

## **Engaging Emerging Diversities: Navigating Complex and Dynamic Intersections in Music Teacher Education**

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### **Abstract**

Teaching in contemporary schools raises complex questions about how to engage meaningfully with diversity. Working within already politicized and fast-changing sociocultural landscapes, the diversity that teachers are required to navigate can no longer be accounted for by pre-existing categorizations. New qualities of difference are continually emerging through students' and teachers' own identity development and the continually evolving relationships that are part of everyday classroom work. As such, teaching also involves a dynamic approach to decision-making as to what is *right* and *good* in and through music, indeed, the very axiological premises of music education are constantly called into question. In this paper, we heuristically engage with the theoretical writings of Bauman, Greene, and Hare to formulate invitations through which music teacher education might approach these complex, dynamic, and intersecting diversities. By assuming complexity, approaching learning as an adventure, alternating between the personal and the professional, assuming a researcher disposition, fostering artistic play, and (co-)imagining possible futures, we suggest that future teachers might be equipped to resist the passive acceptance of the status quo and explore how we might practice the art of living with difference, together.

## Introduction

As institutions and societies are compelled to address both recent and longstanding diversities among school and university populations, music teacher education is confronted with the imperative to prepare future teachers to navigate intersecting qualities of difference, the perplexities that this can generate, and the potential for conflict either through the recognition or neglect of difference. Indeed, researchers suggest that courses in ‘diversity’ do not necessarily result in changed dispositions (Mills & Ballantyne, 2010). In this article, we answer the call put forth by Ballantyne and Mills (2015) for music teacher education research to “effect change beyond ‘tolerance’” (p. 656). In preparing teachers to continually learn deeply about and engage ethically with the students that they work with, they need to be able to

hold competing viewpoints simultaneously, to cope with ambiguity, to be able to accommodate different perspectives in the seeking of alternatives to ‘what is already known ... Challenging preconceptions or understandings of reality through providing juxtaposing arguments or experiences where dissonance is encountered may prompt the questioning necessary for learning. (Ballantyne et al., 2016, p. 236)

Diversity is thus repositioned from clearly demarcated categorizations such as ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality, and other differences *between* students (e.g., Brant, 2016; Escalante, 2020; Kallio et al., 2018), to emergent social locations that arise as part of everyday teaching and learning, as students and teachers grow and change as individuals, in relation to one another, and in relation to other communities and society at large (see Churchill & Laes, 2020; Kallio et al., 2021; Nichols, 2016 as examples). This repositioning has implications not only for classroom content or teachers’ pedagogical approaches but also underpins the axiological premises of why music is taught, to whom, and for what. Contemporary (and indeed historical) classrooms are inherently diverse, with members occupying various social locations pertaining to ethnicity, gender, sexuality, language, culture, ability, age, class, and background that intersect and are constantly shifting. Questions on how we can prepare teachers to engage with music as an “everyday, and ethical, way of living together” (Westerlund & Karlsen, 2020, p. 216) are increasingly important within the contemporary zeitgeist of war and armed conflict, genocide, forced migration, and political upheaval; the entrenched disadvantage, health crises, and social isolation associated with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; and what has been termed the ‘New Culture Wars’ (Kaufman, 2022) of majority identity protection, marked by concerns of ‘cancel culture,’ identity politics, and critical race theory. In this article, we consider how music teacher education might prepare teachers to navigate complex and intersecting diversities. We do this by engaging with three theorists whose work has been concerned with learning the “art of living with difference” (Bauman, 2010, p. 151): Zygmunt Bauman, Maxine Greene, and William Hare. We then envision approaches to music teacher education that can not only promote but exemplify “a

positive way of thinking about the world: loving the music but loving the people even more—not a thing to do, but a thing *to be*” (Niknafs, 2019, p. 3).

### Encounters with Strangers

We begin by providing a very brief introduction to our selected philosophers, Bauman, Greene, and Hare, each offering valuable contributions to understanding the role of the teacher in light of intensifying diversity. Without providing easy answers, these three philosophers prompt us to think critically about how we, as music teacher educators, might best prepare student-teachers for an increasingly complex, and divided world.

