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The Chelsea House Orchestra: A Case Study of a Non-Traditional School Instrumental Ensemble

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to describe the ways in which a high school orchestra program balances the need for a more diverse repertoire of music with the limitations and requirements inherent to traditional instrumental music programs. This research project used a qualitative case study design to analyze the Chelsea House Orchestra (CHO), a nontraditional high school Celtic string ensemble.

Data included interviews with CHO's director, a focus group interview and observations of CHO and traditional orchestra rehearsals. Trustworthiness was further achieved by the use of member checks and peer review.

Four themes emerged from the analysis of data. They include:
• Social Music Making
• The Balance Between Classical and Folk Music Education
• Evolving Authenticity
• The Creolization Of Musical Transmission

Few school instrumental groups exist that perform multicultural music. This study presents a model of an instrumental folk ensemble that lives harmoniously with a fine traditional orchestra program.

INTRODUCTION
Imagine you are attending a Celtic Highland festival. You observe traditional Celtic athletic competitions, traditional foods, pipe and drum competitions, traditional dancing and fiddling. Men wearing kilts and tartan are everywhere and the food and drink are abundant.

What you see on the main stage is amazing. Nearly thirty high school musicians are playing fiddles, cellos, guitars, percussion, flute, oboe, and harp. Their music fills the air as you watch fingers flying over the instruments. The musicians are smiling, moving, and obviously having a great time playing a set of traditional Celtic tunes. The next tune they play, though obviously maintaining some aspects of Celtic style, is much more like rock and roll, as the electric guitarist rips off a raucous solo in the middle. The energy subsides as a young girl puts down her fiddle, picks up a microphone, and sings a sweet ballad with the airy, pure tone of a female Irish singer. As the program continues, other members of the group
are featured as they play traditional and contemporary Celtic music interspersed with other styles of world music.

You see joy in their faces and an obvious love for what they are doing. You realize that the learning which is going on in this group is profound and goes beyond that which is taught in the average secondary school instrumental program. This is not traditional American music education...

The group you have just witnessed is the Chelsea House Orchestra (CHO), a high school Celtic Band from Chelsea High School in Chelsea, Michigan. The ensemble is directed by the school's orchestra teacher, Jed Fritzemeier and rehearses after school once a week, playing a mix of traditional and contemporary Celtic music, along with other folk musics to provide students with an eclectic musical experience.

The CHO website states that,

The basic philosophy of the arrangements is to allow everyone in the group to enjoy Celtic music as much as possible. Consequently, the majority of the playing is melody based with very little inner harmony or separate part writing. This truly provides students a contrasting experience from their normal school orchestra. All music is memorized and arrangements often evolve from rehearsals and suggestions from students. (Chelsea House Orchestra, 2004)

Individuals are showcased through the use of solos, duos, and special features. Students are also encouraged to learn other instruments such as mandolin, guitar, bodhran, djembe, cajon, bass, bouzouki and anything else that has a folk connection.

Jed Fritzemeier started CHO in 1996 with 10 students. Within three years, the group was performing on Celtic Festival stages and fairs throughout the region including numerous Highland Games and Celtic Festivals in the Midwest. In 2005, they were invited to perform at the ASTA National Convention in Reno, Nevada. CHO has performed on stage with professional groups including Barrage, Millish, Jerry Holland, Simon Mayor and Hilary James, Bowfire, and Pub Domain.

THE PROBLEM

As our country has become more and more ethnically diverse, multicultural education has grown in importance. Leaders in music education have called for the teaching of music in relation to history and culture, as seen in the national standards for music education listed by MENC (Consortium, 1994). While instrumental music classes have become quite capable of teaching students music in a historical context, they remain inadequate in exposing students to music of diverse world cultures (Campbell, 1994).

The purpose of this study was to describe the ways in which a high school orchestra program balances the need for a more diverse repertoire of music with the limitations and requirements inherent to traditional instrumental music programs. This research project used a qualitative case study design to analyze the Chelsea House Orchestra
(CHO), a nontraditional high school Celtic string ensemble. This study is intended to address the need in the profession for creative ideas which teach a more diverse repertoire of music while balancing it with the limitations and expectations inherent to traditional instrumental music programs. It is hoped that this description of CHO will spur on new ideas for instrumental music teachers hoping to create instrumental ensembles of world musics.

