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ROUTLEDGE

Musical Creativity Revisited
Educational Foundations, Practices and Research

OSCAR ODENA



SEMPRE Studies in The Psychology of Music

An **Ashgate** Book

Musical Creativity Revisited

How is creativity understood and facilitated across music education settings? What is the power of creativity in enhancing individual and group learning? How is musical creativity used as a tool for cross-community integration? How can we research the interactions of those engaged in musical activities aimed at creative development? These are just some of the questions addressed in this fascinating new monograph. *Musical Creativity Revisited* is an authoritative volume of insights from theory, practice-based research and methodological analyses. Its chapters celebrate the diversity of the many different ways in which young and adult learners develop musical creativity. Following on from *Musical Creativity: Insights from Music Education Research* (Ashgate, 2012) Odena offers novel examples from practice and precise suggestions on how to research it. This book will be an essential point of reference for students, researchers, practitioners and practitioner-researchers interested in music education and creativity across the arts and social sciences. The chapters have been organized into three sections – Foundations, Practices and Research – including examples from in-depth studies focussed on a secondary school in England, higher music education in Spain and out-of-school settings in Northern Ireland. This is a book that will fascinate readers, inspiring them to think deeply about the many different ways in which musical creativity can be developed, its purposes and how to research it.

Oscar Odena is Reader at the School of Education and the School of Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Glasgow, UK. He has a doctorate from UCL Institute of Education and has held posts at universities in Spain, England and Northern Ireland. His areas of expertise comprise music education, creativity, qualitative research approaches, social inclusion and professional learning. He was Co-Chair of the Research Commission of the International Society for Music Education (2012–2014) and serves on the boards of leading journals and the review colleges of the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Irish Research Council. Publications number over 70 peer-reviewed articles and chapters, including the edited book *Musical Creativity*. He holds dual Spanish and British citizenship and lives in Edinburgh with his wife and two daughters.

SEMPRE Studies in The Psychology of Music

Series Editors

Graham Welch, *Institute of Education, University of London, UK*

Adam Ockelford, *University of Roehampton, UK*

Ian Cross, *University of Cambridge, UK*

The theme for the series is the psychology of music, broadly defined. Topics include (i) musical development at different ages, (ii) exceptional musical development in the context of special educational needs, (iii) musical cognition and context, (iv) culture, mind and music, (v) micro to macro perspectives on the impact of music on the individual (from neurological studies through to social psychology), (vi) the development of advanced performance skills and (vii) affective perspectives on musical learning. The series presents the implications of research findings for a wide readership, including user groups (music teachers, policy-makers, parents) as well as the international academic and research communities. This expansive embrace, in terms of both subject matter and intended audience (drawing on basic and applied research from across the globe), is the distinguishing feature of the series, and it serves SEMPRE's distinctive mission, which is to promote and ensure coherent and symbiotic links between education, music and psychology research.

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Musical Creativity Revisited

Educational Foundations, Practices
and Research

Oscar Odena

First published 2018
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Odena, Oscar, author.

Title: Musical creativity revisited : educational foundations, practices and research / Oscar Odena.

Description: Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY : Routledge, 2018. |

Series: SEMPRE studies in the psychology of music | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2017047607 | ISBN 9781472489753 (hardback : alk. paper) | ISBN 9781315464619 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Music—Psychological aspects. | Creation (Literary, artistic, etc.) | Music—Instruction and study—Psychological aspects. | Music—Instruction and study—Research.

Classification: LCC ML3830 .O35 2018 | DDC 781.1/1—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2017047607>

ISBN: 978-1-4724-8975-3 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-31546-461-9 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Swales & Willis Ltd, Exeter, Devon, UK

To Lucy, Marta and Rosa



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Series preface

SEMPRE Studies in The Psychology of Music

Series editors

Graham Welch, *Institute of Education, London, UK*

Adam Ockelford, *Roehampton University, UK*

Ian Cross, *University of Cambridge, UK.*

The enormous growth of research that has been evidenced over the past three decades continues into the many different phenomena that are embraced under the psychology of music ‘umbrella’. Growth is evidenced in new journals, books, media interest, an expansion of professional associations (regionally and nationally, such as in Southern Europe, Latin America, Asia), and with increasing and diverse opportunities for formal study, including within non-English-speaking countries. Such growth of interest is not only from psychologists and musicians, but also from colleagues working in the clinical sciences, neurosciences, therapies, in the lifelong health and well-being communities, philosophy, musicology, social psychology, ethnomusicology and education across the lifespan. As part of this global community, the Society for Education, Music and Psychology Research (SEMPRE), celebrating its 45th Anniversary in 2015, continues to be one of the world’s leading and longstanding professional associations in the field. SEMPRE is the only international society that embraces formally an interest in the psychology of music, research and education, seeking to promote knowledge at the interface between the twin social sciences of psychology and education with one of the world’s most pervasive art forms, music. SEMPRE was founded in 1972 and has published the journals *Psychology of Music* since 1973 and *Research Studies in Music Education* since 2008, both now produced in partnership with SAGE (see www.sempre.org.uk) and we continue to seek new ways to reach out globally, both in print and online. This includes the launch of a new online journal, *Music and Science*, in early 2018. We recognise

