



## Music and Art in Conflict Transformation: A Review

ARILD BERGH & JOHN SLOBODA

University of Exeter | UK\*  
Oxford Research Group | UK

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### **ABSTRACT**

Since the early 1990s, there has been an increase in the use of music and the arts within a conflict transformation context. This guest editorial discusses the developments in this research and practical area. The current status of the field, and challenges it faces, are then examined within the context of this issue's theme of the arts and conflict transformation/peace building.

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\*HUSS, University of Exeter, Rennes Drive, Exeter, EX4 4RJ, UK

## INTRODUCTION

In *Music and Arts in Action's* first theme issue we focus on two areas that until recently were treated as separate, namely music/arts and conflict transformation/peace building. In recent years, however, these two areas have often been joined up and have received increased interest from musicians, practitioners and academics. It is an area where we can learn a lot about how music and art is used (positively and negatively) in situations that are relatively extreme, thus expanding our understanding of how the arts and their use affect us. There is also an important role for researchers and practitioners to play here to help improve the results of interventions aimed at reducing conflict and tension.

In this extended editorial we provide some background information from two converging viewpoints: Sloboda has for many years researched the psychology of music (Sloboda 2005) and simultaneously but separately been a peace activist and, more recently a contributor to peace research and policy (Abbott, Rogers & Sloboda 2007) whereas Bergh has combined the two areas in a recently concluded PhD on music and conflict transformation (Bergh 2010). Here we sketch out the background against which this issue's papers have emerged. We will first examine recent and current forms of violent conflict, and rather importantly, how music has often been used to generate or support conflict, rather than reduce it. This will be followed by a historical background to the growth of music and arts in small scale conflict transformation as it is currently practised. Given our backgrounds the focus will primarily be on music. We will conclude this section by discussing some of the core problems that have been highlighted through a overview of the articles in the current issue and how they in different ways help improve this situation.

## MODERN CONFLICTS AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Since the 1990s the attention of conflict transformation researchers and practitioners has been increasingly directed towards what Kaldor (1999) calls "new wars", wars that are more complex than before and are frequently internal to a country. Typical examples of this are the wars in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s or the conflict that affected Northern Ireland from 1968 to 1998. The term "protracted social conflicts" coined by Azar (Azar et al. 1978; Ramsbotham 2005) in the 1970s captures the essence of these wars by describing them as "*hostile interactions which extend over long periods of time with sporadic outbreaks of open warfare fluctuating in frequency and intensity.*" (Azar et al. 1978, p.50). Azar identified four elements of protracted social conflicts; unfulfilled basic needs such as security or recognition; lack of good governance by the state; identity issues (referred to as communal content); and international linkages, whereby a country intervenes across borders, directly or through support for one side (Ramsbotham 2005, pp.114-117). Azar maintained that as conflicts were more complex than the Cold War bi-polarisation indicated, they should also be handled by different academic disciplines working together since no single discipline covered all aspects of such conflicts (Miall et al. 1999, p.99). This is something taken to heart in this issue where ethnomusicologists, music psychologists, theatre practitioners and sociologists all discuss different aspects of the role of music and arts in conflict transformation.

Today there is a clearly established, but very diverse, discipline of conflict transformation/conflict resolution (Miall et al. 1999; Kemp & Fry 2004; Wallensteen 2002; Woodhouse 2000). A major strand in the recent development of this discipline

has been the increasing adoption of a human security approach to conflict and conflict resolution (for instance, Human Security Report Project (2005)). The premise of a human security approach is that no political or strategic goals can be pursued that ignore basic human needs for safety, well-being and livelihood. People on the ground, and their legitimate aspirations, should be an integral part of any political or strategic considerations. This has opened the door to conflict-resolution activities at all levels of society, not just at the level of the state or inter-state processes which dominated the conflict-resolution community during the cold war. This has meant more opportunities for small scale, local peace building with new approaches and experiments. These new approaches tend to focus on the *psycho-social* effects of conflict (Miall et al. 1999, pp.269-277; Stubbs 1995; Bradbury 1998, p.335; Chandler 2000, pp.147-148), e.g. traumas and other invisible effects of war that were often ignored in earlier conflict transformation work. The projects developed in this space range from dialogue workshops (Lumsden & Wolfe 1996; Maoz 2000), drama (Epskamp 1999), cross cultural music events (Independent 2005) and reconciliation work (Chicucuec 1997; Chirwa 1997) to music therapy with traumatised children in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Osborne 2004; Sutton 2002).