Bauman’s scholarship was eclectic, drawing upon critical Marxism, structural linguistics, and post-structural critical theory to address subjects ranging from the Holocaust to sex, art, religion, and ethics. However, it is Bauman’s ongoing focus on ethics, boundary-navigation and strangerhood that are of particular relevance to our work here. Bauman (1995) claimed that in *liquid modernity*, where identity and social reality are fluid and always changing, we live in a *post-ethical* world. By this, he described a situation where ethics, as “a code of law that prescribes correct behaviour ‘universally’ – that is, for all people at all times; one that sets apart good from evil once for all and everybody” (p. 11), is impossible. This was not, however, to embrace relativism, but to recognize that notions of the right and the good are constructed and negotiated situationally and relationally. Acknowledging that “education is distinctly ethical in character, concerned ultimately with the development of character and identity” (Bowman, 2002, p. 64), music classrooms can be seen as arenas for power struggles over social norms, ideals, and values – *how* students should be developed as citizens and members of society. However, rather than a clear binary of being ‘in’ or ‘out’ of these socially constructed ethical boundaries, in a liquid contemporary world characterized by migration and movement, Bauman (1993) suggested, that we encounter *strangers*. Strangers are individuals who “stubbornly elide assignment and sap the familiar classificatory grids,” who resist the social status quo but are also not so easily dismissed as deviant. Being unable to solve or control the “‘problem’ of strangers” (Bauman, 1993, p. 10) risks placing us in a state of *proteophobia*, “the anxiety of misunderstanding... ‘not knowing how to go on’” (Bauman, 1993, p. 11). In music teacher education, these feelings of being “lost, confused, [and] disempowered” (Bauman, 1993, p. 11) have been described in relation to teachers entering the profession and engaging with increasingly unforeseen and unknowable school contexts (Ballantyne, 2024), engaging with Indigenous musics and knowledge-systems (Locke & Prentice, 2016; Webb & Bracknell, 2021), composition and conducting skills, as well as dealing with practical matters associated with legal and financial responsibilities and communicating with communities (Ballantyne & Canham, 2023).

The metaphor of the stranger was powerfully employed by existentialist philosopher and educator Greene in conceptualizing how teachers might be positioned more broadly as change agents in the lives of their students and society. In the book *The Teacher as Stranger*, Greene (1973) posited that the teacher ought to approach their work with criticality, continually interrogating their own assumptions about their students, the curriculum, education, and the role of the school. This frames teachers' understandings of knowledge and knowledge construction in particular ways, by demanding "attacks on the familiar" (Greene, 1992, p. 251). Greene (1992) argued that a tolerance to the constant unsettlement of such attacks can be developed by doing philosophy, and also by providing "opportunities for telling... diverse stories, for interpreting membership as well as ethnicity and making inescapable the braids of experience woven into the fabric of [a society's] plurality" (p. 258). Greene (1978) suggested that the arts are particularly adept at developing such critical dispositions in future teachers, fostering a "wide-awakeness [that] contributes to the creation of the self" (p. 163), as a reflective but also creative endeavor to "keep alive the sense of a 'possible happiness'... [by] existing proactively in the world" (Greene, 2000, p. 139).

More recently, educational philosopher Hare's (2003; 2011) writings on open-mindedness highlight a concern for its development in formal education contexts. Hare (2011) clarified common misconceptions, emphasizing that open-mindedness is *not*: it is not "a kind of tolerant indifference in the face of disagreement" (p. 15). Rather, if we are to let open-mindedness 'flourish,' "receptiveness to ideas must include the critical appraisal of evidence and argument to determine what is worthy of belief" (p. 15). This contributes a complexity to teacher educators' work, in considering how to prepare future teachers for dynamic and emerging diversities through unsettling the familiar. Hare (2011) warned that achieving open-mindedness is a difficult and elusive process that requires being "willing to tolerate uncertainty with respect to our own beliefs and move beyond the comfort zone of our personal convictions and preferences" (p. 17). In this vein, Hare's notion of open-mindedness provided a lens by which to consider music teacher education, specifically in terms of facilitating attacks on the familiar or 'dissonances'; facilitating ways for future teachers to meet strangers in unsettling yet productive ways (for example, Ballantyne et al., 2016; Kallio & Westerlund, 2020).

