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## Editorial

### **Journeys in Traumatized Lands: Dissimilar Images of a Monadic Vision?**

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Over the last years, there has been a growing interest in music therapy with regards to trauma (e.g. Bensimon, Amir & Wolf 2008; Edwards & McFerran 2004; Howden 2008; Loewy & Frisch-Hara 2002; Pavlicevic 1994, 1995, 2001; Roberts 2006; Stewart 2009a, 2009b; Thompson 2007). This seems to relate to the existence of a significant number of people in our societies facing the implications of traumatic experiences such as abuse, war, physical disasters or other catastrophic events. In addition, the increasing discourses and practices about trauma in music therapy seem to relate both to a gradual shift in society's awareness of the immediate implications of trauma, and to its widespread repercussions which affect people's living experience on individual and collective levels.

In 2002 the book *Music, Music Therapy and Trauma: International Perspectives* was published and since then has become a milestone in relevant music therapy discourses. This book, which was edited by Julie Sutton, includes various chapters describing music therapy work with people who have faced diverse traumatic experiences in a range of cultural, socio-political and economic settings; a diversity that reflects the global problem of trauma, as well as its influence that reaches across community and country borders.

More recently, in 15-16 September 2010, an advanced research workshop was organised by NATO and took place in Ankara, Turkey. This workshop was entitled "*New Therapy Approaches in Countering the Negative Effects of Terrorism – Music Therapy against the Negative Effects of Terrorism*" and it focused on the potential therapeutic approaches and rehabilitation strategies of music therapy in restoring wellbeing and normalising the lives of people who have experienced traumatic events especially connected to terrorism. The speakers represented various countries around the globe (including Albania, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, North Ireland,

Poland, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and USA) and discussed the implications of trauma in the different communities and societies within which they work: from Kosovo's refugees during the civil war, to the severely traumatised young men in North Ireland and the riots in Greece in December 2008.

The two articles included in the new issue of *Approaches* come to contribute to this growing discourse in music therapy. They reflect diverse approaches and practices in this area of work: from individual music therapy work with a sexually abused adolescent in a psychiatric clinic in Western Europe, to community-based music therapy group work with children in a post-war environment in East Africa.

More specifically, the first article is written by Marieke Degryse who reflects on her music therapy practice in a psychiatric unit for children with learning disabilities in Belgium. Following a psychodynamic perspective, she presents clinical material from her individual work with an adolescent with learning and behavioural difficulties who had experienced sexual abuse. She explores the role of songs and playfulness in music therapy when working with trauma and aggression. She also discusses how "[m]usic and body become like two broken mirrors, reflecting one another" (p. 49) by posing some questions with regards to the nature of music and the use of improvisation in this context.

In the next article Bethan Lee Shrubsole reflects on her practice in Africa. She writes about *Music for Peaceful Minds* – a music therapy service for children which she established in 2008 in post-conflict northern Uganda. The focus of this paper is on group music therapy work in a social environment which has been affected by trauma caused by war and conflict-related experiences. In this context, Shrubsole explores the potential role of religion and faith in music therapy, as well as the challenges that cultural, linguistic and musical

diversity brought in her work as an English therapist practising in Uganda.

The above articles are followed by two book reviews by Claire Hope and Simon Procter respectively. Hope reviews the book *Music Therapy with Children and their Families* edited by Amelia Oldfield and Claire Flower and published in 2008. Procter reviews Randi Rolvsjord's book *Resource-Oriented Music Therapy in Mental Health Care* which was published recently, but already seems to "[...] have considerable influence on what – if anything – music therapy has to offer to people in years to come" (p. 68).

This issue of *Approaches* concludes by providing some information and publication lists which will hopefully be useful to readership: i) New International Publications (2009-2010), and ii) Upcoming Events. This information is complementary to the online resources of *Approaches* available for free on its website <http://approaches.primarymusic.gr>. These online resources include the newly updated links of *Approaches* where one can find a wealth of web material related to music therapy and/or special music education associations, educational institutions, research bodies, forums and networks, journals and databases, as well as service providers.

I hope this issue of *Approaches* will further raise our awareness of the diversity in music therapy practices and approaches, yet of their uniqueness - as dissimilar images of a monadic vision: to meet humanity's needs for growth and wellbeing; to transform people's and society's lives through health musicing.

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