It is within this psycho-social domain of conflict transformation that music and art are used. The activities themselves have generally been ad hoc with little theoretical underpinning specific to the use of arts and the academic research that focus on the intersection of music/art and conflict transformation is rather limited.

## MUSIC IN CONFLICTS

Music as a social activity and distribution mechanism of ideology is often used to foment conflicts, a brief summary of how music has been used for such purposes is therefore useful. This, we hope, will also demonstrate that not utilising music for peaceful purposes will leave it open to abuse by those who attempt to maintain boundaries between enemies, either by performing music that emerged during a conflict, by creating new music that commemorates a conflict or through music that highlight latent conflicts. Over time such unchallenged enemy images of “the other” can become part of future conflicts as happened in Northern Ireland after the 1960s (McCann 1995).

Before a conflict music is often used to mobilise resources for “the cause”: in Nazi Germany in the 1930s music provided a uniting focus in the large Nuremberg rallies (Reinert 1997, pp.13-14);<sup>1</sup> in Croatia independently produced tapes of ultra-nationalistic Croatia music were produced and sold before the war started in the 1990s (Pettan 1998, pp.11-12) and in Serbia turbo-folk<sup>2</sup> was used by Serbians to bolster the myth of the Serbian uniqueness (Hudson 2003; Bohlman 2003, p.215). Kosovo Albanians actively used music videos to disseminate a message that tried to create a national identity whilst also bolstering preparation for war (*Sugarman 2006, p.13*). Music is also used to clarify and disseminate ideology as discussed for instance with regards to White Power music (Corte & B. Edwards 2008; Eyerman 2002; Futrell et al. 2006).

Music during wartime has tended to be thought of as a morale booster or a diversion for the non-fighting population, as seen in the UK during the second world war

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<sup>1</sup> For more discussions on music use in Nazi Germany see Levi (1994), Gilbert (2005), Reinert (1997), Bergh, Sutherland and Hashim (2008) and Jaros (2005).

<sup>2</sup> A mixture of Eurovision Song Contest style pop with traditional folk music/themes.

(Weingartner 2006) or in parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s (Hadzihusejnovic-Valasek 1998; Zelizer 2004). In active warfare music has been used to marshal troops in(to) battle, through marching rhythms that help build a (temporary) community and foster strong euphoric feelings (McNeill 1995). In the 2003 invasion of Iraq American soldiers played recordings of loud, predominantly rap, metal and hardcore music, whilst engaging in patrols and attacks inside armoured vehicles (Gittoes 2006).

In times of war music has also been used to intimidate as was seen in the Balkans (Hogg 2004, p.223; Pettan 1998, p.18) or in the second world war (Moreno 1999, p.4; Gilbert 2005, pp.177-178). Music has also been used as torture (Cloonan & Johnson 2002) to torment and humiliate prisoners of war (Cusick 2006; Bayoumi 2005). Songs have been used to encourage fighting in Rwanda (African Rights 1995) and Sudan where the *bakkamah*, female praise singers from Darfur (Carlisle 1973) have in recent years used their skills to encourage *jihad* (Lacey 2004).

Thus music is not inherently peaceful and groups and individuals who want to create or maintain conflicts have often made good use of music to further their agenda. However, this does not mean that these musical positions are fixed. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for instance songs about Jerusalem have often changed as a result of political twists and turns on the ground (Al-Tae 2002). Hence a musician that sings for conflict today may sing for peace tomorrow.

## AN OVERVIEW OF MUSIC AND ART IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

In this summary we sketch out a rather broad picture of the literature on music/art and conflict transformation as it has emerged over the past 20 years, space consideration prohibits a in-depth review of each contribution.

It is important to realise that the use of music or art in conflict transformation contexts is not a new innovation. In the Philippines for example, the Buwaya Kalingga People established peace pacts that were cemented through feasts which included peace pact specific songs (Prudente 1984).