### ***The Politics of Diversity in the Music Classroom***

As schools and universities are composed of increasingly diverse student populations and longstanding diversities are increasingly acknowledged, classroom doors have been opened to new musics, languages, identities, cultures, religions, abilities, values, onto-epistemologies, and ethical frameworks. The complexity of these intersecting diversities is compounded by the rhetoric of "safe spaces" and "cancel culture," whereby singular notions of the 'right'

morality are often fixed and imposed in order to “publicly denounce[e] real or assumed political and moral misconduct” (Bagus et al., 2022, p. 2). Such an approach to ethics in education may mask or hinder genuine concerns for truth, knowledge, and equity, limiting opportunities for student-teachers to develop open-mindedness (Hare, 2011). While it is impossible to deny the role of schooling in shaping public values and norms and to engage in the diversity “discussion as if it were an intellectual game” (Greene, 1973, p. 208), the wielding of such rhetoric by policymakers, school leaders, teachers or even students to further exclude minoritized social groups warrants a critical perspective on how teacher decision-making legitimizes certain ethical frameworks over others, and the implications of these decisions for student belonging and inclusion. The inherent relationality of teaching further implies that these decisions are not made from the relative security of a detached, neutral standpoint. Rather, these complex decision-making processes involve teachers’ own dynamic, intersectional social locations, identities, and experiences. As Hare (2003; 2011) argued, this requires a commitment to seeking truth and knowledge, and continual questioning whether certain beliefs can continue to be held to be ‘true’. This is not to suggest that students (and indeed teachers) should not feel safe in school. Rather, that there is a danger in conflating safety with comfort. Indeed, music education scholars have highlighted the importance of confrontation and discomfort as part of anti-racist, anti-oppressive pedagogies “interminably rooted in humility, love, and the pursuit of shared humanity” (Coppola, 2021, p. 16; see also Gould, 2007; Kallio & Westerlund, 2020; Ocádiz, 2022). Rather, it highlights the need for care and critical reflection for teacher educators in designing opportunities for student-teachers to encounter strangers and engage with difference.

How music teachers are thus equipped to navigate diversity in ethical ways demands a more complex understanding than simply ‘choosing good’ or minimizing discomfort, in recognizing and engaging with this complexity and potential conflicts that may arise (Kallio, 2021; Kallio et al., 2021; Westerlund & Karlsen, 2020). Jorgensen (2019) provided an example of gendered ways of musical, educational, and religious expressions through the scenario of an Indigenous Aboriginal girl wanting to play the didgeridoo. She notes that the differing value systems of Aboriginal culture, wherein “the didgeridoo is a male preserve, undergirded by assumptions about masculinity, femininity, and musical and spiritual power” (p. 23), conflict with the value systems of western schooling, which is guided by ideals of gender equality. The question of whether this young girl ought to have the right to play didgeridoo in a public school may appear as an encounter with a stranger (Bauman, 1993), leaving the teacher uncertain as to which course of action is more ethical. However, Yorta Yorta Early Childhood Education Scholar Lopez-Atkinson’s (2017) examination of restrictions around women and girls playing didgeridoo highlighted the potentials of dispositions of critical inquiry more aligned with Greene’s (1978) *wide-awakeness*. She noted that restrictions and traditions (both

ancient and new) vary considerably between Aboriginal Communities and Cultures, questioning the logic behind White teachers' framing of the decision as one between the "irrationality of the colonized" (p. 27) and human rights. In light of cultural dispossession, she argued that "maintaining the gendered place of the didgeridoo can be seen as a symbol of resistance to ongoing colonization" (p. 30) and called for a more nuanced reading of Aboriginal patriarchy, colonization, gender norms, and the richness of Aboriginal cultures.

