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The World Well Lost, Found *Reality and Authenticity in Green's 'New Classroom Pedagogy'*

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The World Well Lost, Found *Reality and Authenticity in Green's 'New Classroom Pedagogy'*



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The 'Real-World Music'

In her recent work, Green (2001; 2008) builds on the idea that there is a gulf between “real-world music” and classroom music (Ibid., p. 2). One of her main goals seems to be to pave the way for the former in the latter: to make the music in schools more in touch with reality. The learning practices of popular music are taken to bring the needed verisimilitude. As most students prefer popular music to other types of music, it is assumed that at least for this majority, its “naturally” arising learning practices appear as more real to students than other, more formal procedures (Ibid., p. 41).

While one can question if the pop/rock band procedures described by Green (2001) cover “nearly all sub-styles” of popular music anymore, or whether they are really “natural,” or even pedagogically the most interesting ones (Green, 2008, p. 5; compare Väkevä, 2006a; Allsup, 2008),¹ it is significant that Green’s point of departure is genre-independent. For instance, she does not insist that there should be more popular music in British schools at the cost of classical music—the latter having not exactly been in the cutting edge of school music in the last years at any rate (Green, 2008, p. 153). Green’s case is made more against the way music, classical, popular, or any kind has been taught; the reality she looks for relates to “the *processes* by which the relevant musical skills and knowledge are passed on and acquired” (Ibid., p. 3, italics original). She attributes the reason for the weak motivation and low take-up of music as a curriculum subject in the UK to the formal methods of instruction (Ibid., p. 2).

It is not surprising that popular music is preferred by many of the students, especially in Green’s target group (13–14 year olds).² In fact, some of the students interviewed for Green’s projects did not even seem to count classical music as ‘real’ music! (Ibid., pp. 154–158) This makes one wonder how music becomes ‘real’ for someone; moreover, it makes one ask, how can a ‘musical world’ be claimed for someone for whom it is ‘well lost’?³

In this article, my intention is to raise discussion rather than offer systematic critique. I do not pretend to read Green’s texts through neutral lenses either: my interpretations are

influenced by my background in the pedagogy of popular music and a pragmatist philosophy of music education, which makes my approach hermeneutic to begin with (Väkevä, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2007). While I agree with many of the ideas that frame Green's books,⁴ I think that a further elaboration of their underpinnings can encourage constructive discussion of the role of popular music based learning practices in music education (see also Väkevä, 2006a; Väkevä & Westerlund, 2007; Westerlund, 2006; Frierson-Campbell, 2008). I believe that this discussion is needed, not just for the obvious reason that popular music is becoming commonplace in many music classes around the world and calls for an elaboration of conventional pedagogical practices,⁵ but also because this development might have more far-reaching implications. For instance, popular music pedagogy could indicate new ways in which music educators may conceive their subject in a society that accepts democratic participation and creative agency as its guiding key values (Väkevä & Westerlund, 2007; Westerlund, 2006).

This elaboration can perhaps also help us to investigate some issues that are not fully covered in Green's work. One of the practical aspects that invite new ideas is the rapid global proliferation of digital music culture.⁶ Information technology has brought forth new, even radically new, ways of conceiving, manipulating, mediating, consuming, and recycling music, and these new ways suggest new ideas which might help us to reconsider music as art form, industry, and mode of communication (see., e.g., Taylor, 2001; Born, 2005; Väkevä, 2006a; Mantere, 2008). While Green (2008, pp. 5, 41–42) frames the informal learning approaches in principle as domain-independent, the fact is that approaches that involve computers, social networks, and other assets of digital music and information technology are not really examined in her study, apart from an occasional hint of the use of digital instruments in conventional music making (Ibid., p. 48). Hence, there seems to be room for deeper meditation of Green's ideas from the standpoint of digital music culture.⁷

Authenticity in Learning

Green's underlying idea seems to be that the authenticity of musical learning—the quality that makes it 'real'—is based on the authenticity of the student's preferences: what really interests the student is 'real' for the student, and thus worth learning from her standpoint.⁸ This is easy to agree with: it is a commonplace in contemporary learning theory to treat intrinsic motivation as an important factor in learning and it is best increased by means of

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engaging a student's active interest. One might here also refer to authenticity in learning (Petraglia, 1998): learning is taken to be more effective when it is motivated by desires and needs that are original and genuine to the learner (Green, 2006, pp. 114–115). From this standpoint, a central condition for learning is a personal commitment, and this commitment is judged by the recognized practical value of what is studied. This idea has been the touchstone of educational philosophy since progressivism: it forms a central tenet of Dewey's pragmatist account of the role of interest in education and further frames student-centered ideas of constructivism.⁹

The motivational value of popular music may justify its place in the music curriculum. For instance, it can be argued that one can invigorate music classes with materials that students are already familiar with and to which they react positively. Thus, popular music may be used as an introductory device for music that is not so popular.¹⁰ Popular music can also offer a gateway to further knowledge of music, musical literacy, and theoretical concepts. When popular music is taught in this way, a student-centered approach may become more a pedagogical device than an end result: student involvement is taken as a means to achieve ends that are not necessarily felt important by the learners. Authenticity, from this perspective, is something that may help teachers to achieve learning objectives that, from the student perspective, are "things remote," as Dewey put it (Dewey, MW 8, p. 339, MW 9, p. 216).

However, Green does not subscribe to the idea that popular music should be taught only, or even primarily, for external goals (e.g. Green, 1988; 2001, pp. 138–139; 2006, p. 102). Like any music, popular music has its own "inherent" or "inter-sonic" meanings, on which music education can focus (Green, 2008, 87).¹¹ In fact, Green's need to map out the informal learning practices of popular musicians, and the ensuing need to experiment with the pedagogical application of these practices, seems to have risen from an urge to criticize the approaches by which popular music was taught primarily as a social and cultural phenomenon – more for its "delineations" than for its inter-sonic meanings (see also Moore, 1993). According to Green, this approach may distort music's inherent (inter-sonic) meanings and let ideological conceptions dictate how these meanings are to be valued. At its worst, this distortion may lead to fetishization of the musical object, where music's inherent meanings are treated as "autonomous essences" (Green, 1988, chap. 7). When this takes place, delineations may "appropriate the inherent meanings and become the means through which

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music appears to communicate its value” (Ibid.). For instance, the assumption that popular music is either indescribable or not worth studying for its inherent qualities may produce an ideological vacuum that is filled up with extra-musical (e.g., sociological or cultural) meanings that are thought to better inform the students about what is worth learning in connection to this music. Against this, Green seems to argue that popular music, as any music, can also be an end in itself and thus can be studied for its own sake.¹² (Green, 2008, p. 7; see also Green, 2001, 2006.)

