Rebooting the Conversation on Composing:
Preparing pre-service teachers to teach composing

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Composing 2.0
Legacies, Conversations & Aspirations

• The Past:
  • A brief history of composing

• The Present:
  • Current considerations on composing

• The Future:
  • Observations and Recommendations
What is *Composing*?
Long, long ago...

- The new syllabus
The **performing** aspects received the attention as teachers

- Lacked confidence in ability to teach instrumental and vocal performance.
- Didn’t know how to find time.
- Insisted that the secondary school student was too self-conscious to perform music—especially the boys!
- Worried about meeting required standards.
- Stressed about comparisons in achievement between those who were being taught on a one-to-one basis and those who were taught in large groups.

Assessment.
What about **Composing**?

Apart from the universities nobody seemed concerned so composing pedagogy remained unchanged.
Development of New Performing Pedagogy

- Teachers became co-learners.
- Teachers and students co-constructed curricula and co-created pedagogy.
- Students were empowered.
- Students became autonomous learners.
- Teachers and students co-generated dialogue.
Composing Pedagogy remained Fossilized
The Bachelor in Music Education Degree
Bachelor in Music Education
Admission

• Restricted entry - very competitive
• Entrance Examination: Theory, Aural and Literacy
• Interview and Music Performance
• CAO Points [Academic Points scored at Leaving Cert of equivalent]
• 4 Years Full-time: 10 – 15 places
### Current Music Education Courses

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Composing and Composing Pedagogy

Music

• *Composing* is studied explicitly in courses such as Harmony and Counterpoint Stylistic and Applied.
• Implicitly in all other music subjects.

Education

• *Composing pedagogy* involves the development of subject specific culturally appropriate composing pedagogies as part of the music education modules.
• *Composing pedagogy* is included in school placement and in feedback.
Luke’s composing

Sunsteps

https://soundcloud.com/luke-t-duffy/sunsteps
Patrick’s composing

www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gn8dx1ku5s
Composing Research
Searching for the Secrets of Creativity

Ralph Mc Tell in Conversation

Arts Education Research Group presents its first biography series beginning in November 29th 2012

www.tcd.ie/Education/research/groups/arts
Channeling Student Creativity in Composing

A MUSICAL LUNCHTIME

B.MUSED Performance Pedagogy Lunchtime concert

Come join us for a selection of music from all around the world!

Monday 3rd December 1pm
Room 3105, Arts Block, Trinity College

Free admission and Christmas treats for all ☺
Obuchenie (n): teacher and learner at once

Remaining in touch with pupils to ensure participation in *Composing* for ALL
Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century

“Ironically, interest in music has never been greater. But in an age of instant gratification, people want to be accomplished musicians without investing the long hours and painstaking effort required to learn the theory. Want to play the piano? There is an app for that—in fact, plenty. Compose hit songs? There are algorithms and online services that promise to turn neophytes into instant Lennons and McCartneys. Why sweat the hard stuff when technology can do the grunt work for you?”

The Economist: Instruments of Mass Delight Oct 13th 2013
Composing Pedagogy

- Articulate a corporate understanding of **Composing**
- Integrate the 3 skills to develop **Composing awareness**
- *Teach explicitly the tools of Composing*
- *Privilege thinking skills*
- *Bias creativity*
- Develop an appropriate assessment rubric
- Embrace students’ *outside school music composing world*
- Develop a **Composing pedagogy**
- Grasp opportunities for CPD (pupils waiting to be consulted)
Incorporate a taxonomy of thinking skills*

- Searching out order and imposing meaning (sequencing etc.)
- Critical thinking (hypothesizing etc.)
- Creative thinking (generating new ideas)
- Problem solving (defining problems etc.)
- Planning
- Decision making

*Swartz and Parks, 1994
I never teach my students; I only provide the conditions for them to learn. Einstein

- Create conditions which foster full participation, interaction and negotiation in *Composing*.
- Create conditions which foster *creative engagement*.
- Provide the tools of *Composing* and models of practice.
- Empower pupils to express themselves through *Composing*. 
The road ahead: let’s not go it alone.

*Obuchenie*