As we then acknowledge the complex and dynamic constellations of morals, meanings, and values that are negotiated as part of everyday classroom learning and teaching, student-teachers can be seen as already-political and already-moral agents, tasked with making decisions not only in relation to Others, but also in relation to complex historical narratives and ongoing power struggles. Struggles to assign and control meaning in music education also extend to musical meaning, and many of us working in music education are familiar with competing prestige discourses, preservationism, territorialism, and elitism (Coppola, 2023). In upholding *tradition* or particular musical values, the political and ethical dimensions of music education may be rendered "invisible or purposefully concealed" (Bauman, 1989, p. 29). As Bauman (1989) argued, "a norm is not a norm because it has been selected for its fitness to the task of promoting and defending [music students'] interests" (Bauman, 1989, p. 137) but as the result of negotiation and conflict. As student-teachers work towards wide-awakeness (Greene, 2010), they must then engage in critical reflection, acknowledging that they are "involved, sometimes against [their] will, in an enterprise more encompassing than the work [they] perform in the classroom: a process of perpetuating and remaking a distinctive way of life" (Greene, 1973, p. 181). The "occasions for more scrutiny and conscious moral choice" (Bauman, 1989, p. 31) are thus essential for student-teachers to reflect upon their own multiple and complex vantage points (Greene, 1973; Vertovec, 2010) as well as institutional and disciplinary norms. As Westerlund and Karlsen (2017) note, "intercultural music teacher education is not simply about the diversity of musics or even diverse pedagogies; it is about the ethics, politics, and ideologies of diversity that condition our understanding of diversity itself" (p. 100).

### ***Cultivating an Empathetic Imagination***

Understanding teacher's work as unable to adhere to prescribed rules of moral conduct, the notion of ethical perfection is impossible and indeed undesirable. Rather than espousing a singular *good*, the role of teacher education may then be to support future teachers to draw "upon disagreement and diversity as... resources... rather than viewing them as hindrances to ethical consensus" (Kallio, 2015, p. 90). This, as Maxine Greene (1973) emphasized, does not place the onus on the "educator... to clear the entire jungle; [they] are not endowed with the power to remake the law. [Their] responsibility is to eradicate the contemptuous treatment of

[those deemed Other] and to get at the truth, as well as [they] can, of the socially wounded child's life" (p. 196). This sense of ethical *responsibility* positions the music teacher as "neither scapegoat nor savior, but as agent" (Allsup & Westerlund, 2012, p. 127, emphasis in original). As such, the complexity of intersectional diversity and the potentials for conflicts require teachers to "continuously ... choose" (Greene, 1973, p. 184) between what is *right*, and *good*, for *whom*, and *when*, as well as in *what ways* – as such conflicts may arise within and between teachers' and students' own social locations as well, temporarily, relationally, and situationally shifting. More than an awareness of all existing qualities of difference and the ways in which they come into play in classroom settings, teachers need to be equipped to move beyond "the habitual and the ordinary and consciously undertake a search" (Greene, 2000, pp. 23-24). In other words, teachers require both a research disposition *and* imagination: "cognitive adventuring *and* imagination" (p. 129, emphasis added) as a means "of decentering ourselves, of breaking out of the confinements of privatism and self-regard into a space where we can come face to face with others and call out, 'Here we are.'" (Greene, 2000, p. 31). Artistic sensibilities thus inform a research disposition as much as research informs art, with both affording teachers "a unique power to release imagination" (Greene, 2000, p. 27) and "empathic understanding, rather than explanation" (Bresler, 2015, p. 6). This empathetic imagination places music teachers in a unique position to envisage and explore possible futures together with their students, to chart their learning cartographically by leaving "something behind while reaching toward something new" (Greene, 2000, p. 20), with teacher educators in music "speaking as eloquently and passionately as we can about justice and caring and love and trust" (Greene, 2000, p. 167). Yet, speaking alone is insufficient to navigate the complexity of contemporary classrooms in ethical ways, as Westerlund (2019) argued, music teachers need to engage with diversity "through concrete creative social action over and over again" (p. 512).