Green also argues for a kind of means-value for popular music in school. By getting involved through the “natural” learning practices of music, students can learn to appreciate its delineations (Green, 2006, 2008, p. 4). Learning to enjoy music for its inter-sonic meanings may encourage students to appreciate it in terms of its cultural references and further direct them to pay more attention to how the latter are situationally conditioned. This is based on the idea indicated above: that learning any kind of music in a ‘natural’ way can make it ‘real’ for its practitioners. Authenticity in learning can also spill over to new areas, widening the musical horizons of the students and introducing them to new musical worlds. Following Green’s rationale, a sense of authenticity can thus transform enjoyment of one kind of musical expression into an appreciation of another. (Ibid., ch. 4.)

One obvious problem in this account is the diversity of today’s global music cultures that tends to encourage more or less relativistic accounts of music’s meaning and value. The inter-sonic meanings of music seem to evaporate into the variety of musical subject positions possible in contemporary mediated and networked culture—that is, the inherent meanings of music tend to be delineated in so many ways that the ‘natural’ practices of learning music seem to be always conditioned by cultural conventions. Thus, it is entirely possible that one can never point out ‘natural’ ways ‘to music’, or to learn any music in its authentic terms, as musical cultures continuously influence each other and each other’s indigenous procedures, intensified by the global information networks (E.g., Vattimo, 1992, pp. 19–20.).

Authenticity, one might further argue, may not be possible at all in a multifaceted culture: the most we can grasp are different cultural attitudes and approaches reflecting different discursive positions, always presenting musical values and objects in new light. As Rorty (1972) put it in his infamous attack on empiricist epistemology: a world outside of language is, for us, “well lost.” Even if one does not subscribe to the extreme linguistic pragmatism of Rorty,¹³ there is still something quite suspicious in the claims that one can

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discern an authentic way that music is, and could be, made and learned on the basis of its inherent qualities. Even if we grant a “virtual” autonomy (Green, 2006, p. 104) to music, one might further argue that in education we could always do more than drill for authenticity. Is it not the goal of education to point out new critical possibilities and horizons of meaning in cultural processes rather than just represent the ways music is ‘authentically’ made or learned?¹⁴

Acutely aware of the discourses of multiculturalism, Green (2008, pp. 41–42) still argues that while the variables making music authentic change along with the historical and social-cultural context, at least in principle it is always possible to hit upon the level at which people respond to music for its own sake, as a universally human expressive practice (see also Green, 2006, 2008, p. 59).¹⁵ Even if different musical cultures and sub-cultures articulate their own musical meanings, according to Green (2008, p. 42), in every case there lurks underneath a learning approach that is “fundamentally similar” in every culture and thus can be grasped by all learners. Moreover, as already indicated, the authenticity of involvement that makes learning one kind of music ‘real’ to the student can spill over to other settings, as long as the teacher can distinguish the relevant learning practices in each case and establish learning environments where those practices can flourish. When students grasp music this way, they are empowered to make its terms their own regardless of its style, genre, or culture. Authenticity, from this standpoint, is not something that is an original property of the subject matter in music, but something that can be arrived at through internally motivated involvement with its inter-sonic properties. Channeled pedagogically, this can further lead to “critical musicality”, a term that Green (*Ibid.*, pp. 83–85) advocates as a central goal of music education.¹⁶

Authenticity In Situ

While one can be critical of the global applicability of the idea that all music has underneath a natural learning practice that is fundamentally similar in every cultural case,¹⁷ Green’s account of authenticity in learning seems to imply a pragmatic logic, which makes it inviting especially for music education programs that suffer a gap between school music and music outside school. One can perhaps open its logic further by considering how the locus of interest shifts from one learning situation to another.¹⁸

One of the most important teachings of Green's account here, pragmatically speaking, seems to concern the flexibility of musicianship. Given this flexibility, musicianship—taken as the capability to participate actively in the practices and processes of 'musicing' (Ibid., p. 60)¹⁹—does not have to be restricted by the bounds of one's acquired musical habits; when a situation changes, new habits and attitudes can be developed that adapt to it. In pragmatist terms this also means that musical self is not fixed: our selves constantly change along with our habits according to the needs and particulars of the situation, in music as well as in other realms of life. Authenticity is thus not something inherent to a static subject position, nor even something that is arrived at through a tedious project of individual self-realization (cf. Taylor 1989). If there is authenticity involved with learning, it must be somehow embedded in the continuing learning process. In fact, to prevent the self from changing would be to prevent growth, a pedagogical cardinal sin if one takes growth in Deweyan terms—as continuing expansion of the experienced realm of meaning (e.g., Dewey, LW 13, 19–20).

What is crucial is that new habits are called forth by needs that emerge naturally from the situation—'naturally' indicating here that the need to learn stems from the tensions caused by the changes in environment that present new challenges to one's musicianship. For a practicing musician, this might simply mean that the need to learn is raised by practical musical problems-at-hand, as clearly happened in many of the cases described in *A New Classroom Pedagogy*. While new musical habits can perhaps be imposed from outside to a certain degree, they serve future situations best when they are elicited by the practical needs of hands-on musicing, for this better guarantees their openness and flexibility in future applications. With informal learning, this implies that students should have a 'say' about what they are expected to learn and how they will proceed in learning it; and, further, that the teacher be willing and able to provide them enough opportunities to try out different solutions to such emergent problems. This amounts to the Deweyan idea of experiential learning, and it also seems to apply to what took place in many of the projects described by Green (cf. Green, 2008, pp. 91, 110).

In Green's frame of reference, room for students to maneuver options is possible first of all because the students have inner motivation towards learning music of their own choice and in terms that they accept as authentic for it. Their need to learn more grows out of the practices to which the students are eagerly and free-willingly committed, inner motivation propelling them forward to adapt to new musical situations that rise as a result of their own

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initiating actions. Like Elliott (1995), Green (2008, pp. 56–60) identifies this continuum of interest as a psychological state of flow, a condition that emerges when the student's ability is continuously contested by tasks challenging enough to call forth further involvement (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; 1996). In pedagogical terms, the teacher is first advised to stand by, observe, and at most help in the setting of the learning environment: she acts more as a facilitator than an instructor (cf. Clements, 2008). Only later, when situation has called forth new ways of adapting to the change, she may suggest more focused practical solutions in order to guide the students towards more structured challenges.