However, in recent years there has been an increase in the use of the arts by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who are increasingly involved in local and international mediation efforts. NGOs are commonly seen as least-contentious channels for external funding, and can often provide a neutral meeting ground for parties who would otherwise find it hard to come together. On the other hand, there has been increasing criticism over the domination of external NGOs in some conflict zones, whose operations can drain resource and capacity away from the indigenous population (Ghani & Lockhart 2008). Partnerships between international NGOs and local citizen-led organisations may work better if there is real sharing of decision-making. However, in many conflict areas (or areas emerging from conflict) such local organisations are thin on the ground, and can often be infected by strong political or sectional interests such that their involvement polarises, rather than brings together, the key sectors of local society. A 1996 review of the workshop model by Lumsden and Wolfe (1996, p.48) pointed towards current trends when suggesting a move away from purely analytical approaches to using arts related methods for “creative problem solving” efforts.

A common approach to using music for conflict transformation is the *multicultural* project or event. These have been arranged in late modern countries since the 1970s

when *Rock Against Racism* (Frith & Street 1992; Roberts 2009) and similar concerts took place. Although not a method per se, the general purpose of such events is commonly defined as an endeavour to “build bridges” (Lundberg et al. 2000, p.138; Al-Tae 2002, p.53; Skyllstad 1995, p.10) between different groups who are perceived to be in conflict. Multicultural events frequently take place in educational settings (Baird 2001; Fock 2004; Evron 2007; Bradley 2006). Skyllstad has written extensively about music and conflict transformation based on the “Resonant Community” project in Norwegian schools in the early 1990s (Skyllstad 1995; Skyllstad 1997; Skyllstad 2000). The focus in what he has described was on changing attitudes towards immigrants among young pupils by exposing them to music from around the world. Similar projects have been researched (with less positive outcomes reported) by Einarsen (1998; 2002), Fock (1997; 2004) and Evron (2007) amongst others.

More specifically connected to protracted social conflicts we can observe that the conflicts in the Balkans and between Israel and Palestine, which due to their location and connection to “the West” received considerable media attention and outside intervention, were the sites of frequent mediation efforts using the arts at the non-state level. These range from joint Israeli-Palestinian CDs (Music Channel 1995) being recorded after the Oslo Accord; joint folk arts exhibitions from the Jewish and Palestinian diaspora communities in Boston (Cohen 2005b); theatre used for reconciliation in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Davis 2005); multicultural workshops involving the arts (Sultoon 2001) via music therapy with children (Ng 2005) to brass band performances drawing children from different ethnic groups with foreign visitors (Veledar 2008).

With regards to literature on music/art and conflict transformation, this started emerging in the 1990s. The edited volume *Arts Approaches to Conflict Resolution* (Liebmann 1996) from 1996 has a number practitioners and academics discussing different aspects of conflict transformation through music therapy, drama and arts in the community. The edited volume *People Building Peace* (European Centre for Conflict Prevention 1999) covers a wide range of peace activities on the local level. Ungerleider (1999) discusses the role of music and poetry in conflict transformation efforts in Cyprus. In the same volume Epskamp (1999) draws on personal experience as a community artist from theatre of development as well as summaries of a number of practical music initiatives around the world to provide a list of “lessons learnt”. Weaver's (2001) thesis on music and reconciliation suggests that one should see reconciliation between parties in a conflict as a creative process.

Zelizer (2003; 2004) conducted research in Bosnia-Herzegovina and focused on the practical use of artistic processes in peace building in so-called identity conflicts. The underlying idea was that these conflicts can be resolved by broadening or transcending the identity of the participant beyond their separate and conflict-imbued group identities. Overall his work provides an early look at this field with empirical data from the field, albeit mainly focused on musicians and organisers.