### ***Open-mindedness as Ethical Praxis***

In line with Bauman's commitment to the 'stranger' in his writings on morality and ethics, how music teachers are prepared to engage with complex and intersecting diversity necessarily needs to extend beyond themselves. Bauman's (1993) proposition of "being *for* the other before one can be *with* the Other" (p. 13) however, requires something particular of the self, if music teachers are to avoid positioning themselves at the center of interpreting and navigating the differences of others: open-mindedness (see Coppola 2022). Hare (2011) argued that open-mindedness is more than a passive receptivity, that "an open-minded person is prepared to entertain any relevant evidence, to concede that an unwelcome conclusion indeed follows, and to allow that a position presently held cannot be sustained" (p. 9). As such, open-mindedness is an active "willingness to form and revise our ideas" (Hare, 2011, p. 9), a willingness to meet the humanity of others without an assumption of commonality or

agreement, a willingness to undergo potentially uncomfortable change. Dolloff (2020) noted that such open-mindedness demands more than introspection, also encompassing imperatives to redress historical injustices, particularly in colonial contexts so often characterized by “cultural– and sometimes literal– genocide” (p. 137). Thus, without the privilege of neutrality and acknowledging that the constitution of difference itself is socially *produced* and *organized* (see Kallio et al., 2021), open-mindedness may be best understood as political action, an ethical praxis.

In fostering open-mindedness, music teacher education in many contexts provides opportunities for student-teachers to leave their musical, pedagogical, and cultural comfort zones, in making their own ontological, epistemological, and ethical starting points more tangible (Westerlund et al., 2021). However, in positioning diversity as something *out there* to encounter, such approaches risk assuming that student-teachers represent majoritarian identities, establishing a divide between ‘us’ and strangers seen to represent particular qualities of difference deemed strange *enough* or “diversity-relevant” (Dobusch, 2017; see also Westerlund & Karlsen, 2017). Furthermore, it risks reducing the complexity of encounters between “each other’s complex personhood” to pre-determined qualities of difference, potentially hindering the formation of “new visions of solidarity from which new political praxes can emerge” (Cervenak et al., 2013, p. 343). As student-teachers are encouraged to leave their comfort zones, Westerlund et al., (2021) have argued that a narrow focus on skills and attitudes may not equip participants with the necessary strategies “to ‘unthink’ the common sense of schooling, to denaturalize what is taken-for-granted, and to make fragile the causalities of the present” (Popkewitz, 2014, p. 14). In line with Greene’s (1973) call for philosophizing and attacking the familiar, music teacher education may thus refocus on cultivating and enacting an ethical praxis. Doing so while upholding an ethic of care demands time for student-teachers to engage and reflect in developing the capacity to respond to differences in ways that can account for the “deep complexities [that] underpin significant change in attitudes, dispositions, and subsequent action” (Ballantyne et. al., 2016, p. 249) and to engage with theory – as one of the core materials of forming a moral stance (Westerlund, 2019).

### **Invitations to Practice**

Music teachers and students encounter one another amidst complex and dynamic relations “of cultural confluence... from different vantage points” (Vertovec, 2010, p. 67), within different historical, institutional, and disciplinary relations. Enacting an ethical praxis through teaching cannot be achieved as individualized end-destinations to overcome specific and bounded challenges in linear, unidirectional ways. In contexts where differences intersect in unknown and changing ways, where teachers and students are co-imagining possible futures, conflict



may be seen as a resource for wide-awakeness (Greene, 1978; 2010) rather than a challenge to overcome. Through continually challenging assumptions of what is good, when, and for whom, music teacher education might establish spaces for student-teachers to actively imagine otherwise and explore alternative possibilities, even if they are not the course of action to be taken. This is not to argue that student-teachers ought to be confronted with a barrage of ‘the offensive’ or exist in a perpetual state of uncertainty and crisis. Rather, through building a supportive community, where individuals can lean in towards discomfort, lean out through critical and theoretical reflection and guide each other through active engagement with what might otherwise be unimaginable or inconceivable, music teacher education may equip future teachers with the capacities for ethical praxis – as part of broader collectives that are always in formation, always imagining what might be.

In this section of our paper, we outline some ideas that incorporate practice strategies for how an open-minded music teacher education that fosters wide-awakeness might be facilitated. These strategies are not intended as an exhaustive model or framework but as openings and invitations to new journeys and ideas. They are in no particular order, and do not represent any particular starting point or systematic process for music teacher educators to work through. Rather, these strategies represent opportunities for student-teachers to navigate emerging diversities through opportunities to engage in an empathetic and ethical praxis of critical inquiry together with students.