Authenticity in a New Key

It is in connection with these more structured challenges that a rupture seems to emerge in this logic of authenticity. In the projects of *A New Classroom Pedagogy*, the emphasis was eventually shifted from the autonomy of 'haphazard' procedures to more systematic work with a pre-given piece of music chosen by the researcher.²⁰ Students were encouraged to apply their newly acquired skills in copying the song; as an aid, they were provided with a "broken-down" version on a CD (Green, 2008, p. 26).²¹ Thus, despite the relative freedom (e.g., in choosing instruments), the situation was now more formally controlled: students did not choose a piece of music to learn (and thus could not really contribute to its authenticity for their learning), nor were they given entirely free choice concerning the directions in which to proceed. Instead, the goal of this stage of the project was clearly articulated: the main undertaking was "to listen to and copy the song...using the tracks of isolated riffs as a guide if desired, in order to make up their own version of it as a band." (Ibid.)

While this can be interpreted as a break in the continuum of the informal approach, the pedagogical intent is clear: to provide the above-mentioned structuring that would guide the students' initiatives in the direction of "critical musicality" (Ibid., p. 84). In fact, after this more formal stage, the first, more freewheeling phase was repeated in most project schools, the idea being that the teacher-framed second stage helps the students to get more focused when working on the inter-sonic properties of the music of their own choice. Thus, the first stage of "dropping pupils in a deep end" (Ibid., p. 25) was established as a kind of a shock tactic to awaken students to the possibility that they can empower themselves to pay attention to the inter-sonic meanings of music, more critically developed in the second stage.

It is noteworthy that in the second stage the critical attitude was evoked by the help of the pre-formed lesson materials that partly dictated the focus of attention and also by the programmatic choice of the song: the teacher's (and in this case, the researcher's) contribution was thus a determining factor in re-framing the situation for the critical approach. The way of establishing the learning situation was nevertheless similar in all three beginning stages, despite the relative differences in teacher input: in all stages, copying from the CDs was chosen as the launching procedure for preserving the authenticity of learning, an idea that was based on Green's earlier research on the learning of popular musicians (Green, 2001). In fact, the procedure of copying music from the CD was deemed so crucial that it seemed to override some of the students' ideas of other possible ways of learning, such as using computers as an aid (Green, 2008, pp. 21, 25).²²

After the first three stages, students moved into songwriting, with the idea that learning in the first three stages could inform more creative activities. According to Green's report, songwriting turned out to be highly rewarding for the students. Here, again, informal work was the beginning phase, and more pedagogically structured tasks followed. In stage 5, the students were asked to follow models taken from the " 'real' world of popular music" (Ibid., p. 27). The function of the models—professional bands and peer groups—was to provide an inside view of the songwriting process by demonstrating "how a song can be put together" (Ibid.). The 'real-life' groups also acted in the role of teachers after the demonstrations, a procedure that gave extra encouragement to the students' efforts.

In both cases (*viz.* copying music from CDs and learning to write songs), the expectation was clearly that the 'natural' situation provided the means of solving emerging problems, which were then to be applied to new, more pedagogically structured situations. After inner motivation was raised, students would also find more structured tasks enjoyable, as they wanted to learn more and to put their newly acquired skills to new uses. Thus the sense of authenticity in learning would be preserved despite the formality of the more staged situations.

In pedagogical terms, this implies a reverse fading strategy: the teacher does not fade from the situation, but takes more responsibility as basic skills are internalized (compare Elliott, 1995, p. 280). The relevance of formal teaching comes apparent only after students are motivated to learn in a 'natural' way, propelled forward by the inner rewards of manipulating the inter-sonic meanings according to (what they at least take to be) authentic musical

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practice. The disruption in student-centered learning process is thus reframed as a natural development of the students' inner urge to learn more and to utilize their learning with the help of more formally established aiding structures and concepts. This idea brings to mind Green's (2001) observation that many of the informally trained musicians in her earlier study expressed their interest in learning music more formally after they had already gained a wealth of skills, knowledge and understanding from informal learning practices with the music of their own choice.

The idea that the teacher fades in, rather than out, does not have to be at odds with a pragmatist rationale that takes learning to be a function of changing situations. The teacher can become as much part of the learning situation as any other aspect, and formal pedagogy can ride on the students' flow established first in informal settings. However, the need for more structured teaching must emerge from the dynamics of the situation in order to build authenticity. One important aspect of this dynamics is the free interchange between the students when they negotiate the best ways to proceed in the task: peer communication is also a central point of departure in Green's projects, based on her previous observation that, in informal settings, popular musicians both learn together and efficiently teach each other. The communicative and organizational habits that students acquire informally can also later turn out to be beneficial in more structured situations: in Green's research, groups were indeed able to act in a more integrated manner afterwards and to negotiate about their co-operative strategies and individual roles. (Green, 2008, chapter 6.)

Green's research suggests that as long as the more organized tasks are meaningfully connected to the earlier informal stages of learning, inner motivation can be preserved and the students' focus further targeted to new challenges. Authenticity, from this standpoint, is not threatened but transformed: it re-emerges as the quality of the pedagogically structured situation. In a way, it is transposed into a new key, as the sheer enjoyment of music encourages the students to pay more appreciative attention to its inter-sonic meanings. This critical attitude is supported by communicative skills, on the basis of which one can negotiate informed opinions of music's meanings. According to Green (*Ibid.*, pp. 88–91), this is required for a balanced, "celebratory" experience where both inter-sonic and delineated meanings of music are taken positively.²³

Worlds Found or Made?

One can ask whether the transformation of authenticity in learning can also transform the conditions of authenticity of the musical content—whether, in the informal practices of learning, ‘a music’ may be changed to something different both in its inter-sonic and delineated meanings. It would be interesting to consider whether the practices of trying to reproduce ‘real-world music’ in school can in fact produce new musical forms indigenous to the school setting, perhaps opening new musical realities along the way.

