

REPLY TO CBDNA POSITION PAPER ON MUSIC EDUCATION

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As lead author of the College Music Society (CMS) change “Manifesto,” I would like to thank the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) for a well-crafted and engaging vision statement for music studies that has been framed in response to the CMS report.¹ I particularly appreciate CBDNA’s intention to further conversation, and I hope this same intention is evident in my reply. The CMS Manifesto has elicited a powerful wave of dialogue around the nation and globe, and I regard the CBDNA document as an important contribution to that dialogue. I hope the following thoughts add to the continuation of this exchange.

I should emphasize at the outset that I do not speak on behalf of the CMS or its Task Force that convened for 18 months prior to the release of its 2014 report. That latter group completed its work with the publication of the report and no longer exists as a formal entity. Nor, as I hope is evident, do I regard the Manifesto as the final word about what the future of music studies might look like. In my view, that document is among the more recent catalysts in a much broader change conversation that, even if going back well over a half century, must be recognized as still in its embryonic stages if current and future generations of musicians, teachers, scholars, and listeners are to be adequately served by our music schools.

Furthermore, extending from important, and sometimes intensive internal debates (as one would expect) on the Task Force itself, as well as those in the field at large following the release of the Manifesto, I find myself increasingly concerned about the perspectives from which the Manifesto is interpreted. To foreshadow a core theme in this essay and one that is increasingly central to my work: the Manifesto is a transcultural² document that is commonly read—by supporters and detractors alike—through a multicultural lens.

Brief working definitions of these terms lay groundwork for further elaboration as the analysis unfolds:

¹ See <https://www.cbdna.org> for the CBDNA report. The CMS Manifesto appears in E. Sarath, D. Myers, P.S. Campbell, *Redefining Music Studies in an Age of Change* (Routledge 2016).

² Sarath/Myers/Campbell, p.61.

Multicultural approaches to diversity are based in a view of the musical world as an infinite series of cultural compartments that are to be taken up one by one in hopes of achieving an adequate understanding of the pluralistic nature of musical and societal realities of our time. The transcultural framework is also predicated on evolving a pluralistic awareness, but conceives of it differently. First is that the central pulse of 21st century musical reality lies not in language-bound categories but in creativity-driven confluence. This does not exclude engagement with culture-specific locations, but rather such engagement renders those locations tributaries that flow into the underlying syncretic ocean. This, in turn, shifts the thrust of diversity engagement from horizontal, piecemeal approaches that are prone to a musical smorgasborg effect—a bit of this and a bit of that—to establishment of deep and intimate connections, therefore vertical grounding, through enlivenment of a creative identity. Hence the Contemporary Improviser Composer Performer profile that is at the heart of the Manifesto, and is clearly evident in the creative trajectories of musical innovators past (as in earlier eras in European classical music) and present (as in jazz and its global offshoots), as central to the transcultural vision. Until this identity shift is invoked, even the most robust multicultural strategies, where pedagogical expertise may appear optimal, are prone to the piecemeal effect.

Evolution of substantive diversity awareness, understanding and navigational tools is directly predicated –as counter-intuitive as it may seem from the standpoint of prevailing multicultural ideology and practice— not on number of cultures encountered, but the degree to which diverse cultural encounter informs the ever-evolving creative voice and artistic identity. I even go so far as to assert that multiculturalism may even perpetuate the very monocultural hegemony it seeks to counter. Most important to my argument is that the transcultural model, unlike the multicultural, is directly aligned with the practices of real-world musicians who navigate innovative pathways that traverse diverse cultural boundaries, and that this model must therefore guide diversity pedagogy.

I strongly urge readers who are interested in more extensive commentary on the topic to have a look at my analysis (among other literature) of multicultural-transcultural distinctions—I identify over two dozen distinguishing parameters between the latter two models—and their relationship to the prevailing monoculturalism in the field.³ I view the monocultural-multicultural-transcultural

³ See *ibid* and my recent book *Black Music Matters* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2018), where I distinguish my model of “integral transculturalism” from other uses of the term “transcultural.”

evolutionary continuum as key to new vistas in not only diversity discourse, but in future visioning for the overall music studies enterprise. I also view the openings that extend from the transcultural framework to the consciousness/spirituality realm as significant across the educational spectrum and argue that music studies could assume a leadership role in burgeoning contemplative studies/contemplative studies movements in higher education.⁴

What interests me about the CBDNA position paper is that it straddles all three (mono/multi/transcultural) perspectives, and even if its largely monocultural orientation (despite occasional appearances) ultimately predominates, the document is rare in post-Manifesto discourse in the openings it provides—however preliminary—to transcultural terrain. Therefore, while my critique of CBDNA is fairly extensive, I make every attempt to emphasize those openings as potential portals to new frontiers in not only diversity discourse but overall musicianship visioning (in my view, diversity and artistry are inextricably linked—one cannot talk substantively about one without the other).

Key concerns with the CBDNA position paper

My central concern with CBDNA's commentary, from which a host of other concerns follows, is that it fails to engage directly and adequately with core precepts of the Manifesto. This raises questions about the extent to which CBDNA has fathomed the very document to which it seeks to reply in hopes for further conversation, and also the extent to which CBDNA has examined the assumptions that underlie its own platform.