#### *Assume Complexity*

Rather than searching for opportunities to engage with predetermined categorizations of difference assigned to the stranger *out there*, music teacher education might begin from an assumption of complex and intersecting diversity within each cohort of student-teachers and each school classroom. In facilitating engagements with such diversities, it has been noted that student-teachers require “time for peer-to-peer sharing and collaboration, including exploring individuals’ divergent musical interpretations, choices, and creative projects” (Richerme, 2019, p. 164). However, these invitations should not necessarily aim toward community cohesion but foreground the richness of human connection in and through music (see Niknafs, 2020) by acknowledging “ontological and epistemological differences and conflict” (Kallio, 2021, p. 165) as opportunities for engagement.

#### *Experience Discomfort*

Acknowledging the centrality, and inescapability, of multiple perspectives, experiences, and identities, student-teacher experiences of disorientation and discomfort are important dimensions of engaging with diversity that should be expected and welcomed. Teacher educators can facilitate activities that might disorient or create “dissonances” in the minds of

those undertaking such activities (Ballantyne et al., 2016). The discomfort and perplexity that may arise from such planned experiences in the university context, or in the field, are arguably necessary to “[let] the context teach” (Westerlund et al., 2022, p. 385) without pre-determined resolutions. In this sense, discomfort may not necessarily arise from conflict or disagreement, but a lack of familiar compass points as to what is right and good; a ‘meeting of strangers’ (Bauman, 1993). This demands open-mindedness (Hare, 2003; 2011), “the courage to get lost” (Sæther, 2021, p. 18), and a sense of adventure that can generate opportunities for imaginative, relational work.

### *Lean In and Lean Out*

Experiences of discomfort or conflict can be prepared for both individually and collectively as a class, by leaning in “to the Big Questions of pluralism... questions of ethics, and the different – and perhaps irreconcilable – perspectives on morality and *the good*” (Kallio, 2021, pp. 171–172, emphasis orig). This, however, also requires opportunities to lean out, through critical and theoretical reflection, in guiding each other through active engagement with what might otherwise be unimaginable or inconceivable. By alternating between the personal and the professional, music teacher education might engage with complex and intersecting diversity as an essential component of identity creation, the formation and negotiation of values, and pedagogical action (Ballantyne, 2024)– moving beyond an individualized frame towards working the limits of knowledge and understanding together.

### *Cultivate a Disposition for Critical Inquiry*

In traversing the edge of what we know about ourselves, others, and the world, music teacher education can cultivate a disposition for critical inquiry, not only through promoting curiosity but through opportunities to critically negotiate understandings of what we, and music education, are all about (see Westerlund & Väkevä, 2011). In this sense, music teacher education might resist a “passive acceptance of the legitimate order” (Talbot & Mantie, 2015, p. 177) to assume a relational and critical stance of inquiry, where meaning is always co-constructed recursively, between theory and practice.

### *Foster Artistic Play*

As music teacher education seeks to decenter the self and promote new ways of meeting and understanding each other’s complex and always-changing personhood, inviting the arts into classroom activities is essential in extending beyond a cognitive analysis of strangers to embodied, empathetic, and creative ways of being together. Writing on neoliberalism in schools, Bates (2021) argued that playful approaches to music education can disrupt the taken-for-granted and create possibilities for connection and relationality. Fostering a playful artistic sensibility may (of course) involve engaging musically with one another, but can also

include drama/theatre, painting/drawing, games, poetry, storytelling, and other creative play that “is personally and socially fulfilling” (Bates, 2012, p. 97). Conceiving of this work as *play* is important, engaging open-mindedness but also an embodied and exploratory way of learning in-relation, in ways that afford new co-constructed ideas and possibilities for wide-awakeness and joy.

