

EDITORIAL

“Words are delicious”

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Words are delicious, but cannot say much. They often lose the water of meaning before it is delivered. But they can be stirred to form descriptions of the breath, glances, gestures, and pulses between lives. Perhaps writing is finding a scrape in the skin of knowing, where the sting and dirt and blood of the day is let out, and music is let in. (Bateson, 2016, p. 15)

I am fascinated by how artistic practice as inquiry can invite diverse ways of knowing about musical experiences with others. Since I joined the team at *Approaches*, I have been excited by the potential for including more arts-based inquiry in the journal. Part of this fascination stems from my own understanding of knowing as a fluid and embodied concept involving not just minds but *body-minds*, after Eli Clare (2017). This sits alongside a desire to work against the silencing of voices considered ‘different’ from established norms in academic practice (norms such as European, White, non-disabled, cis-gendered or neurotypical).

Nora Bateson’s quotation points toward something of the quality of music in relation to knowing, which is interesting to sit with in a context of academic norms. If we follow Bateson’s metaphor of writing as “finding a scrape in the skin of knowing” allowing music to be “let in,” what might music be in this scenario? A salve, a disruption, a bridge, an imagining, a resonance, a challenge... And how might music evolve knowing from Bateson’s perspective? A scrape would also seem to involve some degree of discomfort and body-mind change.

Music can hold a diversity and complexity of lived experiences and yet when engaging with persons through music and sound, depth experiences can feel transient and ambiguous. How we might know, and what we might know through sound are questions that frequently emerge for persons working within a field of music and health, and possible answers are surely fluid and intimately related to one’s own worldviews. In music therapy, for example, improvised articulations of sound offer ways to know something *with* someone beyond individual experience. Yet, communicating what we know from encounters in music therapy work with colleagues from other disciplines, even knowing within our own body-mind processes can be complex, and often involves a process of translation back to words (Gerber & Myers-Coffman, 2019).

As a place of gathering (Dos Santos & Bolger, 2023), *Approaches* –as an open access journal– is well-placed to support and share varied ways of knowing. In this journal issue, music therapy runs as a thread throughout a broad range of articles, invited commentaries, book reviews and conference reports. The articles span depth of practice, experiences of training, and ways of understanding and articulating the complexity of possible outcomes of music therapy.

Agnieszka Łuciuk-Wojczuk leads us into the in-between with their study of profound phenomenological experiences through music in music therapy with persons in psycho-oncology. Kandia Bouzioti continues aspects of this thread with an in-depth exploration of vocal psychotherapy with traumatised Greek persons.

Megan Brand, Victoria Clarke and Catherine Warner delve into the experiences of music therapists at different stages of their training and practice to consider the role of personal therapy in becoming a music therapist. Along a similar idiographic line, Luke Annesley and Nicolette O'Neill focus on music therapy group experiences from the perspective of a music therapist.

Alison Fuller's work introduces an approach to music therapy with families with complex needs using the Music Therapy Visual Schedule they have developed. Jenny Kirkwood documents their Communication-Relationship Outcomes Matrix (CROM) and discusses its relevance in understanding outcomes in music therapy. This is presented alongside a response by Gustavo Schulz-Gattino, who dialogues with the CROM in practice.

The book reviews in this issue offer lively dialogues with texts that further evolve knowing and expanding on the in-between that written words invite, entering into Bateson's idea of a scrape. Returning to practice, the three conference reports invite the reflections and experiences of authors attending these events.

The *Approaches* team is growing. We are delighted to welcome Alexandra Georgaki (Anglia Ruskin University, UK), Jinah Kim (University of Melbourne, Australia) and Marija Pranjić (University of Toronto, Canada) to our Advisory Editorial Board, and Stephanie Cham (Center for Performing Arts Medicine, Houston Methodist Hospital, USA) as a copyeditor to our team. Along with this expansion of our team, we are excited to share that we continue working toward moving to an Open Journal Systems (OJS) platform which will streamline the processes involved in editing and publishing a peer reviewed journal. With this transition, we would also like to actively encourage authors and contributors for submissions that use non-traditional and arts-based methods and methodologies. If you would like to find out more about what this means, please visit our website, or get in touch with the editorial team.

Finally, as I write this editorial, it feels very important to acknowledge the ongoing violence in Israel and Gaza. Amongst the millions of people affected, some of those have longstanding relationships with *Approaches* as past and current editorial board members, reviewers, and authors. Our thoughts and love are with our colleagues there and around the world affected by this situation.

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