

CROSS CURRENTS

MULTICULTURALISM REVISITED

by Jere T. Humphreys

The University of Maryland hosted music education colloquia in April 1993 and April 1995. *Cross Currents: Setting an Agenda for Music Education in Community Culture* (University of Maryland 1996) is the proceedings of the second colloquium and the second in the colloquia series entitled the State-of-the-Arts Series.

Cross Currents begins with a brief foreword and acknowledgments section in which State-of-the-Arts editor Bruce D. Wilson says this series will continue in the name of Charles Fowler, the influential arts education writer who died shortly after the second colloquium. The remainder of the publication consists of an introduction by *Cross Currents* editor Marie McCarthy, an extended essay by the colloquium's main speaker, Patricia Shehan Campbell, three responses to Campbell's essay, a colloquium synthesis by McCarthy, and a copy of the col-

loquium program, including a list of the colloquium's discussion group leaders.

In the introduction, McCarthy announces the meeting's theme: multicultural education in music. After introducing the main speaker and the three respondents, she provides a framework for the remainder of the publication by setting forth the position that multicultural education is "now at a watershed" and that "these currents of thought are offered not only to mark the day's proceedings but more importantly to advance thinking and to stimulate further dialogue regarding multicultural music education." (p. xii)

In the main essay, music educator Campbell touches on a wide range of issues and problems related to multicultural music education in the United States. Campbell's eclectic approach represents a fascinating mixture of practical and theoretical thinking. Among the many issues and problems she discusses are the backlash against multiculturalism in the United States during the last five years; the absence of goals for multicultural music education;

problems relating to the identification of a suitable repertoire for multicultural music education (including teachers having been trained in the traditional music canon and the lack of a multicultural music canon, musical authenticity and representativeness of various musics, and moral and legal ownership of music); "cultural dissonance" (p. 19) between teachers and students; and the lack of research on the effectiveness of extant multicultural music programs.

Campbell makes important distinctions between two approaches to multicultural music education: global, or world, music approaches that emphasize similarities and differences in musical structure and meaning among various musics, and multicultural music approaches that "focus . . . on representative musical styles of two or more groups of people, each united by national or ethnic origin" (p. 12). Despite the distinctions between the two approaches, Campbell observes that "there is considerable blurring in classroom practice" (p. 13) between the two.

In addition to her intriguing

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distinctions between the global and multicultural approaches, Campbell takes a stand on the issue of repertoire. She believes that because the "leap from rhetoric to reality is often difficult for teachers" (p. 17), it is lamentable that the National Standards for Arts Education do not include lists of recommended musical works. She also believes that teachers can attain competence in unfamiliar musical styles. She then goes on to describe three model programs worldwide for the multicultural approach and three more for the global approach.

Campbell's positions seem always to be taken with a view toward the practical, and she seems eminently in tune with the plight of music teachers. Even her theoretical model for multicultural music education, the Concentric Circles Music Model, exudes practicality. The model consists of the "Musical Self" (teacher knowledge and competence) at the core, encircled first by "Musical Training" (what teachers and students "ought to know"), and finally by "Musical Outreach" (what local and regional communities can provide). This model is refreshing because it locates both practical and philosophical concerns at the core of the curriculum model and not just philosophical concerns. Because Campbell's well-organized, colorfully written address raised more questions than it answered, it clearly succeeded admirably in providing a stimulating opening for the three respondents and colloquium discussants.

The first respondent, philosopher Susan R. Wolf, applauds Campbell's distinctions between the global and multicultural approaches, and she, like Campbell, comes down on the side of

the multicultural approach. She gives an excellent discussion of the important difference between studying the "cultural achievements" of other nations and peoples because of their inherent value and studying these achievements because they "contribute to *our* heritage or to the heritage of some of *us*" (p. 41). Wolf insists that the purpose of multicultural education is not just to "benefit or soothe or raise the self-esteem of the formerly neglected or unrecognized groups," but rather to increase consciousness "of our multicultural composition" as "a step toward [our] communal self-knowledge" (p. 41). While she praises Campbell's concentric circles model, she wisely notes that the two inner circles (respectively, what teachers know and can do, and what teachers and students should know and be able to do) could become too conservative in practice. She believes that the obligation of "revising the canon" and "the moral importance of multicultural education" (p. 44) are too important to be left entirely in the hands of local and regional individuals and groups.

