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## Introducing Contemporary Voices of Music Therapy: Communication, Culture, and Community:

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### Why Book?

Essays, reports, and columns from *Voices* have been collected in an anthology. The book is published by Unipub, and will be possible to purchase in forthcoming international congresses. It will of course also be possible to order the book via the *Voices* website, to order it from the publisher, or to buy it in an ordinary or Internet bookstore. The editors (Carolyn Kenny and Brynjulf Stige) are taking no royalties for this book and all income from the sales will support *Voices* (which is a non-profit enterprise). National or regional associations of music therapy will be given a special discount rate if they order more than 10 copies. Such arrangements may also be made with universities or other institutions. Take contact with Unipub ([post@unipub.no](mailto:post@unipub.no)) for details.

*Voices* is an electronic community and publication forum. Our goal is to establish a worldwide avenue and arena for communication and dialogue, *accessible for everybody*. One of the reasons why the web is chosen as the medium of publication for *Voices* is that it would not be possible - either practically or financially - to distribute a paper magazine worldwide in high numbers. The electronic format also allows for texts within several genres and for experimentation with use of new technology for documentation and communication of music therapy. Why then a book?

We have chosen to create this anthology of several reasons. First; by reviewing the first year of existence of *Voices* as a web-forum the editors realized that very many interesting essays, reports, and columns had been written, and that there were some themes that seemed to unite otherwise diverse contributions. The idea of producing an anthology that could highlight these texts and themes then developed. Second; we think electronic and conventional publishing complement each other, and serve different purposes for the scholar. Electronic publishing gives fast access and new possibilities for hypertextuality. Conventional publishing (books and paper journals) gives scholars possibilities for connection even when there is no electricity around. When you have a book in your hand there is another aesthetics involved. You can hold a book, you can see it, and you can smell it. You can carry a book around, all the time, if you wish. A book therefore provides the reader with quite specific conditions for study and contemplation. Third; we have created this anthology in order to highlight and endorse the electronic forum of *Voices*.

We therefore hope and think that the electronic forum and the book will complement each other. The anthology is a development of ideas, debates, and texts from *Voices*, and as such texts that are republished have become new texts. All essays, reports, and columns have been revised for this anthology. In the context of the book they have also been brought together in a way that highlights and clarifies some themes and connections that have not been so obvious before. Several of these have been elucidated and discussed in the new Introduction written by

## The Essays

Part I of the book includes eight essays on communication, culture, and community. "Every practice has a theoretical foundation. You cannot at all act without some conception, at some level, of what you are doing." This is the starting contention for Rudy Garred, who in Chapter 1 explores the conception of music, by discussing music as a means in therapy versus music as medium for therapy.

In Chapter 2 Brynjulf Stige discusses the heritage after Paul Nordoff's pioneering work in improvisational music therapy, through analogues with the Norwegian ski jumper Bjørn Wirkola and with Leiv Eiriksson, the Norse discoverer of America.

Lucy C. Forrest, the Australian author of Chapter 3, explores issues of ethnicity and identity in palliative care, through a theoretical discussion and a case story. Her starting point is that: "Each of us seeks to define and maintain our sense of identity in terms of the familial, social, cultural, ethnic and historical heritage of which we are, or would like to be a part."

In Chapter 4 the Canadian music therapist Julie Brown discusses a culturally centered music therapy practice, by considering and discussing the increasingly multicultural contexts that many music therapists find themselves in. Brown approaches this issue by focusing upon ethical considerations and through use of a notion of *cultural empathy*.

Chapters 5 and 6 have both been produced in a British context. Simon Procter discusses music therapy in non-medical health provision. He outlines how psychiatry can be experienced as disempowering for clients and advocates that a radical shift in the music therapist's role and self-understanding may be required. In a thought-provoking discussion paper, Gary Ansdell advocates that *community* music therapy is the future of music therapy, and that a new paradigm is on its way.

Chapters 7 and 8 are written by two veterans in the treatment of cultural issues in relation to music therapy. In an essay review of two recent British books, Even Ruud discusses history and cultural contexts in relation to music therapy. Carolyn Kenny treats music therapy in a ritual context. Her arguments are based on assumptions such as: "One way for Western societies to understand the rituals of traditional societies is to study their mythologies," and: "Poetry and metaphor are always good choices when attempting to translate traditional, indigenous concepts into academic and professional contexts."

## The Reports and Columns

The eight essays referred to above link and complement each other in several ways. In addition, the anthology includes texts in two other genres: reports and columns.

International reports on music therapy, from eight countries and six continents, constitute Part II of the book. The first report is from Kenya, which is one of the few Sub-Saharan countries that have established a music therapy association. The work of the Kenyan pioneers is characterized by a stimulating attempt of integrating traditional and modern notions of music therapy. The next report is from South Africa, where the relationship between traditional and modern music therapy is contextualized in a different way. The subsequent reports - from New Zealand, Japan, the United States, South America, and Israel - all follow up the cultural theme from different angles. The series of reports is closed with a presentation of music therapy in Lithuania. This is a previous Soviet republic, and the author of the report underlines the relevance and importance of history in the development of a music therapy community.

The third and last part of the anthology introduces *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*. This part features a chapter where eleven columns from the series of Fortnightly Columns have been selected. By including the column genre, with shorter texts and more personal reflections than what is common in scholarly writing, the editors want to highlight relationships between personal and public narratives. Also, we want to stimulate reflections on the possibilities and limitations of other genres of academic writing; such as the research article, the essay, the clinical report, the interview, the review paper, the reflection paper, and the discussion paper.

## In Closing: The Turn to Culture

The texts of the anthology are framed by an introduction and an epilogue, including short fables on two villages, one by a pond and another by a waterfall. These texts outline what the editors consider the unifying theme of this volume: the turn to culture in contemporary music therapy.

"Scholars tell us that culture is implied, that we take it for granted. We begin our socialization at such an early age that it is difficult to recognize these implied realities. It's like the inside of our bodies. We don't see them so we don't think about them. We assume that all will go well until something goes wrong. Then we notice." This is the beginning of the preface of the book. Hopefully we are at the beginning of a higher awareness about culture in music therapy practice, research, and theory.

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