that there is an ongoing need to promote the latest research findings to the widest possible audience. Through more extended publication formats, especially books, we believe that we are more likely to fulfil a key component of our distinctive mission, which is to have a positive impact on individual and collective understanding, as well as on policy and practice internationally, both within and across our disciplinary boundaries. Hence, we welcome the strong collaborative partnership between SEMPRE and Routledge (formerly Ashgate Publishing).

The *SEMPRE Studies in The Psychology of Music* series has been designed to address this international need since its inception in 2007. The theme for the series is the psychology of music, broadly defined. Topics include (amongst others): musical development and learning at different ages; musical cognition and context; culture, mind and music; creativity, composition and collaboration; micro to macro perspectives on the impact of music on the individual (from neurological studies through to social psychology); the development of advanced performance skills; musical behaviour and development in the context of special educational needs; music education; and affective perspectives on musical learning. The series seeks to present the implications of research findings for a wide readership, including user-groups (music teachers, policy makers, parents and carers, music professionals working in a range of formal, non-formal and informal settings), as well as the international academic teaching and research communities and their students. A key distinguishing feature of the series is its broad focus that draws on basic and applied research from across the globe under the umbrella of SEMPRE's distinctive mission, which is to promote and ensure coherent and symbiotic links between education, music and psychology research.

We are delighted to include Oscar Odena's new single authored text *Musical Creativity Revisited* within the SEMPRE series which builds on, updates and extends his earlier edited text in the same series (2012), and which also complements the series book by Haddon and Burnard (2016). Oscar has an extensive published academic biography concerning research into creativity and music. This new text draws on a rich array of findings gathered from his research across Europe over several decades, including England, Spain, Northern Ireland and now Scotland. The book is organised in three sections – Foundations, Practices and Research – that build on an initial clarification of the concept of creativity and subsequently extend this clarification into formal educational settings and also community music. Overall, the book's eight chapters offer a coherent, cohesive and contemporary understanding of what should be covered in the discussion of creativity as applied to music. The narrative draws on Oscar's

own research and this is contextualised by broader reference to existing literature across diverse disciplines, including neuroscience, psychology, education and music. As well as providing an important overview of both the nature and implications of research findings into musical creativity, the book also offers important applications for nurturing creative practice for parents, teachers and lecturers, as well as policy makers. The new book is an excellent addition to the series.

Professor Graham Welch
UCL Institute of Education, London, UK

Acknowledgements

I take this opportunity to thank the editors of the book series and the various representatives of Routledge with whom I came in contact during the long process from proposal submission to publication. I especially thank Graham Welch for his helpful advice and the commissioning editors Emma Gallon and Heidi Bishop for their support. I am grateful to the colleagues and students I worked with or supervised in the past, whose inspired work features in some of the discussion sections. External funders of particular research projects are acknowledged at the end of relevant chapters. Finally, I am grateful to all research participants for generously giving their time, to Peter and Maureen Young for the writing space, to Penny Enslin for feedback on writing style, and to my own supervisors, colleagues and students from whom I have been fortunate to learn over the last two decades. Responsibility for any errors or omissions in this book remains mine alone.

Oscar Odena
October 2017



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Introduction

This short introduction gives an overview of the aim, origin, and structure of the book, as well as an indication of the contents of each chapter. The steady number of research-based publications focussed on musical creativity evidence the topic's constant relevance. However, this increase in publications does not seem to provide a clearer understanding of how musical creativity develops or of its value across settings. How is musical creativity understood and facilitated in diverse contexts? What is the power of creativity in enhancing individual and group music learning? How is musical creativity used as a tool for cross-community integration? How can we research the interactions of those engaged in musical activities aimed at creative development? These are just some of the questions addressed in this monograph, aimed at offering fresh insights from theory, practice-based research and methodological analyses, drawing on meticulous investigations focussed on secondary schools, higher music education and out-of-schools settings.