The second respondent, the well-known historian of music education Michael L. Mark, notes that movements such as multicultural music education usually occur "in response to a political mandate, . . . [which] usually follows a social movement" (p. 51). He describes early efforts on the part of the federal government and Music Educators National Conference to encourage multicultural education. He agrees with Campbell that multicultural music education is now in a transitional period and suggests that, although multicultural education may receive less government support in the future due to shifting

Congressional priorities, the profession will not "abandon it" because "it is just too important" (p. 54). Mark also comes out in favor of promoting our nation's "unique and valuable national identity" (p. 55), an identity that he believes is strengthened by its "numerous subcultures" (p. 56).

The third respondent, Paddy B. Bowman—an author, consultant, teacher, and coordinator of the National Task Force on Folk Arts in Education—gives some interesting historical facts related to the English-only movement. She takes issue with Campbell's moderate approach "as the political pendulum swings right" (p. 62). Unlike respondent Wolf, who appears to favor adding national-level controls to Campbell's model, Bowman would add "the concentric circles of . . . students" (p. 65) to the model. Like Wolf, she asserts that the goal of multicultural education "should not be merely to boost cultural groups' esteem but to educate ourselves and all our students more richly" (p. 68). She agrees with Campbell that research on multicultural music education is "essential." Finally, she reminds readers that not all education takes place in schools, and she gives two examples of nonschool arts education programs.

In the synthesis portion of *Cross Currents*, McCarthy lists several points of agreement that were reached by Campbell, the respondents, and the discussants. She cleverly organizes the synthesis around Campbell's concentric circles model. Under Musical Self, McCarthy suggests that "musical expressions and values" are transmitted through schools and many other vehicles, that students should explore "their own musical roots," and that teachers must share their own musical "identi-

ries" with their students (p. 72). Under Musical Training, colloquium participants agreed that there should be a musical canon, albeit a flexible one. McCarthy states that this issue, "what we ought to know" (p. 74), was the most debated subject of the colloquium and that "more intense dialogue is needed" (p. 76). For Musical Outreach, participants recommended more partnerships and other outreach activities between schools and communities. McCarthy closes with a list of recommendations for the profession regarding multicultural music education, including the development and establishment of broad goals; policy statements;

a musical canon; guidelines for authenticity, representativeness, partnerships, and the like; descriptions of successful programs; sites for action research; and the restructuring of music teacher education.

Interestingly, one of Campbell's initial and strongest assertions, that "the maintenance of the disciplinary core of music is central to the mission of music educators" (p. 4), is not addressed directly by the respondents or by McCarthy in the colloquium synthesis portion of *Cross Currents*. In view of Campbell's stand in favor of a multicultural approach as opposed to the learning-of-structure inherent in the global music approach,

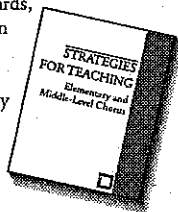
it is not entirely clear how this would occur. This issue, together with the other fascinating concepts and problems represented in *Cross Currents*, should stimulate future discussions.

McCarthy, Campbell, Wilson, and the colloquium respondents and discussants should be congratulated for providing concrete, practical suggestions for profession-wide action, as well as a conceptual focus for future discussions on multicultural music education. Because it represents thought-provoking discussions on numerous practical and theoretical aspects of an important, timely subject, *Cross Currents* is a "must read" for all music educators.

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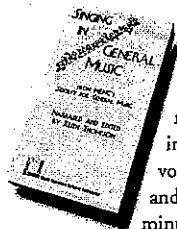
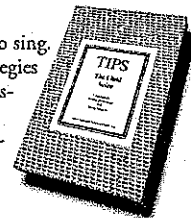
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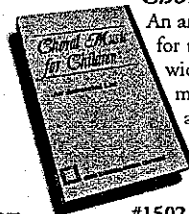
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