Cohen (2005a), Zelizer and Weaver all suggest that emotional work, not strict rational thought, is the route to reconciliation after civil war. However, Cohen also stresses that music and arts should connect with other conflict transformation type activities and take into consideration the context within which the work is done. Such advice is relevant to all individual peace building initiatives, not just those involving music. Co-ordination between disparate activities is essential to strategic progress, and it is

precisely the lack of co-ordination which has so profoundly hampered peace building and development activities around the globe (Ghani & Lockhart 2008). However, this injunction has particular force when considering music, precisely because music is, despite the enthusiasm of the current constituency, a statistically rare component of global peace building efforts. Most people involved in conflict resolution activities worldwide have never used music as part of their toolkit, and have no conceptual or practical understanding of its dimensions or benefits. Unless music practitioners can talk the wider language of conflict-resolution, and show a professional understanding of the larger toolkit, their efforts are likely to remain marginalised and largely ineffective.

Haskell (2005, p.8) who studied NGOs and international cultural aid in Bosnia-Herzegovina suggested that “*issues of power and control should be central to any study of situations which involve patronage*”. In Haskell’s fieldwork on a village and its relationship to an international NGO, she found that when funding was allocated to start a village folklore group they had to fit into the NGOs way of working. Beckles-Wilson (2007) has also discussed the issue of power in music and conflict transformation efforts with regards to the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, the Israeli and Arab youth orchestra mentioned earlier. She is mainly concerned with the negotiations of power between the instigator and conductor Barenboim and the young musicians, and shows that despite the utopian character of the orchestra (Beckles Willson 2009) it is clearly dominated by Barenboim.

A number of recent articles by music therapists on music and war, peace, trauma and refugees (Hunt 2005; Ng 2005; Akombo 2000; J. Edwards 2005; Kennedy 2001; Lopez 2007) point to an increasing interest in the topic of music and conflict transformation from music therapists. Dunn (2008) provides an exploration of the potential for music use with adults in mediation situations, primarily through role playing by mediators. *Community Music Therapy (CoMT)* (Pavlicevic & Ansdell 2004) is increasingly used to deal with victims of war and torture both in one on one music therapy sessions (Zharinova-Sanderson 2004), as well as groups of children (Sutton 2002). The use of music for therapeutic purposes may also occur in casual ways, e.g. a US soldier rapped about his experiences in Iraq to cope with the aftermath of his deployment there (Gilchrist 2006) and in Uganda “*One young man is playing a string instrument [...] all day long, but is too traumatised to talk about his role as a [Lord’s Resistance Army] commander*” (Mirren 2005).

Two recent books have put music and art more firmly on the agenda for conflict transformation. The first is a monograph by a well known peace building scholar and practitioner Lederach (cf.1997) who engaged with the question of how artists can contribute to peace building in his book *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (2005). One chapter is devoted to the discussion of music and arts in conflict transformation, with a number of anecdotes used to illustrate a wide range of points, within a book that is primarily philosophical and spiritual in tone. The second book is the edited volume *Music and Conflict Transformation* (Urbain 2007). Over a number of chapters music therapists, psychologists, academics, musicians and practitioners discuss different aspects of music either used for, or as a form of conflict transformation, both in areas of protracted social conflicts and multicultural societies. More recently Bornstein (2008) has researched the artistic and religious contributions to peace building in Indonesia.

## WHAT NEXT FOR MUSIC AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION?

An in-depth review of the literature summarised above and empirical data collected from conflict transformation projects that had used music in Sudan<sup>3</sup> and Norway<sup>4</sup> (Bergh 2007; Bergh 2008; Bergh 2011(forthcoming)) raised a number of concerns with regards to the use of the arts for conflict transformation purposes. In particular it became clear that in general there exists an overly optimistic view of what music and art can achieve in conflict transformation situations which has a negative effect on the outcomes. These problems provided the impetus for inviting contributions to the present issue of *Music and Arts in Action*. It is therefore reassuring to see that the papers presented here all tackle some of these issues and help move this increasingly important field forward. We now briefly discuss the main points that were uncovered and (where appropriate) relevant papers from this issue that deal with these concerns.