The original research questions for this study fit primarily within two overarching categories. The first category asked questions related to the value of CHO to the school's music program, as well as the ways in which it can serve as a model for similar groups in other schools. The second category of questions addressed the practical issues involved with the development of this unusual ensemble, such as teacher education in non-Western European styles, and the performance of authentic Celtic music within the context of a school music program.

More specific questions emerged as I analyzed the data. One unexpected theme dealt with the concept of democratic music education. This led to a question asking, "How does the teaching of music in this context influence the incorporation of principles of democratic education within the music ensemble?"

**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

The call for incorporation of musics from many cultures within America's music education curriculum has been ongoing for over a generation, beginning with the Tanglewood Symposium in 1967 (Britton, Broido, & Gary, 1968). More currently, the Housewright Declaration states that:

All music has a place in the curriculum. Not only does the Western art tradition need to be preserved and disseminated, music educators also need to be aware of other music that people experience and be able to integrate it into classroom music instruction. (Music Educators National Conference, 2000)

Further, music education philosophers, such as Bennett Reimer and David Elliott advocate the incorporation of multicultural music within the American music curriculum. Reimer (2004) makes the point that there is a pervasive attitude among music educators that only western classical music is worthy of study in school settings, leading students to view school music as different from their own music. To Elliott (2005), students need opportunities to make and listen to several different styles of music as part of their preparation to create their own music and understand how musicians borrow and adapt musical ideas from different musical style-practices. Students then gain self-understanding through the process of understanding the music of others.

*Teacher Education and the Incorporation of Multi-Cultural Musics*

While the call for teaching music through a multicultural perspective has been heard for nearly four decades, the implementation of curriculum in schools has not been as
comprehensive and rapid as hoped (Campbell, 1994). Researchers have found that preservice teachers, veteran teachers, and college professors perceive the importance of incorporating multicultural music within their curriculum, but do not do so because of a lack of training or a fear of not being able to teach the music authentically (Norman, 1999; Damm, 2000; Volk, 1991; Teicher, 1997; Pembrook & Robinson, 1997).

In her review of articles written on multicultural music education since 1970, Campbell (1994) found that secondary music performance teachers are exploring multicultural music traditions, yet few truly successful projects have been organized. A number of “best practice” articles dealing with mariachi music can be found in teachers’ trade journals such as Teaching Music and Music Educator’s Journal (Zehr, 2003; Ballard, 2002; McCullough-Brabson, Achilles, & Ascraft, 1997) and a small number of dissertations have been undertaken dealing with the implementation of cultural music in instrumental music classes (Bieber, 1997; Kay, 1995).

**Authenticity**

Volk (1998) stated that the music education profession does not have a cohesive philosophy and definition of authenticity. While multiple positions have been made about the importance of performing world musics authentically, researchers have espoused different positions concerning the definition of the term “authenticity” and its use in school music programs (Reimer, 2002; Pembrook & Robinson, 1997; Campbell, 1994 & 2004; Volk, 1998 & 2002).

Campbell (2004) stated that there are two predominant views in regard to authentic transmission of world musics. From the conservative viewpoint, teachers attempt to train students to render as true a performance of a culture’s music as possible, whereas the expressionist viewpoint uses other musics to provide ideas that lead to the creation of new songs and musical pieces. Campbell believes that while it is commendable to strive for conservatism, it may not be possible. The ultimate goal may be to stay as close as possible to the style within the teaching context and to compare student performances with recordings of traditional musicians.

Campbell (2004) also emphasized that teachers of world musics should acknowledge the pedagogical traditions of those musics. Teachers should attempt to maintain the notational systems, oral/aural techniques, improvisatory methods, and performance customs of the given musical cultures (2004, p. 27). This position is echoed by Pembrook and Robinson (1997), who found that authentic instruments encourage optimum attitude and knowledge outcomes in multicultural music instruction.

Wade (2004) stated that globally shared music is constantly recontextualized by the people using it. It is given new meanings and often performs different functions based on context. According to Wade, modernization, westernization and globalization “have problemized the bounded concept of culture” (2004, p. 17). She acknowledges a number of views from which one can regard the concept of authenticity. Through a
folklorist's perspective, “authenticity can be thought to reside within people who have the knowledge and skill that allow them to perform authentically or evaluate authenticity.” Yet, “the folklorist’s definition of ‘folk song’ is an artificial construction of no particular importance to traditional singers themselves” (2004, p. 148).