### *Imagine Possible Futures*

Through charting experiences of difference, including conflict, student-teachers can also co-construct possible futures, as the means to consider alternate approaches and ways of being. Exercising their imaginations together enables a reflexive movement between aspirational, possible, and realized notions of self and teaching that may assist teachers to better locate themselves and their own learning and development. Through this, music teacher education might support the ongoing reconstitution of subjectivities in intersecting and complex ways, without a clear destination to achieve, or ideal to become. Thus, rather than music teacher education aiming towards *problem-solving*, it might better be considered as *problem-seeking*. Problem-seeking points students towards finding the interesting or challenging problems that may not be initially apparent, or indeed, even solve-able. However, by seeking and identifying such ‘problems’— as the cracks and crevices, the conflicts and discomforts, the anxieties of not knowing— teachers might locate new opportunities for creative, relational ethical work.

### **Engaging with Complex and Dynamic Intersections**

These invitations for music teacher education might not lead to certainty nor a set end-point destination, but may rather generate new opportunities and engagements to navigate the rich complexities of the worlds in which our graduates work, and the futures that they might imagine for themselves and their students. Envisioning each of these approaches as not necessarily steps in a linear, steady, nor unidirectional process, music teacher educators and student-teachers are positioned as co-learners and co-inquirers, highlighting the need for critical open-mindedness in this relational work. Through these approaches, participants might construct new identities through experiences of disorientation or uncertainties that shift classroom orientations from aims of progress to welcoming frustrations and failures as part of confronting challenges to their own value systems, beliefs, and worldviews, adopting a *teacher as stranger* approach (Greene, 1978). Accordingly, the opportunities identified here are both reliant on and supportive of a community committed to learning and changing together, which might develop over teachers’ careers.

By assuming complexity, experiencing discomfort, alternating between the personal and the professional, assuming a disposition for critical inquiry, fostering artistic play, and imagining possible futures, we suggest that student-teachers might resist a passive acceptance of the way

things are, to explore how we might practice the art of living with difference together. However, we ought to also be mindful of the resources required to facilitate such work, and in particular, *time* (Ballantyne et. al., 2016). Understanding that “time is an essential component of lived experience as the meaning of an experience changes over time” (Matsunobu, 2015, p. 64), and equating practicing the art of living with difference to the practice our student-teachers apply to their musical development, the time and space to reflect, experience, engage, explore, and imagine is imperative. A sense of adventure, humility, open-mindedness, and a researcher-disposition are not innate qualities but require time to develop and hone. As has been noted, intercultural competence is always an ongoing process (Ballantyne & Mills, 2015; Westerlund et al., 2021) and is never achieved once and for all. Humility and generosity towards both student-teacher and teacher educator becomings allows this work to be an ongoing and spiraling process, unbound by set ideals or values but where the moral work of music education might come into its own. The implications of this extend beyond the classroom, as Benedict (2021) has cautioned, “[i]f educators ignore the fact that our students hold values that are incommensurate with our own and with others, we do so, not just at our peril, but the peril of this world” (p. 61). Thus, in seeking to do the *right* thing, and work towards the *good* in music teacher education, the art of living with difference is something we need all to practice – again and again.

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### **About the Authors**

Julie Ballantyne is the Director of Higher Degree Research at the University of Queensland, School of Music. Currently co-editor in chief of *Research Studies in Music Education* and elected to the Board of the *International Society for Music Education*, Julie has won commendations and fellowships for her teaching and has undertaken research with various organisations in Australia and overseas, particularly in the broader area of music engagement. An experienced researcher and practitioner in teacher education, she is known for her work in music teacher identities, social justice, music teacher education, and the social and psychological impacts of musical engagement.

Alexis Anja Kallio brings together her expertise in music teacher education, music education, and criminology to examine music education as a political arena where individuals and social groups negotiate meaning, values, and power. Focusing on highly complex contexts such as youth justice, community provisions for under-resourced youth, and intercultural music teacher education, her research frames music education as a unique form of cultural production with potentials for agency, equity, and justice. She is co-editor in chief of *Research Studies in Music Education*, editor of *Difference and Division in Music Education* (2021, Routledge), co-editor of *The Politics of Diversity in Music Education* (2021, Springer) and co-editor of *Music, Education, and Religion: Intersections and Entanglements* (2019, Indiana University Press).

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