**The participants views are rarely heard:** In most research on music and conflict transformation only artists and organisers are interviewed, and they tend (rather unsurprisingly) to report success. This is particularly puzzling as the participants' lives are meant to be altered through engaging with music. Musicians are seen as impartial, and their quotes are often taken as proof of music's effectiveness. The frequent focus on musicians implies that any positive changes are bestowed (at will) upon participants by gifted musicians and the participant-music interactions are rarely interrogated. Positive reports may therefore be a result of informants trying to please the organisers. Fock (2004, pp.23-24) for instance found that teachers in a Danish multicultural music project were more cautious when reporting changes in pupils to her than in the questionnaires returned to the organisers. Furthermore, the parameters by which success is measured are set by the organisation, and their "world view" is used as a starting point; any lack of local knowledge that affects conflict transformation negatively goes unnoticed.

Past articles in *Music and Arts in Action* have provided good examples of how valuable understanding of how music and arts get into action in everyday life is obtained through direct interviews with people who engage with the arts: Lawson (2009) has discussed [amateur tap dancers and their motivations](#) and Corte & Edwards (2008) researched the [use of music by white power activists](#). In the present issue this approach has been used successfully by Brooks, Jennings & Baldwin, Rüser and Roberts who conducted research in USA, Northern Ireland, Spain and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

**Music's role is exaggerated or taken out of context:** When participants' understandings of conflict transformation are ignored, the result is often that music is elevated to a level that is not matching participants' experience. In Norway the participants generally liked the musical events but did not see them as particularly important, as one former pupil said: "For us it was like going on an excursion to a power station" (Bergh 2010, p.133), whereas the official report often focused on the idea of musical peak experiences (Skylstad 1992, pp.8,17,37,50,79). Furthermore, there are no attempts at trying to open the "black box" of the artistic episodes that is often illustrated through anecdotes, the aesthetic experiences are often seen as self explanatory as to why any conflict transformation changes take place. Thus

<sup>3</sup> Data in Sudan was collected from a settlement of people who were internally displaced in East Sudan due to the 22 year civil war in Sudan. Here music was used as a meeting place between 29 different ethnic groups.

<sup>4</sup> The Norwegian data came from interviews with former pupils who were involved with the "Resonant Community" project in Norway from 1989 to 1992.

suggestions such as “*The arts by nature hold significant power to transform individuals and societies*” (Zelizer 2004, p.59) are made without any proof or further discussion as to what this power is. In this issue of *Music and Arts in Action* Riiser and Roberts both show how important contextualisation is to understand the real role of music and art in conflict transformation and not be seduced by anecdotes discussed in isolation.

**Relationships, musicking and interventions:** Relationship building is, quite rightly, seen as a core element of conflict transformation, this is clearly illustrated in the articles in this issue. However, when music is used there is an underlying assumption that one can quickly create long lasting relationships where none existed before. What we found was that this is a process that takes a long time, in Sudan an elder in the settlement explained how the relationships between tribes had strengthened over time due to regular joint musicking over a 10 year period:

[...] those people, when in the past, when they were simple, they used to go to each other as tribes. Now there is a development; even the bands go to participate in the occasions of the people, they go to participate and the people also participate; the bands have brought the people closer together.

Thus there is a problematic notion that interventions by outside organisations are assumed to make lasting changes. Roberts, Brooks and Jennings & Baldwin all show that long term community based activities can have an effect, and the community aspect is increasingly important to understand. Interventions can also have unexpected side-effects. In Sudan an international NGO helped form professional bands with their own costumes to help raise their income, but as woman explained:

Now singing and dancing has become limited to those who are recognized as members of the bands. The rest of the people have been turned into spectators. This has limited the extent of enjoyment of the rest of people as it has become like a stage where they perform and we, the public are the spectators.

**Traditions and multicultural issues:** Conflict transformation work that focuses on multi-cultural issues is prevalent, and often takes place in educational settings as aforementioned. This area exposes a range of problems that tend to have a negative effect on the conflict transformation efforts. Often organisers assume that different ethnic groups have a homogeneous, unchanging culture. In multicultural contexts this presents particular problems. Often the invocation of multiple cultures reifies the very boundaries and problems they seek to challenge by emphasising “the other” (Milligan 1999) something that Riiser discusses in her article on the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra. One of the informants in Norway who was a young (14 year old) performer in the project explained that in her later experience:

[...] what I have tried to experiment with a little when I work with kids since, try to relate to kids on the similarities. First and foremost. And then bring in the differences, but not starting up with the differences. Because I think differences put people's backs up instantly and it instantly puts on this kind of strange barrier in their mind which goes **me** and **you**. I am here, you are there and that's kind of it.