Although there are studies on the creative process of adults improvising, for example in jazz ensembles, the study of musical creativity has traditionally focussed on the compositions and biographies of long-deceased musicians. This has reinforced the view that creativity in music is an inherited gift, which is restricted to genius. This view is unfortunately still prevalent amongst the general public and is often reinforced in academic publications that focus on the mysterious, romantic or even supernatural aspects of creativity. This book challenges this view by offering new empirical investigations and methodological analyses that will advance our understanding of musical creativity development. More thorough analyses of this topic are required if the public perceptions of and academic approaches to musical creativity are to change. The chapters in this book shed light on young and adult learners' inspirational dynamics and creative processes, which are assuming increasing importance in the field of music learning and teaching. This field includes researchers in psychology, music, education and the performing arts with an interest on musical

2 *Introduction*

development, including in schools, post-compulsory education and out-of-school settings. The methodical investigations and analyses offered in this volume, such as the research of music teachers' perceptions of creativity using video-elicitation techniques and specialist analysis software in Chapters 3 and 7, are innovative because for the first time social methods are applied to interrogate an arts phenomenon in need of interdisciplinary work. I hope this research will increase our understanding of musical creativity and its development, contributing a primary reference in the field.

The book's eight chapters celebrate the diversity of the many different ways in which young and adult learners develop musical creativity. The book's research examples and suggestions will be of value to students, researchers, and practitioner-researchers interested in musical creativity across disciplines. The origin of the examples comes from my recent investigations in the UK and Spain. Nevertheless, interest in musical creativity started much earlier, probably as a child singing invented melodies copying the styles heard on the TV and radio, learning music formally and informally, and then playing with semi-professional groups as a teenager. The academic fascination with this topic, though, started with the introduction of 'musical creativity' in the reformed curriculum of Catalonia in the 1990s, while studying for degrees in music teaching and psychopedagogy in Lleida. How music teachers perceived creativity was the focus of postgraduate degrees in the UK, including a doctorate on musical creativity in schools in England. On its completion, I took up lecturer positions at the new conservatoire and at the university in Barcelona, where I worked with performance students, and with specialist and generalist student teachers, catering for and learning from their diverse needs. After three years, I moved to Belfast as a researcher, where, amongst other things, I investigated the uses of music in post-conflict settings and taught music psychology to general education Masters students. It was in Northern Ireland that my interest in music and musical creativity for other-than-musical purposes deepened. I then moved to England, where teaching research methods and supervising research students increased my commitment to helping others develop their investigations. In my current post at Glasgow, I work across the departments of Education and Interdisciplinary Studies, supervising music, inclusion, creativity and learning topics. The privilege of having all these experiences continues to shape my thinking and, combined with a sustained fascination with musical creativity, resulted in this book.

A number of the ideas discussed in some of the chapters develop new analytical angles on recent papers reporting funded research that appeared in peer-reviewed journals and edited volumes. The provenance and funders

of such examples are disclosed when relevant in the chapter's endnote. Chapters have been organized into three parts, Foundations, Practices and Research, and can be read consecutively or accessed on their own, depending on interest. Following the editor's advice, all chapters include a References section, to allow for separate use.

Part I, Foundations, includes two chapters that examine the contested meaning of 'creativity' in music education and related disciplines, such as cognitive sciences and neurobiology. I look at how musical creativity is understood in different contexts and discuss an original fourfold framework focussed on the characteristics of the creative person, the creative process, an environment conducive to creativity, and the assessment of its resulting products. The opening chapter is devoted to conceptualizing creativity in musical development. In the first half of the chapter, I examine some of the meanings of creativity, drawing on aesthetics, musicology, psychology and education. The second half considers musical creativity in education and outlines some promising practices. In Chapter 2, I discuss key trends in the neuroscience of musical creativity, including brain imaging techniques and the 'location' of creativity in the brain. The conclusions present fresh implications for enhancing musical creativity practices, and outline how brain plasticity allows for musical creativity development throughout the lifespan. Undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as specialist readers, will benefit from the ideas discussed and the novel theoretical frame provided in Part I.

Part II, Practices, comprises three chapters that build on the framework from Part I and offer unique insights into systematic investigations of practice in a state school in England, a conservatoire in Catalonia, and out-of-school settings in Northern Ireland. Chapter 3 discusses the pedagogy of creative collaboration with a study of a group composition project in a secondary school in England, in which I employed video-elicitation and narrative techniques. Chapter 4 outlines a student-led action research project on the use of drama to reduce performance anxiety in a competitive advanced learning environment, and offers ten innovative building blocks to facilitate the development of students' creativities in higher music education. In Chapter 5, I consider the impacts that participation in musical creativity activities can bring as a tool for social and ethnic inclusion, and discuss an example from an interpretive enquiry carried out in Northern Ireland. The research-based chapters in this part provide current and future practitioners and practitioner-researchers with precise suggestions and examples on ways to enhance their practice.

Part III, Research, includes three chapters that consider the issues faced by individuals involved in investigating musical creativity, including the