According to Campbell (2004) completely authentic replications of musical pieces may not be possible with traditional public school performance groups, but when students make the music their own, whether it be truly authentic or musical expressions of a style, it becomes a meaningful experience. She stressed that teachers can remain authentic to cultural musics primarily through multiple ways of guiding the listening of music and the use of the expertise of other musicians within the community.

In the music of today, we find large amounts of blending of traditional styles with progressive ideas, even by the champions of traditional music. Popular Celtic groups such as the Chieftains have performed with musicians from rock, world, and classical traditions, while highly accomplished classical musicians such as Yo-Yo Ma and Joshua Bell have also crossed over into Celtic style. “Mixing the melodic heritage of bluegrass, Celtic folk music and American Popular songs with the structural discipline and technical demands of chamber music,” they make “the very notion of boundaries between classical and popular music seem laughable” (Goldsmith, 2002).

Throughout history, especially in the history of America, people from diverse cultures have been brought together geographically, ideologically, and economically. This has resulted in a blending of cultural preferences in which new cultures are formed. Instead of the dogmatic concept of the United States as a cultural melting pot where other cultures lose their own distinctiveness, the concept of creolization suggests that cultures maintain their unique identities while taking on aspects of other surrounding cultures (Lornell & Rasmussen, 1997). Many aspects of a culture, such as literature, food, social relations, and musics are affected by this interplay between different peoples. Creolization describes this interplay as a mutual exchange of traditions and customs rather than the acculturation of a smaller people group into the dominant culture of an area.

**Democratic Education**

Democratic learning is closely tied to constructivist learning and other curricular reforms such as cooperative learning, thematic teaching, and child-centered curricula (Allsup, 2003). Woodford (2005) suggests that a musical democracy consists of students who exercise the right to participate in music decision making by forming, questioning, creating, developing, and composing ideas and musical products. Other researchers who include democratic themes in their work are Campbell (1995), Claire (1993/1994), Green (2001), and Wiggins (1999/2000). Their research cites the principles of shared experience, shared decision making and creativity as important within democratic musical learning.
Claire (1993/94) contends that students who participate in mutual learning communities tend to be self-directed, efficient and enjoy longer periods of concentration. Her findings, along with those of Allsup (2003) and Wiggins (1999/2000) suggest that creativity is fostered more through mutual interaction than under hierarchical work processes. Other research literature suggests that democratic music processes facilitate creativity (Campbell, 1995; Claire, 1993/1994; Green, 2001; Wiggins, 1999/2000). Green (2001) also found that musicians in her study of garage bands reported music learning was strongly tied to listening, and influenced by relationships.

RESEARCH DESIGN
The design of this qualitative case study is an analysis of a nontraditional high school string ensemble specializing in Celtic music. The study was bounded by a time limit of four months from mid-July to mid-November in 2005. Analysis of rehearsal observations, interviews with the ensemble director and a focus group discussion as well as data obtained from the CHO website served as triangulation for the study. Interviews were video recorded using a Canon Z60 digital video camera.

I observed two CHO rehearsals and two school orchestra rehearsals at one week intervals during in October of 2005 and a CHO concert performance in early November. Copious notes were taken during each observation. I interviewed Jed Fritzemeier once in July, three more times before and after rehearsal observations, and one more time after the CHO concert for a total of approximately five hours. The focus group discussion consisting of four upperclassmen from the ensemble took place during one hour immediately after a school orchestra rehearsal. For the purpose of maintaining anonymity, I have assigned fictitious names to the members of the focus group. Stephanie and Lynn were both seniors while Katie and Greg were juniors.

Jed Fritzemeier was the primary consultant of this study. He has taught orchestra at Chelsea High School since 1996. He holds a masters degree in string bass performance and music education from a major mid-western university. His musical background can be described as eclectic. While serving as a bassist with numerous mid-sized professional orchestras, Fritzemeier also has extensive experience in jazz and rock styles. Fritzemeier is a relative newcomer to Celtic music as his involvement developed through his work with CHO. He originally organized the ensemble to perform an eclectic assortment of music from jazz to bluegrass. Through contacts with friends and extensive listening to recordings of Celtic groups, Fritzemeier became interested in the educational opportunities afforded by Celtic music.

