasm for practical music making. A kinder evaluation of what might be seen as a 'worse case scenario' of professional preparation, therefore, would be that – for a defined period and because of understandable pressures on institutional timetables and resources – a group of musicians elected to focus their efforts on preparing to be effective teachers. They learned to apply their skill and enthusiasm in music making, enabling others to capture the vision that motivated them as young people. On emerging from their studies as effective teachers, they continue to practise as musicians. In no sense do I detect that personal and collective music making has been *devalued* during their course of teacher education; nor does the evidence suggest that their enthusiasm for music has been diminished. Rather, the process describes a necessary transformation from the world of study to the world of work, where musical skills are not *devalued* but *applied.*

Different voices

Bernard identifies three elements in a proposed revised framework 'for understanding and examining the professional identities of music educators' (p. 27), expressed in a call for reframing music teacher education. What is not specified, however, is the extent of the call – be it local (dependent on particular circumstances), national (that is, specific to the USA) or international. Given the limited number of individuals from whom the research data was gathered and the localised context of the investigation, one might assume that the call to reframe music teacher education is a local one. However, Bernard cites a number of Canadian and other international authors in her article, suggesting that the call is intended to be wider in its impact.

The propositions for our consideration are outlined on page 28, and the call is directed to music teacher educators – namely to:

- "listen to our students' discourses about their identities";
- "acknowledge the centrality of making music in the ways that music educators understand themselves and their work"; and
- "listen to and validate the personal, individual meanings that people bring to their experiences with music".

The recommendations reflect a situation that is not at odds with my own experience of current practice in the UK. I wonder also to what extent music educators from other cultures do not, to some degree at least, engage students at a personal level as well as musically and professionally.

The first of these propositions is based on Bernard's contention that teacher educators impose 'a discourse about who music teachers are, what music teachers do, and what it means to become a music teacher' (p. 28). The 'imposition' model suggests a dogmatic assertion by the teacher educator – a 'chalk and talk' approach that disappeared from British schools many decades ago, and which is at odds with an emphasis in higher education on developing skills in thinking and analysis. Models of teacher education across the world encourage discussion with students concerning the nature of teaching, based initially on their earlier experiences as recipients and, later, enriched by periods of school teaching practice. Even at the audition interview, students often are encouraged to consider a range of qualities and requirements for those entering the teaching profession and to discuss their own musical identities and motivation for becoming teachers. It would appear that Bernard has been unfortunate in having experienced only poor models of music teacher education.

Bernard's call for 'listening' rather than 'telling' reflects a student-based approach that has been advocated for many years in schools. What is unclear, however, is whether or not the perceived need to 'recognize and celebrate the multiplicity of ways that our students understand who they are, what they do, and their individual processes of becoming a music teacher' is purely a requirement to *affirm* students, or if it is intended to characterise the training programme. Teaching styles apart, there has to be translation of 'recognition and celebration' into the tools of the *job* of music teaching. At some stage, content and methodology, classroom organisation, assessment and evaluation, and the developing professionalism of the music teacher (an emerging *professional* identity) have to be addressed. Merely to *listen* to students' perceptions of who they consider themselves to be neither prepares them for the classroom nor empowers them to develop as musicians.

Bernard's second proposition calls music teacher educators to 'acknowledge the centrality of making music in the ways that music educators understand themselves and their work'. Again, it is not clear if Bernard's negative experiences in this area reflect a local or

wider North American problem. In many teacher education programmes in the UK, for example, music making is central to the process of training teachers. However, this does not preclude the need for *application*. Courses of teacher preparation cannot simply centre on affirming individual musical identities – they have to prepare musicians to apply their musicianship to the classroom. Bernard's criticism of teacher educators 'imposing curricula and programs with the aim of socializing musicians into teachers' could be considered an archaic view of teacher education, a model of training based on handing down received wisdom rather than engaging learners in developing knowledge, understanding and skill. National curricula have to be taught and teachers have to be able to teach. The issue, therefore, is not so much that of 'imposing curricula and programs' as *exposing* students to the real world, of preparing them to become effective teachers. To do that requires students to focus not only on their own musical identities, but also to consider others – to prepare themselves to be effective musical communicators.