In this light, the most interesting phase of the research reported in *A New Classroom Pedagogy* was surely the last one (stages 6 and 7), where informal learning practices were applied to learn “Western classical music, broadly defined” (Green, 2008, p. 149).²⁴ In this phase, informal practices of popular musicians were used as exploratory vessels to carry the students to new experiences in musical styles to which they had previously paid little attention, at least in any positive sense—the music was, for the majority of them, ‘well lost,’ but, presumably, could be found again.²⁵

Here we are back on the question of what guarantees the authenticity of learning when the situation is artificially changed. Earlier, the shift was rationalized by the notion that authenticity in learning was transformed to a new critical level. In order to be able to assume appreciative perspectives on the music one enjoys, one can benefit from a situation framed by the teacher for the needs of ‘critical musicality’ without losing one’s intrinsic motivation. In Green’s study, the motivation developed in the first stage was preserved through the second stage by simply keeping the focus on music that the students liked. Live models further helped to target the students’ attention in the fourth and fifth stage. Thus, authenticity was not really challenged by teacher or peer group intervention: meaningful musical engagement provided the impulse to learn more, and formal procedures were taken for their practical worth in helping further involvement. Authenticity of preference, even when transformed to a more critical level, still provided the red thread running through the continuum of interest.

However, in the ‘classical stages’ of Green’s research the situation was radically different. One justifiably wonders whether the music reportedly not preferred by the majority of the students really provided the needed authenticity in learning, especially when approached in a way that does not seem to be ‘natural’.²⁶ This “litmus test” (Green, 2006, p. 111) can also be seen as critical for Green’s theoretical underpinnings: if it warrants the assumption that learning music can be internally motivated even in situations when its

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‘content’ alienates the students, one can further assume that authenticity in musical learning can be targeted methodically, regardless of the students’ earlier preferences. These preferences, even if originally hostile, may give way to more critical attitudes that can be further channeled through playful hands-on involvement with the inter-sonic meanings of the music in question.

Even if the last stages in Green’s research turned out to be more pilot studies than finished accounts (Green, 2008, p. 151), she does report a change in the attitudes of many students. Music that was not originally ‘real’ for many pupils appeared to become more ‘real’ for them through tangible working with its inter-sonic possibilities in informal classroom situations (Ibid., pp. 150, 168–175). Here the establishment of authenticity in learning seemed to be dependent solely on the carrying over of the motivation from working with music of the students’ own choice established in the earlier stages. Hence, the students seemed to find the informal approach motivating *in general*, regardless of the ‘content’ factor. The authenticity involved in this approach would not be restricted to any particular musical content, style, practice, or culture: it could be based on Green’s global factor of musical involvement, which can rise in any kind of music as long as its ‘natural’ conditions of learning are satisfied.²⁷

Green’s idea seems to be that even if this global factor is taken to be always ‘there,’ as a real-world possibility, ideological restrictions may hinder its emergence. The largely hostile or indifferent attitudes that the majority of the students projected towards classical music may be ideologically loaded with a set of negative delineations that replace the ‘inter-sonic’ meanings of this music, presenting the latter more as a fetish than the real thing—not a natural situation from the standpoint of authenticity in learning (cf. Green, 2003).

Not liking ‘a music’ can be really mere symptomatic of not liking what it brings to mind, and in these cases the music may not get the chance it deserves in its own right. The lack of critical appreciation may prevent a student from enjoying music in its own terms, and consequently get in the way of her enjoyment; in this case, the student would not have access to the flow channel that could be opened through an active involvement with manipulating and exploring music’s inter-sonic relationships. This hidden, but nevertheless potential meaning can only be realized in active dialectic of musicing that has been previously unrecognized because of the ideological lenses that distort one’s perspectives. Such a dialectic is behind all enjoyable involvement with music, and it also provides a ‘natural’ way into its more critical appreciation.

Green (2008, p. 159) also mentions that, especially in stage 6 where the music was taken from British TV advertisements, its familiar delineations may have helped to open the door to its inter-sonic possibilities.²⁸ This seems to suggest that once music is identified in some way—once put on the cultural map—it is easier to access through methods that are motivating to students; that is, when students are able to put a positive (or at least neutral) ‘tag’ on classical music, it is also easier to access it simply as music for its own worth.

Freedom in the use of musical instruments in arranging the pieces may also lower the ideological threshold. According to Green (Ibid., p. 161), the liberal choice of instruments in stages 6 and 7 made possible the use of sounds that allegedly carried more affirmative delineations for the students than the ones they heard from the CDs. For instance, the students could freely add a drumbeat to a classical piece—a procedure that many would probably say changes the idiom, even if the melodic and harmonic content of the music remained untouched.²⁹

Despite of this room to maneuver, the need to preserve inter-sonic authenticity remained strong for many students. This was reflected in attempts to emulate the actual sounds they heard from the CDs, whether they preferred them sonically or not (perhaps reflecting their newly acquired critical musicality). This also made possible the use of classical instruments, which some of the students studied (c. 15 %, according to Green; Ibid, p. 150). However, the informal approach also introduced new ways of approaching these instruments: for instance, many classically-trained pupils had no previous experience playing by ear (Ibid., p. 163). Here again a striving for authenticity seemed to emerge, as there were cases in which it seemed to be difficult for the students to make a connection between formal and informal uses of these instruments (Ibid.)

Despite these attempts to be true to the sonic characteristics of the classical recordings, the results of applying the informal approach in learning the musical works distinguished the student versions from conventional classical performances. In a similar vein as when dealing earlier with popular music, mistakes were tolerated, and musical flow was kept uninterrupted even if someone was ‘lost’—not a commonplace occurrence in classical music rehearsals.³⁰ Green takes these observations as suggesting that the students achieved a psychological state of flow similar to the earlier stages: emphasis was not on details, but on the general ‘feel’ of the music. (Ibid.)

The students also took liberties in their arrangements. Omissions, inserts, melodic changes, even the composing of new sections were all signs of transformations by which the students adapted to the new situation. (Ibid., p.164.) In fact, some of these changes were so radical that one may justifiably ask whether this was the same music anymore: whether the students turned classical pieces to something else, more as result of their own inclinations, and more suitable to their own skills. According to Green (Ibid., p. 169), while some critics may take this kind of appropriation as submitting to a delusion that classical music is easier to learn than it is, it is also true that pedagogical simplification of difficult material has always been commonplace in music education.³¹

An obvious way of doing this kind of simplification is what was already indicated above—a popular arrangement of a classical piece. One of the students interviewed in Green’s study put it this way: “[A]ll you need to do is listen to the beats and stay with it really, and then you find it as easy as anything else. . . . All the other music things that we’ve been doing, like it’s the same really, sticking with the beats.” (Ibid.). As this notion was arrived at when discussing Beethoven, one may justifiably ask whether the idea was really to be true to the inter-sonic meanings of the piece, or whether new meanings were picked up from the reservoir that the students had earlier collected when working with popular music. Thus, at least some of the student arrangements discussed in Green’s study seem to be instances of turning classical works into popular music. One can ask whether the students really learned to appreciate the inter-sonic meanings of classical works as they exist in the ‘real world,’ or whether they substituted meanings taken from music that they liked to the original inter-sonic meanings they did not like. The result could of course be called a hybrid style, and may be as justified as any artistic utterance, but the main point here is that identity and thus, presumably, the authenticity of the music was changed; if the ontological status of music can be transformed relatively freely without losing its authenticity, the ideal that school music should be made more like ‘real-world music’ seems not to qualify as a necessary criterion for achieving authenticity in learning.