Permission to observe the class and audiotape interviews was received from all consultants through written consent forms. I have permission from Fritzemeier to use his name at my request, because of his place within the music education community and because I feel that his work should be recognized.
As a form of member check, I sent a combined set of interview transcripts to Fritzemeier via email, along with a list of emergent themes developed from data analysis. Fritzemeier was asked to look over the material and make any adjustments he deemed necessary which would most accurately reflect his thoughts. Due to time and logistic constraints, the member check process with the focus group was limited to a short, five minute discussion with three of the four participants regarding my analysis.

RESEARCHER’S LENS
My music teaching experience is that of a band teacher from what can be considered a traditional American instrumental school music program. For years in my own teaching, I have been committed to the National Standard’s call for introducing students to music from other cultures and time periods, and have been able to do this with a modest degree of success. Recent involvement in old-time fiddle festivals and contemporary Christian worship bands have forced me to develop new paradigms of musical learning which I believe can translate into a public school setting. I had no prior involvement with the participants of this study. I became aware of them simply by their reputation.

ANALYSIS
To analyze my data, I first transcribed the interviews of Fritzemeier and the focus group, and field notes taken during the observation. I then coded each document individually and compiled the coded statements (Creswell, 1998). This resulted in summarized, coded documents in three categories: teacher, students, and classroom observation. I analyzed these coded statements for breadth and depth of codes. There were a total of 43 codes. I analyzed each code, noting where it was found in the data and how often each code appeared. Based on this, I identified four emergent themes that were important to Fritzemeier, his students, and those evident in class.

- Social Music Making
- Evolving Authenticity
- The Balance Between Classical and Folk Music Education
- The Creolization Of Musical Transmission

These themes represent possibilities for transfer to other teaching situations.

INTERPRETATIONS
Social Music Making
Woodford (2005) and Green (2004) list a variety of values as the basis for emphasizing democratic education, such as freedom, creativity, an open flow of ideas, faith in the individual and the group, the use of reflection and analysis, concern for the dignity of others, and individual contributions to society. Music education should go beyond teaching about the meaning within the notes. Instead, according to Woodford (2005),
"If music is one of the humanities then music education should seek to humanize, or to make life worth living for all."

Based on my observations and the discussions I had with Mr. Fritzemeier and the students of CHO, I was able to identify four ways in which this ensemble reflect what could be thought of as foundational aspects of democratic education. These aspects include the development of a community of learners, collaborative student empowerment, creative freedom, and musical enjoyment.

One of the first things I noticed in my observations of rehearsals was that a large number of students tended to arrive early in order to talk and socialize. Within the focus group session, Stephanie mentioned that, “It doesn’t seem like a teacher class sort of setting like orchestra is. It’s more like we just get together with friends and play something.” The members of CHO are involved with a community of learners in which a level of trust and understanding has developed, allowing students to take risks and be themselves. A number of researchers (Wiggins, 1999; Allsup, 2003, Green, 2004, Campbell, 1995; Claire, 1993/94) support the educational benefits of developing this a shared experience in learners. Green (2004) stated that social relationships, such as the ones exemplified by students in CHO, are fundamental to understanding music. Further, Elliott (2005) believes that, “self-growth, self-identity, and enjoyment emerge when students learn to make and listen to music in the social-cultural context of others.” Identity develops “in the context of the educational community or ‘belongingness’.”

Because of the development of this community of learners, students feel encouraged to take risks. Students in CHO feel free to learn new instruments, to sing, to dance, to improvise and even to write music for the group. They recognize Fritzemeier’s sensitivity toward each student’s comfort level with their playing and improvisation. Because of this encouraging atmosphere, Lynn said, “(CHO) helps build your self-confidence too. Like you can see it if people start off as sophomores or something. And then even by the next year they’re just more confident because they’re with a bunch of people they’re comfortable with.”

Fritzemeier’s respect for student input fosters a strong sense of ownership within CHO. When asked what advice he would have for other teachers interested in starting a similar ensemble, he mentioned the importance of being, “sensitive to the students’ vision and what they respond to. Getting over the notion that you have to have a sit down, get serious kind of thing.” He suggested that this ensemble requires the power structure to be more open.” Fritzemeier leads the ensemble less like an orchestra teacher and more like a respected peer, much like the research of Campbell (1995) and Green (2001) who both found that more experienced musicians tend to rise up as leaders within garage bands.

Researchers have shown that encouraging student input develops a sense of ownership within the community and fosters improved learning (Allsup, 2003; Claire, 1993/94; Wiggins 1999). Fritzemeier also sees this open approach as a benefit to him also, in that he is able to learn new things from the students. When discussing a previous member of CHO, Fritzemeier stated that, “He is the reason we teach the bodhran.
He learned how to play the bodhran and I watched him and I learned how to play the bodhran. It's always one person that starts it."

