

COMPOSITION IN BRAZILIAN MUSIC EDUCATION

Heloisa Feichas

Institute of Education, London University
Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Background

The problem of the fragmentation of the music curriculum in higher education is discussed. This curriculum usually emphasises specific skills and technical aspects of music and do not attend to the real needs of the students. There is a need of a unifying element in music curriculum which can link musical knowledge. The aural training element could assume this role of integrating the other elements of the curriculum. However, the way the aural training course has been carried out does not allow this integration.

Aims

The main aim of this work is to examine composition as a powerful tool that unifies intuitive and analytical musical knowledge, thus contributing to a holistic approach in the music teaching/learning process in higher education in Brazil.

Main contribution

The activity of making arrangements is regarded as a compositional process and an example in the holistic approach, in which listening and performing are also integrated with composing. In making arrangements, popular music is used successfully as students are greatly familiar with it and, consequently, it promotes great motivation. The role of the teacher is crucial to the aforementioned approach. Accordingly, there is a need for a kind of teacher who is able to promote active and creative engagement in musical experience.

Implications

Teaching music defined solely on a rational intellectual basis no longer corresponds to reality. What is required now is a holistic view, not a fragmented one. Teaching music in a holistic way, in which intuition and analysis are present in a balanced way, ensures that students learn music deeply with more motivation and consciousness. Moreover, it allows the development of more sensitive musicians, more fully aware, and ready to lead more creative tasks contributing to changes in their world.