Thus multicultural music projects often share certain basic problems: a failure to realise that they often increase, rather than reduce, differences; a problematic assumption (implied or explicit) of music being a universal language; the notion that merely playing music to different social groups will bring them together. A former pupil illustrated how the enjoyment of music does not necessarily translate into an improved view of others:

[...] it was fun to watch [the African musicians] when they played, a little comical and we laughed a bit at their costumes and the way they played, like "is this the way they play?", in a way teasing/bullying [about] the outfits and the way they played.

**Top-down vs bottom-up power issues:** It is obvious that the power wielded by NGOs and (visiting) artists is largely ignored in writings on music in this field. Yet there is clearly an imbalance in power between organisers and participants. Zelizer (2004, p.156) has highlighted this: *"Much of the arts-based peacebuilding related work is part of the huge post-war investment of international funds and expertise to support extensive humanitarian and peacebuilding work"* and Haskell (2005) suggested that power and control should be central concerns to any inquiry in this area. As a weaker party may prefer to "play along" with what they assume the stronger party wants, partly out of deference, partly to avoid trouble (Munch 1964), it is important both for practitioners and researchers to pay attention to power issues (Assal 2002).

Although it is important that academics also get involved in this field as Pettan discusses in this issue, we must also be reflexive about our involvement, a key point discussed by Jennings & Baldwin in their article. There is a danger, as was found from the data from both Norway and Sudan that networks of professionals emerge that sideline real local involvement.

Interventions may also be too laden with theory or ideology upfront. In a complex and emerging field such as music and conflict transformation this is problematic: In this issue Robertson discusses this point with regards to his own work on music and conflict transformation (Robertson 2006) which had to be revised with considerably less focus on theoretical rules once empirical data had been collected in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Top-down approaches to conflict transformation also means that there may be a considerable difference between what leaders think, and the opinions of the participants, as Riiser demonstrates in this issue. In Norway a teacher suggested that:

I do actually think that the pupils also thought it was good music and good dance, and that they simply liked what they saw. It wasn't, I think, that they thought, great that we escape teaching and do something else, I don't think so.

However the following quotes from some of former pupils tell a very different story:

"I think we kind of saw it as a bit of time off or at least time off from the usual routines of the school day". "We didn't have to stay in the classroom, and have [regular] teaching, so it was a bit OK to get into the music room and watch someone play." "It was fun time off" "[...]I think we were more happy to avoid doing school work and [have] fun different places."

**Evaluations are geared towards claiming success, not exploring what took place and how music may work:** Evaluations are central to conflict transformation projects where outsiders are involved, a successful evaluation may be the key to further funding for NGOs or future work for musicians. Various forms of evaluations are also what support claims of music's effectiveness as a tool for conflict transformation.

The review of the existing literature indicates that frequently occurring concerns include: evaluations that are done by organisers and authority figures; the assumption that any changes inside a short term project automatically affect the participants' lifeworlds in the long term; positive changes are assumed to come solely from music

use and little attention is paid to the context; anecdotal evidence is seen as “proof” and personal experiences of music are extrapolated to apply to entire societies.

These concerns all link back to a single issue: the tendency to interpret and observe the use of music in conflict transformation in a distinct top-down manner. As with conflict transformation in general, this causes problems as it fails to thoroughly understand any conflict transformation processes that may occur through music. Here Jennings & Baldwin's article on evaluations of drama and theatre in Northern-Ireland is invaluable to shed further light on a very important part of interventions through the arts.