Bernard's third proposition is set against the claim that 'today's music teacher educators tend to privilege the aesthetic, structural, or conceptual aspects of experiences with music as a listener or performer' (p. 28). The omission of composition would suggest that Bernard's context is that of North America. My own belief is that composition (where its emphasis is on developing individual creativity and musical understanding) should be central to the music curriculum – for it is through improvising and composing that we come to an intimate understanding of the nature of music as well as develop skills in listening and performing. Rhoda Bernard's emphasis on 'validating individual meanings related to personal experience' focuses on an *affective* response. But surely one's personal relationship with music does not have to be set against the more objective *learning about* and *experiencing* music through composing, performing and listening? Relationships, whether musical or personal, are an important part of our lives, but they depend on a range of variables. Personal response is enriched and developed through knowing and understanding – otherwise there is a likelihood of the individual remaining at the level of 'I know what I like'. The music teacher educator and the music teacher should, of course, teach in such a way that individuals develop personal and meaningful relationships with music. The development, acknowledgement and celebration of such subjective

responses, however, should not be the *focus* of our approach but, rather, the *result* of effective teaching. In all of this, there is a place also for encouraging understanding of *music's* rich identity. The better we know music *and* those we teach, the more effective will be our approaches to teaching and learning.

> I would concur with Bernard's observation:

> Creating opportunities for our students to think about and articulate the ways that music is personally relevant to them will better equip them to support their young students as they forge their own personal bonds with music (p. 28).

Such a position, however, does not have to be set against the relevance of musical knowledge, understanding and skill derived from experiences in composing, performing and listening – or from related 'aesthetic, structural, or conceptual aspects of experiences with music' (p. 28). The 'personal, individual meanings that people bring to their experiences with music' (p. 28) can be enriched where there is sensitive teaching that recognises both music's identity and the need to communicate this effectively to young people.

Different conclusions

Postmodernists may believe there is no objective truth but, in reality, we require certain 'knowns' in our lives in order to be able to interact effectively with one another. Few of us would like our doctors, dentists or bank managers to be relativists! Clearly, we should not forget that 'music is meaningful because of its personal relevance' (Bernard 2005, 28); the experiences we bring to our study of music and music education are valuable resources that inspire and shape our practice. Such experiences provide a secure foundation for building knowledge, understanding and skill as musicians and teachers. Focusing attention on the application of our musicianship to the needs of the classroom does not have to – indeed, should not – undermine music's important role in our lives.

Rhoda Bernard is properly concerned for the 'whole person' – a composite 'musician-teacher' identity rather than what she sees as a fragmented identity. For Bernard, fragmented identities may be promulgated in the conference introduction, in what she describes as the '"musician" identity to "teacher" identity' advocated by Woodford (2002), or the '"teach[ing] musicians to be teachers"' approach proposed by Roberts (2004). The reality experienced by

many people is of isolation and separation located more in a fragmented society than in teacher education programmes. True, such programmes might reflect societal trends; but I am not convinced that the examples Bernard identifies actively seek to divide musician and teacher in the way she fears. Certainly, in my own case, such fears are unfounded.

<div align="center">***</div>

The paperwork on my desk continues to increase alarmingly, demanding ever more of my time. However, it will have to wait; reading Rhoda Bernard's article has reminded me of the importance of engaging in some *music making!* As I look out of my study window, I notice that the weather has changed… I think it is better than it was yesterday – or perhaps it is just *different.*

Notes

[1] Indeed, while cultural definitions might boost our sense of individual and communal identity, they often serve to divide rather than unite us to a wider community by emphasising differences rather than similarities.

[2] Brian Simon discusses the 1944 Act in *Education and the Social Order* (1999). The Act provided free secondary education for all school-aged students in England and Wales, and extended the school leaving age to 15 years. The 11-plus examination determined whether students entered a grammar (academic) school or secondary modern school; technical colleges provided later professional training, mostly for students from secondary modern schools.

[3] E A S: Europäische Arbeitsgemeinschaft Schulmusik (European Association for Music in Schools)

[4] John Stephens (no relation) was Staff Inspector for Music in the former Inner London Education Authority, sometime HMI for Music, and Head of Music Education at the Trinity College of Music in London. His observation on the importance of the music teacher being a *musician* was mentioned at various meetings and conferences from the 1980s onwards.

[5] In making this observation I am not suggesting that *all* 'truth' is relative, or that there can be no underlying principles or universals – but simply that, in many instances, we have an opportunity to view a picture in colour, or at least in shades of grey, rather than only in black and white.

[6] This view resonates with the earlier reference to the work of Simon Frith (1996).

[7] The psychological and sociological construction of musical identity is helpfully discussed in *Musical Identities* (Hargreaves, Miell and MacDonald, 2002). The first section of the book considers how participation in musical activities develops personal identities that are essentially musical.

[8] In the UK, 'Public School' refers to fee-paying *private* establishments, rather than to the State sector.

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