Numerous researchers have suggested that democratic learning processes have a positive impact on creative output of students engaged in collaborative learning experiences (Allsup, 2003; Woodford, 2005; Claire, 1993/94; Green, 2001). Claire (1993/94) and Wiggins (1999) also suggest that creativity is fostered through mutual interaction more than through highly structured activities. Common experiences in CHO offer evidence supporting these research findings. During the process of learning new tunes, students often suggest new ideas for making an arrangement "their own," even though there is no structured procedure for accomplishing this.

The most common term used in each of the interviews with Fritzemeier or the focus group was "fun." By analyzing the ways in which the term was used in context, I began to see that the word was used to mean the deep enjoyment members of the ensemble get from playing music together for other people. While observing the members in rehearsal and in concert, I could see that they expressed their fun by the ways in which they moved and smiled, and in the excitement they showed (often by talking and playing at inappropriate times!). Their actions seemed to show that the vast majority of students enjoyed making this music with their friends.

Fritzemeier considers CHO to be primarily a fun activity. "I do it just because it's a cool thing to do. It opens up a whole different genre of performance for our kids." On another occasion, he said,

This is a party band. This is what they do for fun... For my gig, from my standpoint, the kids are there to play music... But when you're looking at kids who are so inundated with information all day long, they just want their hands dirty and they just want to have some fun. Not just fun, but they want to be enlightened in a different way rather than straight up left brain intellectual.

The Balance Between Classical and Folk Music Education

While the primary purpose for CHO, according to Fritzemeier, is as a showcase for the school orchestra program, another purpose is as a motivation tool. The ensemble is meant to be an aid in teaching the masterpieces of Western European music:

In some ways I thought about making my whole program based on that model 'cuz it's so much fun. But, you can't do it. That's not what I'm about. I'm about Mozart, Bach and Beethoven and trying to get the kids to the level where we're playing great music. And CHO's the motivator to get there. The kids in CHO know that.

Though Fritzemeier has a respect for many styles of music, he clearly stated that he felt his primary purpose was to teach music from the classical Western European style. His goal is to develop in students a love for this music because of its sophisticated style: "Classical music is the most studied and their music is the most sophisticated. Both intellectually and musically in the motives that they used. And the ideas that they had were really cool."
Fritzemeier wants his students to appreciate the craftsmanship and care that is apparent in the best compositions of the best composers. While he values many styles of music, he recognizes that in teaching music within the school context, few styles can be taught in which students can experience the epitome of that style's musical thought. Because many styles are very improvisatory, and therefore fleeting, in essence, students cannot experience the absolute best a style has to offer. According to Fritzemeier, the choice to focus on Celtic music within CHO was partly based on “the relationship it has to classical music.”

Students within CHO also exhibited a preference for classical music. When observing a CHO rehearsal, I noticed students playing music from a classical piece which was being learned in class. Also, when asked about their favorite experience from CHO, students mentioned their trip to the ASTA national convention and expressed great excitement over watching Midori and the National High School Honors Orchestra. At the same time, they expressed a new appreciation for other styles of music.

This primary emphasis on the music of the classical Western European tradition should not be misunderstood as a lack of emphasis or respect for other musics. Throughout my observations, Fritzemeier and many of the students expressed a value for multiple styles of music. Music programmed for the string orchestra classes exemplifies this, as it included great works such as “Jupiter” from “The Planets” by Holst, a Vivaldi concerto, and Gershwin’s “An American in Paris,” along with Spanish tango music (complete with dancers), fiddle music, and a swing tune.

**Evolving Authenticity**

Lornell and Rasmussen stated that, “It is clear that people are becoming hooked on musical diversity” (1997, p. 20). People within multicultural America are becoming more and more open to listening and creating multiple styles of music. As a result, styles often meld together to create new forms of music. The music CHO plays and the way in which they play it and learn it suggests that they reflect this idea of creolization. Their style of music is a result of choices made based upon musical preference and on pragmatic decisions.

The Chelsea House Orchestra derives its name from an Irish group called the House Band, but Fritzemeier is careful to point out that the words Celtic and Irish were deliberately left out.