**Passive versus active engagement and sustainability:** The default mode of engagement with music in most societies is that of consumer of recorded music, or spectator at live musical events. The vast majority of episodes of musical engagement in everyday life take place in the context of a non-musical activity which dominates the priorities of the individual concerned (Sloboda 2010). So, people listen to music on portable music devices as they undertake daily tasks, ranging from driving a car, doing housework, exercising, or studying (Sloboda, Lamont, & Greasley 2009). This offers both an opportunity and a threat to music in conflict initiatives. The opportunity is that music offered into a conflict situation by external actors can survive the duration of the intervention if it finds its way onto the CDs and iPods which will allow its survival and dissemination long after the end of a funded-project. The threat is that the essentially passive nature of the relationship between listener and music will be insufficiently robust to offer an engine of significant change which endures beyond the immediate confines of the intervention. Long-term personal and social change after music engagement tends to occur where the involvement is active; it involves the participant in the structured acquisition and regular exercise of musical skills over a period of time measured in months rather than days (e.g. Spychiger, Patry, Lauper, Zimmerman, & Weber 1995; Harland, Kinder, Stott, Schagen & Haynes 2000). In contrast, where the musical intervention involves listening alone, effects are often short-lived and ephemeral (e.g. Hetland 2000; Sloboda 2007). This is clearly demonstrated in Brooks paper where activists have sustain (often decades long) involvement through communal sing alongs.

More attention needs to be given to the nature and extent of engagement that music interventions in conflict bring about or encourage in the participants that are the targets of the intervention. This needs to be informed by a better understanding of the diverse ways in which music and musical engagement can impact on non-musical behaviour (see for instance Clayton 2009; Rauscher 2009, Hallam & MacDonald 2009; North & Hargreeves 2009; Garofalo 2010; Thaut & Wheeler 2010)

## SUMMARY

We hope to have demonstrated that music and arts in conflict transformation is not only an interesting field for academic reasons, it is also an important space for the development of relationships beyond the art event itself. These relationships are an important part of ensuring that violent conflicts are avoided in the future. This field is developing rapidly and the lack of theoretical foundations, which means many projects do not survive in “the wild” beyond the evaluation stage, is in urgent need of improvement. Here academics should consider being more than “diagnosticians”. As Pettan suggests in this issue, there is scope for academics to actively involve themselves in conflict transformation, although one should be aware of the ethical implications of this. Conflict transformation interventions in a community requires

considerable reflexivity as Jennings and Baldwin explain in their paper. Practitioners and academics need to work together, and it is important that the type of peace building communities that Brooks describes are nurtured long term through music and arts that are suitable for their situations. Relying on short term, strong emotional reactions to aesthetic experiences is counter productive. It is longer term projects such as the choir in Bosnia-Herzegovina that Roberts discusses that can benefit from an academic investigation, where it is important to understand power dynamics and identity issues as Riiser demonstrates in her paper. Overall we see that whether we engage with international “high art” or local community theatre, with communal singing during anti-war protests or post-war choirs, the aesthetic experiences do not occur in isolation, they are always connected with the “nitty-gritty” of everyday life.

With this issue of *Music and Arts in Action* we wanted to provide a more in-depth and critical view of this exciting and emerging field. This we feel our contributors have achieved, and we look forward to future work in this field.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Arild Bergh** has recently completed a PhD on the topic of music and conflict transformation at the University of Exeter, with fieldwork in Norway and Sudan. He is editor of the journal *Music and Arts in Action*. He has previously worked as a music journalist and researched and written on topics ranging from music of immigrants in Europe to cassette music culture and underground music in communist countries. Published and in press work includes "From wind-up to iPod: techno-cultures of listening" with Tia DeNora (in *The Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music*, 2009), "Emotions in motion: Transforming conflict and music." (in *Music and the Mind: Investigating the functions and processes of music*; Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming) and "Forever and ever: Mobile music in the life of young teens." with Tia DeNora and Maia Bergh (in *Handbook of Mobile Music and Sound Studies*; Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

**John Sloboda**, FBA, is Emeritus Professor at Keele and Visiting Research Fellow at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London. He is also Consultant and Director of Oxford Research Group's Recording Casualties in Armed Conflict programme and chairs its International Advisory Group, and he is Honorary Professor in the School of Politics and International Relations at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is co-director of the Iraq Body Count project. He is author of over 150 publications. His books include "The Musical Mind", "Psychology for Musicians", (with Patrik N Juslin) "Handbook of Music and Emotion", (with Hamit Dardagan and others) "A Dossier of Civilian Casualties in Iraq", and (with Chris Abbott and Paul Rogers) "Beyond Terror: the Truth About the Real Threats to Our World".