In Media, Res

Be that as may, one of the most important findings of Green’s research certainly is how easily the ideological constraints may be mitigated when one is given a free hand to make music in a way that is intrinsically motivating.³² It could be further argued that the music class in

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comprehensive schooling is one of the few places where this is possible in a formal pedagogical setting. Especially when considering music education from an egalitarian standpoint (i.e. with the idea that music education should be accessible to all), the heterogeneous competencies aimed for in a general music class seem to demand that music should not be approached as a collection of pre-produced, autonomous, and immutable cultural formations but as a dynamic process of creating new meanings from the resources at hand in a particular cultural environment. In the last decades, information networks have extended this environment immensely, opening a global network of creative possibilities. In principle, nothing prevents a properly equipped music class from utilizing this wealth, as long as it is acknowledged that almost anything can contribute to the creative process of learning music. If desired, a music class could be a place where musical worlds are not merely found, but also created.

The quotes of students cited by Green in the last part of her research reveal that many students interviewed were actually aware and proud of the musical transformations that took place in the 'classical' stages. From this, one can infer that when the students were not inspired by the original music addressed in stages 6 and 7, they intentionally "made it better," manifesting creative agency and a degree of emancipation. (Ibid, p. 170.) One might also argue that in a contemporary multicultural, mediated, yet socially responsible democratic culture, where musical communication is so commonplace that most of it is not even acknowledged by teachers, students deserve to be given a wide range of possibilities for processing musical meanings in their own terms.

For Green, the freewheeling attitude towards transforming music reflects the above-mentioned play impulse at work. Rather than taking the classical pieces as authoritative cultural texts, the students handled the pieces with a sense of confidence, making them subject to their own musical interests. Instead of criticizing this procedure of appropriation as an inauthentic way of approaching music, the value of which depends on originality, Green takes the students' eagerness as a healthy reminder how the lack of improvisation and playfulness in Western post-classical era music has made its learning "anti-musical" and distant to "why humans make music in the first place" (Ibid., p. 171; see also Green, 2001, p. 3).³³

Green (2008, p. 171) suggests that by transforming classical music to their own needs, students can empower themselves to become "less alienated from the music's inter-sonic properties and its delineated associations." This also helps them to think anew their relation to music. The newly found freedom in transforming music to better suit one's own situation thus

relates to the goal of learning to appreciate it through ‘critical musicality.’ Some students in the study reported that their attitudes towards classical music changed as a result of the process: even if they would not necessarily listen more to classical works than before, they now seemed more willing to appreciate the workings of that repertory (Ibid., p. 174). Thus, even if the students did not perhaps learn to enjoy classical works in their intended form (that is, as musical art works to be interpreted with precision and contemplated for their inherent qualities), through working with such literature, many learned to listen to music *in general* more critically. What seemed to emerge as an important idea was that classical music, as much as *any* music, can be adapted by anyone to her own expressive needs in whatever way she finds satisfying without losing the critical potential. This is surely an important lesson.

Despite the results of her empirical research, Green’s more extensive rationale still seems to involve an underlying tension related to her theory of musical meaning. The summary at the end of *A New Classroom Pedagogy* leaves this tension visible. Green suggests that by paying more attention to the authenticity in learning than to authenticity of musical ‘content’ and, further, by providing the students opportunities for developing critical musicality, a teacher can motivate them to learn any kind of music— “so long as it is ‘real’” (Ibid., pp. 176–177). While the first two ideas are clearly understandable in reference to the above-described emphasis on authenticity that can be transferred from situation to situation and aided by clever pedagogy, the ‘reality’ part of the argument remains a bit troubling. On one hand, ‘reality’ seems not to be judged according to music’s authenticity, but according to how motivated the students are to learn it: what is ‘real’ in music seems to be what students happily enjoy and want to learn more. On the other hand the goal of the informal approach is to provide the students with “a doorway into the music’s inter-sonic meanings,” and these do not seem to depend logically on the students’ inherent motivation or authenticity in learning (Ibid., p. 180).

Green is by no means a formalist: she clearly emphasizes the value of meaningful experiences that students can have when they approach music through “some amount of social action, which is both autonomous and co-operative” (Ibid.) This is the proper way for students to get involved in “direct production of musical inter-sonic meanings” (Ibid.). At the same time, she argues that students should be “stimulated by whole pieces of ‘real’ music” (Ibid.). The general challenge of ‘new music pedagogy’ would be to “provide . . . curriculum content that authentically reflects the world outside the school”: that is, ‘real-life music’ (Ibid., p.

185). Hence, in Green's account, 'reality' seems to be at the same time something that frames music in advance as an object of study and something that can be used as a criterion of the authenticity of its learning—that is, at the same time a property of musical content and its learning.

As a pragmatist, I wonder whether Green's empiricist point of departure, in which music is taken at the same time as objectively existing, carrying its own meanings for critical listeners to grasp through musical experience, and as something that is cognitively-culturally constructed in the process of its learning ('musicing'), is the best rationale to account for the ways in which the students actively transform music for their situational needs (see also Väkevä & Westerlund, 2007). In the more creative situations described in *A New Classroom Pedagogy*, music's meanings seem to elude any clearly cut logical distinctions between its experienced content and the process of its meaning-formation (and, thus, of its learning). What the students do in the class seems to be as real as any song on a CD that they are listening to as long as they *make* it authentic—this authenticity being provided by their continuing interest in working out its possibilities. Musical reality seems to be transformed in this process: the subject is not just the 'real-life music' represented; music appears as a living practice that continuously claims new terrain in human life through the meaning-making processes of its transformation.