We're more of a ceili¹ group than anything. What we're not is an Irish band. But then when you listen to some of the American, transplanted Irish groups, like the band called Lunasa or more like the band called Solice—those guys are taking the Irish style to a whole different genre I think.

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¹ A “ceili” (also spelled ceilidh) is a Gaelic word describing a party or dance. Ceili groups are simply dance bands. They generally perform a variety of music including traditional Celtic music and other popular musics.
While CHO strays from the conservative view of authenticity because of preference, some variation from authentic performance is also necessary due to the school context. Completely authentic replications of world music may not be possible with traditional public school performance groups because of variations in instrumentation, cultural knowledge, and the skill of the students. Campbell (2004) contends that these pragmatic variations in authenticity are acceptable in education, as long as the music is treated respectfully, with ample time given to its study.

Further evidence of the creolization of Celtic style and the traditional school orchestra program has emanated from Fritzemeier’s need to make creative compromises. Because flutes and certain percussion instruments are common to traditional Celtic ensembles, flutists and percussionists have been recruited from the school’s band program. Other students have chosen to learn secondary instruments, such as harp, guitar, and bazouki. Because of the difficulty in finding people willing or able to learn uilleann pipes, he recruited oboe players to imitate their unique sound. Other instruments, while not common to traditional Celtic bands, have been added to the group, such as electric guitar and electric bass, along with viola and cello.

Though Fritzemeier states he is not concerned with being authentic, he is also able to validate many of his choices based on his knowledge of contemporary Celtic style. CHO strives to emulate Celtic musicians to a certain point, but they consciously choose to blend in a more classical style in other ways. For example, Fritzemeier strives to teach a more refined tone than is common in traditional Irish fiddling. While this choice has been made primarily for educational purposes to support the goals of his string classes, validation comes from the tone heard in many contemporary Celtic musicians with classical backgrounds who have developed a creolized form of Celtic style. Other Celtic musicians have created the precedence for using bass guitar and djembe, providing validation for their use in CHO.

Many researchers have stated that authenticity is not a static concept, but instead changes over time and place (Campbell, 2004; Wade, 2004; Green, 2004; Lornell & Rasmussen, 1997). As music crosses physical and cultural borders, elements of authenticity are adapted to fit the cultural context and bring forth musical progress. When asked to define a line between what would be authentically OK and not OK, Fritzemeier replied, “In my minds eye, there is no ‘not OK.’ I believe America takes the best of all the cultures and tries to amalgamate them into a force.”

**The Creolization of Musical Transmission**

World music pedagogy asks teachers to acknowledge the pedagogical traditions of given musics. Notational systems, oral/aural techniques, improvisatory methods, and even customary behaviors that precede or follow music making should be considered when teaching new music traditions. Campbell (2004, p. 27)
From the data gleaned through rehearsal observations, my interviews with Mr. Fritzemeier, and especially from the focus group interview, the analysis showed that teacher and students alike do not learn Celtic music in the way the style is traditionally taught. Nor did they learn it through traditional school music methods. Instead, what seems to have grown out of the CHO experience is a "creolized" method of teaching folk music in that the ensemble has incorporated aspects of both traditional school pedagogy and traditional folk methods. Celtic music is traditionally transmitted is through immersion. Beginning folk musicians engage in the music through listening, watching and imitating the music making of the surrounding community. This is a different model from that found in a typical school string class in which the majority of information is passed through teacher direction, notation, and drill.

The process commonly used in teaching a new tune to members of CHO includes listening, reading notation, peer work, memorization and creativity. The process was described well by the focus group:

Katie  Basically we'll all sit down and we'll listen to it...like once or twice. And then we'll try playing...

Stephanie  And he'll give us the music and we might listen to it a third time and kind of play with it if you can...

Lynn  And then we'll all do it really slowly a couple of times, just to see how it you know how it works. And then we'll pick up the tempo. And then he'll usually send us off individually to kind of work on the spots we need to...

Stephanie  And then we'll come back and work on the arrangement for it.

Campbell (2004, p.126) states that, "When coupled with careful and continuous listening, notation can support and enhance the experienced of performance as enactive listening. Notation alone does not 'get it'." Fritzemeier uses notation as a resource to facilitate memory as opposed to the main source of information. While Wade (2004, p.17) states that, "ethnomusicologists are careful to distinguish between oral (teacher and learner) and aural (learning by ear) transmission," Fritzemeier believes musical transmission in any style does not occur solely through the ear. To the Katie, notation often is used for a short time, but soon it gets in the way.