In this outlook, music's manner of being 'real', and thus, the students' manner of representing it as subject to be learned, changes along with the process of learning: the musicing self is also transformed, continuously adapting to new creative situations. This change should not be dictated by any standard of authenticity alien to the needs of learning itself: there are no a priori limits for what counts as meaningful in musical processes, only socially and culturally (and thus, ideologically) framed conventions that can always be negotiated and argued about (but also accepted without critical consideration). Nevertheless, even if we accept that the ontological status (or 'reality') of music may be transformed during the process of learning, this does not mean that musical meaning would reside entirely in the mind of an individual subject. There is still an objective locus of music's meaning, one related to the tangible social-cultural practice of its transformation, where real people act together in real ways, manipulating real-world tools and materials with expressive artistic goals for themselves and others to enjoy.³⁴

Accepting the multi-faced and mutable ontological status for musical reality does not imply that music education should be entirely haphazard or that we should forget practical guidance in pedagogical situations, leaving all decisions to the students. As indicated above, teachers can be as much part of the learning situations as are other significant persons or things. The point is that music's meanings should be realized in the kind of musical practice that mediates between different phases of the continuing learning process, arising 'naturally' from the needs of the situation. Music, as much as anything else that is experienced as meaningful, is objectified in this process as the situation is defined in some manner for future orientation: the 'content' of music, or its material signifier, is examined in this process for its potential for raising new ideas to be interpreted as habits of action that help us to pass from a problematic situation to another and, thus, that can be applied to similar cases in the future. For instance, when a student picks up the 'feel' of the rhythm section from a CD or live model and learns to apply it to another musical situation (e.g., as a drummer or a DJ) what she learns is not something that is merely copied from the recording, as a 'given' musical reality, but a tool she can use in future musical situations in order to realize more musical meanings: the tool is a new habit. The 'feel' can be of course freely experimented with, mutated, re-applied, even torn apart and re-assembled in new expressive forms.³⁵ Here, the most important and authentic thing for the learner is the potential of the 'feel' for realizing future reality, not its original status as a part of a recording by someone else.³⁶

Nowhere is this experimental attitude on musical potentiality as lavishly experimented with as in digital music culture, at least if judged in terms of its accessibility. While musical appropriation has been commonplace in probably every musical culture in history, the possibility of using samples of real sound added a new layer of transformative potential to musical expression in the late 1980s. In the last decade, rapidly developing (and less expensive) digital technology has truly revolutionized the musicing (both music making and listening) of professional and amateur musicians alike; it has produced a wealth of new tools, which make possible new creative ways of reworking and transforming music. With these practices, the questions of the authenticity and ontological status of musical works changes, and new challenges are presented for theorizing about these matters. For instance, when someone produces a musical 'mash-up', a collage assembled from commercially recorded, sampled and/or electronically produced sounds, freely circulating whatever assets she finds useful for her expression; when she utilizes online communities in distribution of her ideas to

anyone interested; when someone else, perhaps living in another continent, picks up her ideas and develops them further, thus making them part of her own expression; passing her music back to the earlier author, and to other potentially interested musicians; when new musical communication is built from such freewheeling practices, perhaps culminating in an operative musical collective with a commercial recording contract, the members of which might continue to live in different parts of the globe—all these exemplify the way ICT may revolutionize the common practices of musicing.³⁷ It also suggests new ways of thinking about the ownership and authenticity of music.³⁸

Many more examples could be mentioned of the ways in which the ‘reality’ of music can be transformed in a freewheeling manner to suit the expressive needs of whoever has the access to and interest in digital music tools and communicative practices. Nevertheless, what counts here is the potential these practices have for our philosophies, theories, and methods of music education. I think that by paying more attention to these kinds of practices we might expand, even transgress, some of the common ways in which music has been learned, produced, disseminated, and enjoyed in the last decades. Moreover, and perhaps most significantly, they might challenge our conventional ways of thinking about the way music can be conceived, both as an art form and as an educational subject. At present, popular music pedagogy may offer the best forum for discussing this, but the more wide reaching general implications of digital music culture should also be acknowledged: general music education is definitely one of the settings for experimenting with its creative potential—and also for becoming aware of its ideological underpinnings.

The garage rock band procedures mapped out by Green (2001) have not disappeared, of course—surely they still constitute a major part of how pop/rock based music is enjoyed made and enjoyed, even if the musicians no longer have to keep to traditional instruments and roles.³⁹ However, the new possibilities introduced by digital music culture suggest that garage band-based practices point to only one pedagogical approach to popular music today.

The critical lesson here seems to be that music education in school, at its best, does not have to merely reflect ‘real-world music’. As Green shows, it can also create new musical realities, perhaps ones more empowering than rock bands have produced so far. Pragmatism reminds us that the ‘reality’ of music education is a point of reference to further things, things that do not have to remain remote to the students, as long as the continuum of intrinsic motivation necessary to all authenticity in learning is guaranteed. This kind of authenticity

would affix the students' attention to the meaning potential of the musical tasks at hand as they orient their musical thinking to the future. While this authenticity can lead to critical musicality, in the sense that the students may learn to form "balanced judgment[s], allowing considered responses and evaluation of different musics in relation to a variety of criteria" (Green, 2008, p. 89), to really open the critical potential of music, music education has to acknowledge its transformative power. With consciousness of this power, music educators should seize the potential for musical meaning making wherever it is found.

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Notes

¹ For instance, they do not cover the various ways music is produced, disseminated, and reproduced in the digital domain, from home studios to remix sites where people offer their beats and loops to creative recycling. Not all pop/rock music is made in the band format, either, even if its sounds usually emulate band instrument sounds.

² This is confirmed by numerous surveys made in the UK and elsewhere, including those reported in Green's research. Of course, there are differences related to cultural background, age, previous education, and other factors. Moreover, as Green (2008, p. 156) acknowledges, social pressure might encourage those teenagers who do like classical music to say otherwise when interviewed by a teacher-researcher (the same might apply in their motivation to reveal eclectic popular tastes).

³ While the analogue has appeared in Western literature at least from the 17th Century plays to modern science fiction, it echoes here one of the key images of Richard Rorty's (1972, 1980) pragmatist turn against the realistic mirror conception of knowledge, *viz.* the critique towards the common sense realist notion that truth consists of a one-to-one relation between and idea (or a concept) and its object. Here the phrase works as a leading idea that encourages probing deeper into the notion that music could be made 'real' for someone who happily ignores it. It also raises the question what is at stake when some part of musical world is judged to be more 'real' than another. While I do not want to make too far-fetched assumptions of Green's use of terminology, I think her work raises interesting ideas regarding the ontological status of music in education, and the different ways it could be made an object of learning.

⁴ In fact, I learned to play rock music in the early 1980s much in the same way that Green describes in her studies, and found the informal approach of the 'garage' a lot more motivating (and thus, 'real') than the formal procedures of music education.

⁵ There are of course differences between educational cultures. In the UK and some other European countries (including Nordic countries), popular music has been part of both general,

vocational, and university-level music education at least from the early 1970s (Väkevä, 2006a, Westerlund, 2006, Green, 2008, p. 3).

⁶ By 'digital music culture,' I refer to the practices and procedures applied in making, disseminating, and consuming music with the aid of digital instruments and tools, and through information networks which revolutionized these practices in the late 1990s. While garage rock band practices have been influenced by digital music culture, the latter has also introduced entirely new approaches. Making music in a home studio in an computer environment with virtual instruments, distributing one's music freely to others in online communities, remixing music of one's peers and one's idols online, taking part in conjoint web-based musical projects, DJ'ng, even downloading music to listen to and to process further in one's personal computer or mobile device can all be taken as instances of this culture. These procedures are integral to current popular music and have been for some time; I also believe that they hold much unexplored pedagogical potential in conjunction with more traditional pop/rock band practices.

⁷ I do not mean to indicate that the people involved with Green's research would be indifferent to this area. However, Green (2008, p. 48) mentions that only one teacher in her project "integrated and alternated the project strategies with ICT." Some of the challenges involved are addressed in the materials available at the project website, www.musicalfutures.org (Ashworth, 2007). NUMU, the project's public platform "to engage and motivate students through music," is also an indication that digital music culture is taken seriously by the developers (NUMU, 2008). I am also aware of the rapid expansion of the research in music education technology, a major portion of which centers on digital music culture (e.g., Ojala et al., 2006). However, in this article, my primary intention is to focus on the pedagogical issues introduced by this culture as pointers to more general concerns.

⁸ This seems to resonate with William James' notion that reality (and, thus, authenticity) simply indicates "relation to our emotional and active life" (quoted in Shusterman, 2000, p. 84). From this standpoint, what interests us, what we "conceive with passion," is affirmative. (Ibid.)

⁹ This tradition also informs Green (2008, p. 110), although learning practices tried out in her study were not based on "any theory of child-centeredness or discovery learning, but on an empirical investigation and analysis of the real-life, informal learning practices."

¹⁰ E.g., when rock versions of classical works are taken as introduction to the 'real thing,' as in some Finnish school music books.

¹¹ For an introduction to Green's theoretical standpoint on musical meaning, see Green (1988, 2006).

¹² Whether all inter-sonic meanings in popular music are worth studying is left somewhat unclear by Green. In any case, she distances herself from value relativism when she writes that there is "'better' and more worthwhile" music, even if this "cuts across styles" (Green, 2008, pp. 150–151).

¹³ As many pragmatists writing in the arts and education do not (see, e.g., Shusterman, 1997, pp. 188–194, 2002, pp. 203–205; Määtänen, 2008).

¹⁴ One expression of this idea is the critique of culturalism in music education; see Regelski (2000).

¹⁵ In line with Swanwick, Green (2008, pp. 58–59) considers music making universally as a “form of play” that depends on rehearsal of imagination towards “pure sensory delight” in sounds, transcending cultures (Swanwick, 1988, p. 71, 1996).

¹⁶ Although Green derives the term partly from the theories of critical education, in *New Classroom Pedagogy* she does not really elaborate it in the terms of ideological critique, except in the sense that analytical listening to inter-sonic meanings can “lead to a greater awareness of how the music industry works,” examples being that the students can become aware that some popular musicians mime on their recordings when performing live, and that some of the musicians work behind the scenes, not taking part in the live performance (Green, 2008, pp. 83–84; cf. Green, 1988, 1997).

¹⁷ For instance, one might ask what is the ‘natural’ way to learn Beethoven? If there is such a way, surely it is not based on copying from the CDs and arranging the music for rock instruments, even if the latter would end up with fruitful results. Or, what would be the ‘natural’ way to learn music that was originally made as a conglomeration of loops and breaks in a digital audio workstation?

¹⁸ In what follows, I use as a background the Deweyan naturalist pragmatist notions I have examined in several earlier writings; see e.g., Väkevä (2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2006b, 2007). Again, I do not claim that Green’s ideas are based on naturalist pragmatism; I use the latter as an interpretative frame. Nevertheless, I do believe that all practical and critical approaches to music education share at least some pragmatist underpinnings, such as locating the focus of music’s meaning to musical agency (cf. Green, 2008, p. 60).

¹⁹ Green (2008, p. 60) refers to both Small’s (1998) and Elliott’s (1995) versions of the term. In my own writing, I use Elliott’s term ‘musicing’ to refer to such straightforwardly musical practices as singing, playing musical instruments, composing, arranging, conducting, dancing to music, etc. Small’s term ‘musicking’ opens the field up to more sociological interpretation. I think there is room for both meanings in the philosophical discussion of music education, but the difference should be kept in mind.

²⁰ This was the song “Word Up” by Cameo, a 1980’s funk hit. The song was chosen because it was thought to be in a style “broadly familiar” to most of the students, and because, being riff-based, it was “easy to remember and to play” (Green, 2008, p. 26).

²¹ In the latter, the song’s riff-based structure was divided into separate tracks; the students were also handed partial worksheets that indicated the note names. (Green, 2008, p. 26.)

²² In the more freewheeling stages, some of the students actually used online services to obtain lyrics for their chosen songs (Green, 2008, p. 46). The use of sound loops, MIDI files, video lessons and podcasts was not reported, nor was the use of web communities.

²³ This claim for balance is perhaps not unlike the one framed by Dewey in *Art as Experience*. According to him, “an experience,” or “esthetic experience” [sic] emerges from everyday practical background of experiencing, mediated through action, when the latter achieves a balance between its pragmatic and emotional dimensions: when, in other words, self becomes so concentrated on the task at hand that the inner constitution of the situation is pervaded by a complete, unique and unifying “felt” quality, an emotional representative of an artistic work “consummated” (Dewey, LW 10, chapt. 3; Jackson, 1998, pp. 7–12; Väkevä, 2004, chapt. 3.3; Westerlund, 2002; Väkevä & Westerlund, 2007).

²⁴ Not all project schools chose to proceed to this phase: some were able to run it only for two or three lessons at the end of the term. Nevertheless, this part of the project represented a bold

attempt to test an “extreme case” of trying to learn music that most of the students did not like by applying the practices they were already committed to in other kinds of music (Green, 2008, p. 150).