We get music to look at and we'll usually like read that for a day, and then we have to memorize it or we'll forget it anyways and then we'll have to learn it by ear (they all laugh)...Sometimes we kind of just make things up by ear and add it to it. That's how everyone learns it.

Campbell stated that, "the expertise of guest artists and culture-bearers is certain to give spark to a teaching unity," by performing, teaching, and telling traditional tales to contextualize the music (2004, p. 15). Fritzemeier's own musical experience in Celtic music only goes back to the beginnings of CHO. Because he had not been immersed
within a Celtic culture, Fritzemeier has found and utilized other musicians within and outside of the Chelsea community (many of whom perform a creolized form of Celtic/rock/classical music) who could serve as culture-bearers for this style of music. Through them, through profuse listening and through their performance experiences at Celtic festivals, Fritzemeier and the students alike are learning more about Celtic music.

All of the students in CHO have been classically trained but they are also experiencing aspects of informal teaching as they attend festivals, listen to recordings and work with various clinicians. The students are experiencing a creolized education, much like the education of some of the contemporary Celtic groups originating in Canada. The players in these groups have Celtic experience, but also some classical training. According to Fritzemeier, “A lot of Canadian fiddlers were classically trained… I love Canadian fiddlers because I think they’re putting together some of the greatest music that we’ll see because I think it’s going to hold up over time. They’ve put all these traditions together.”

The benefits of CHO can be seen in the whole school orchestra program in many ways. When I asked him if CHO had an effect on the way students played, Fritzemeier replied, “Oh they’ve got fingers! My kids have chops. They can fly around the finger board. …And the ears! Even though they’re reading… they can memorize a lot of different stuff.” He felt that the tonal training gave the students a sense of confidence in learning new music and playing in the upper positions on their instruments.

**IMPLICATIONS**

Though leaders in music education have stressed the necessity of multicultural music education, there are few school instrumental groups in the United States that perform multicultural music. This study provides an example of a multicultural instrumental ensemble for teachers interested in developing their own ensembles which will most appropriately meet the needs of their students. Fritzemeier believes teachers should be responsive to their communities and create ensembles specializing in the popular regional folk music. He said if he was in Wisconsin, he would probably be teaching a polka band.

Two factors can be seen which inhibit the spread of more world music ensembles within public school instrumental programs. The first is the concern teachers often have regarding their inability to teach world music in an authentic way. Fritzemeier acknowledges this concern, but stresses the CHO is creating a creolized music. The second factor inhibiting the spread of world music ensembles is teacher training in non-traditional styles. Because the majority of traditional university teacher education programs still do not offer courses in instrumental world music methods, teachers must learn to teach world music on their own. Fritzemeier developed this ability through his experiences in jazz and rock bands, abundant listening, and the use of culture-bearers from the community. He was also willing to learn along with (and even from) his students.
The benefits to musicians in Fritzemeier's traditional orchestra program are abundant. His orchestra enrollment is enormous, considering the size of the school district. Over 110 students are enrolled in the middle and high school orchestras out of a combined total of 1400 students. Students acknowledged more skill on their instruments, better listening skills, and a new appreciation for other styles of music. They are gaining experience in creating and improvising music as they arrange tunes, and are experiencing music in a more democratic way than is commonly found in school orchestra classes.

Practicing instrumental music teachers need to see successful examples of multicultural instrumental ensembles in order to develop their own ensembles which will most appropriately meet the needs of their students. The Chelsea House Orchestra presents a model of an extra-curricular Celtic ensemble that lives harmoniously with a very fine traditional orchestra program. If more ensembles such as CHO are to be formed in our nation's schools, more research is needed in the development of teacher education programs for multicultural musics and in the description of various world music performance ensembles. Perhaps, once the inhibitors to world music education are alleviated, America will begin to truly address musics outside of the traditional Western European classical tradition.

Imagine you are conducting a high school band concert. The first ensemble performs traditional band music, demonstrating excellence in tone, musicianship, and precision. Next comes the jazz band, swinging in a way that would make Ellington proud. Then, after a short intermission, many of the same musicians along with others from the orchestra and choir form a klezmer band, while another group follows them playing polka music. The concert finishes with an exciting mariachi number.

You see joy in their faces and an obvious love for what they are doing, and you realize that the learning they experience is profound and goes beyond that which is taught in the average secondary school instrumental program. Could it be that you are witnessing the future of American music education?

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