²⁵ In the stage 6, the music was picked from British TV advertisements: the implication being, that even if the pieces did not really interest the students, most had at least heard them beforehand. In turn, the repertoire studied in stage 7 was mostly chosen on the criteria that it would be unfamiliar to the students. The pieces in stage 6 were copied entirely by ear: in the stage 7, the students were also provided a rehearsal record with “broken-down” parts, reminiscent of stage 2. (Green, 2008, pp. 151–153.)

²⁶ Taken that for many of the students, it does not really seem to be ‘natural’, or authentic, to learn, for example, Beethoven’s music by ear and to arrange his music freely for rock instruments. Of course, one might argue that these kinds of authenticity claims can—and even should—be contested by music education that strives for critical understanding of the workings of any music culture.

²⁷ I find this idea at least thematically related to Elliott’s (1995) praxialist creed that all music is, at root, practice, and a musical practice can be learned by anyone who has access to its meanings, processed through active involvement with music in a social-cultural setting. For a pragmatist critique of some of the philosophical implications of this view, see Väkevä & Westerlund (2007); Westerlund (2002); Westerlund & Juntunen (2005).

²⁸ Actually, the interviews revealed that only some of the pupils identified the pieces as music from TV (Green, 2008, p. 158). Perhaps a more interesting case of delineations helping a student to tolerate classical music was that of a student’s called Justin (Ibid., p. 166). Despite his strong personal hostility towards this music, an attitude that did not really seem to change over the course of the project, Justin tolerated ‘Für Elise,’ and actually “produced good stuff” with it because of the personal delineations that remained for him (as with many other students, he had also played the piece before) (Ibid.). As Green suggests (Ibid., p. 167), another possibility might be that Justin did not actually assign this piece to the ‘classical’ category because he actually liked it—the assumption being, that he classified classical music simply as music he does not like. This remark takes us back to reconsider the possibility that perhaps not just the identity of a particular work but an entire musical category can change along with the approach taken.

²⁹ For instance, take the case of “Hooked on Classics,” a series of albums released in the early 1980s: the genre can be called ‘classical disco’, but few would probably really locate this music in the classical music category, as it was meant primarily for the disco floor. Of course, this raises a common issue in critical musicology: that music’s identity may be defined by its function rather than by its form. Green’s argument is clearly that the inter-sonic meanings are an integral part of the identity of music and at least virtually autonomous of its delineations, including, I presume, its cultural uses.

³⁰ Also, the original speed of a recording was taken to be an integral part of the right ‘feel’, as in popular music where it usually is marked by the beat (Green, 2008, p. 163).

³¹ The situation is similar when one first studies the ‘It is easy to play’ versions of classical repertoire: the work may not be authentic, but the easier version may offer valuable first steps to the ‘real thing.’ The same practice is common in popular music where different ‘broken-down’ versions often define the stylistic properties for a beginning student. As indicated, this procedure was also applied in Green’s research. Of course, a significant difference is that

classical music (or much of Western art music in general) is usually conceived as consisting of original works of art, the identity of which is for its most important parts relayed by notation, framing its status as an entity.

³² A critical voice could remark that ideological constraints may not be mitigated, just neglected. Following Shusterman (2002), I would suggest that there might always be room for this kind of neglect, as the sheer somatic joy of practicing the art may in itself be transformative, even transgressive. However, to be conscious of the dialectic between what Shusterman indicates as art's 'surface' and 'depth'—*viz.* its aesthetic qualities and ideological conceptions—is more of a safe bet if one wants to be able to do any socially constructive critique through art education.

³³ While this might sound harsh, there may be a grain of truth in it, for Western tradition has certainly defined music ontologically in such way that this kind of a free appropriation would be considered at best, ignorant; at worst, a major transgression.

³⁴ This can be also argued on naturalistic premises, where the epistemological relation of a subject reflecting on an object does not suffice as a rationalization of meaning. Reality, from this standpoint, is not something we project on our mind's screen, and label with meaning, but something with which we are already entangled with as living organisms in innumerable ways, as meaningfully mediated by action. Meaning is from this standpoint a property of action, or more accurately a 'habit of action' that refers to future possibilities (see, e.g., Määttä, 1993, 2008; Väkevä, 2006b)

³⁵ This is what happens when breaks are sampled from records, sliced up with recycling software and reassembled (and often re-mixed) for further use as beats and loops. Not just the order of the sound event changes; often what is sought in this way is a new 'feel', one recognized as a potential in the source material. Of course, this is what drummers and other rhythm section players have done for ages when composing new patterns: the logic of the creative transmutation remains the same. Nevertheless, digital tools have enhanced this creative potential vastly.

³⁶ However, the choice of the source material can also be a critical factor in musical expression based on recycling. For instance the common practice of circulating James Brown and Parliament/Funkadelic breaks in the 1980s Hip-Hop added to it an important layer of authenticity with crucial political allusions for those that wanted to take them—in addition to helping to establish a killer groove.

³⁷ This example is based on what I witnessed in the late 1990s when visiting a commune in the most northern part of Finland where my department was organizing distance learning. The issue came out of the preliminary discussions with the students; interestingly, the local teachers and parents seemed to be unaware of the fact that some of their young were involved with international online communities of music. The occasion definitely opened my eyes to the possibilities of musical globalization.

³⁸ An example of how tangled the issues of ownership and authenticity can get in the digital domain is when a professional act publicly encourages its fans to download its music freely, in a form of public domain (or Creative Commons) sound files, ready to be reworked in personal digital audio workstations—and when it further offers the fans a remix site where they can upload their own efforts to each other to listen to, discuss, and develop further. A famous promoter for this kind of open policy and also a pioneer in the creative transformation

of rock as a digitally produced, disseminated, consumed, and recycled art form, is Nine Inch Nails (aka NIN), an industrial metal act built around the creative energy of Trent Reznor.

³⁹ NIN is again a good example of this, for Reznor produced its early records largely by himself using digital instruments along with more traditional rock tools. This is especially notable, in that the parent genre is heavy metal, often criticized for sticking to traditional models both aesthetically and ideologically. Digital tools have also influenced the use of guitars, basses and drums in recording and performing, opening a new wealth of possibilities in sound construction with these instruments. However, the most fascinating example of the creative dialectic between old and new ways of producing sound, and one that really ‘cuts’ across historical authenticity is probably DJ’ng (or, rather, turntabling) with vinyl records and the re-appropriation of such practices with new digital turntables and DJ software.

About the Author

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