A primary example involves questions CBDNA raises about the very topic of diversity I preview above. CBDNA quite reasonably asks if diversification of the knowledge/skill spectrum might risk compromising depth of achievement. However, CBDNA never engages with the Manifesto's approach to this very concern, which is through a seminal transcultural principle—that robust and rigorous creative development has the capacity to harness the synergistic interplay of diverse areas to yield unmatched achievement. Accordingly, the Manifesto establishes an inextricable link between diversity and its other two pillars—creativity and integrative pedagogy—and identifies the Contemporary Improviser

⁴ See *Society for Consciousness Studies* (<http://consc.org>) and *Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education* (<http://www.contemplativemind.org/programs/acmhe>). Music studies is notably under-represented in the increasing number of symposia, publications, and curricular innovations in these innovative areas.

Composer Performer (CICP) framework as the artistic site where this synergistic interaction and unprecedented and integrative scope of excellence takes hold.

The point, of course, is not that CBDNA, or anyone, ought to tacitly accept the Manifesto's viewpoint on this or any issue, but at the very least CBDNA needs to acknowledge and address it if productive dialogue is to ensue. In not taking this step, CBDNA elicits concerns that it remains prone to weakly informed monocultural reaction against what it perceives as the prevailing multicultural diversity agenda (the only one discernible through either monocultural or multicultural lenses), when in fact a transcultural vision is being advanced that, were it met by even a preliminary kind of CBDNA response, might open up new horizons in the conversation.

Second is that CBDNA at times creates a sense of conflict between its vision and that of the Manifesto where no such conflict exists, or at least not to the extent implied.

A prominent example is when CBDNA cedes a central place for what it calls "Western Art Music" (which I term Western classical music; see note⁵) and "Jazz" as core musical pillars for 21st century musicianship. The implication by CBDNA is that its position differs from that of the Manifesto, and therefore requires emphasis in order to counter the Manifesto's ostensibly contrasting perspective. However, even a moderately close reading of the Manifesto reveals that CBDNA's interpretation of the Manifesto is ill-informed.

Consider this passage from the Manifesto as but one indicator of its perspective on the importance of Western classical music:

A large ensemble—orchestra, choir, or wind band—consisting largely of aspiring contemporary improviser-composer-performers will be capable of bringing in unprecedented levels of passion, vitality, appreciation, understanding, and excellence to the performance of the works of Beethoven, Brahms, Debussy, and others, as well as to new repertory. (p.77)

⁵ I have written extensively on the problematic nature of the common use of the heading Art Music to reference European classical music and its offshoots (e.g. American wind bands). Is Jazz not Art? Is Jazz, and much other music that its practitioners view as art, not of the West? This exclusionary heading is not unique to CBDNA and even pervades ethnomusicology, providing yet another among the many examples of diversity discourse in music studies lagging decades behind other fields, where attention to language is often paramount.

Commentary of this sort that underscores the Manifesto's broad and inclusive vision, and the important place it cedes Western classical music, is found throughout the Manifesto. Yet CBDNA addresses none of this, nor a further step taken by the Manifesto when it identifies multiple paradigms within classical and jazz traditions that are important to both documents' visions.

Here is where the Contemporary Improviser Composer Performer (CICP) profile, central to the transcultural model, assumes front and center stage as a paradigmatic indicator within the two traditions (classical and jazz), and also serves as a connecting link between them. In other words, both traditions, as they are represented in music studies (and in areas of professional practice, particularly classical music), have forsaken their CICP foundations (Sarath/Myers/Campbell, p.56). The CICP that prevailed in earlier eras of European classical music, but which has been replaced by the interpretive performance specialist paradigm (with a select few engaged as composers), and which makes its return in expanded form in jazz, in a single stroke both distinguishes between two very different models *within both* classical and jazz lineages, and also identifies important shared principles that are key—but, again, never acknowledged—to CBDNA's very classical-jazz centering.

The Manifesto thus serves up on a proverbial silver platter a core dialogic principle—that of a more nuanced conception, and thus critical analysis, of its key cultural pillars and how they differ from both the conventional model *and* prevailing change visioning, thus raising the bar in terms of critical interrogation of its own premises. The fact that CBDNA fails to engage on this level, remaining confined to but the most generic conceptions of its own core cultural pillars (classical and jazz), further supports my above concerns about lapses in critical integrity.

The extent to which one is able to critically fathom a vision contrary to one's own is directly predicated on the extent to which one is self-critically astute. I believe important indicators are already evident that support my concern that CBDNA falls short in both critical directions. I provide further examples shortly.

However, it is important to emphasize that this problem is not unique to CBDNA but pervades much change visioning as well as argumentation in support of retaining the conventional model, in whole or in part. If the field is to move forward, the need is urgent for stronger conservative (the word has no negative

connotation for me) and progressive voices alike. My (and the Manifesto's) multicultural-transcultural distinctions are but part, though a significant one, of an attempt to critically examine broader patterns that elude attention and need to be addressed in this light.

Here I might note an important reason for the shortcomings among both progressive and conservative constituencies: The dominant voice in music studies reform (and conventional practice) has not been that of the transcultural CICP, but rather largely colleagues who have come up as interpretive performance specialists. Tendencies to, at best, approach improvisation and composition as curricular add-ons, as well as prevailing multicultural approaches to diversity, while well-intentioned, are direct results of this orientation. This has also perpetuated the misguided, yet prevalent notion—harbored by monoculturalists and multiculturalists alike—that European classical music is a tradition primarily of interpretive performance specialists, with a small minority engaged in composition, and improvisation as distant memory. The transcultural viewpoint, which approaches musical reality through the lens of epistemology first, is that the classical music paradigm which music studies has inherited is a radical deviation from the European tradition of CICPs (with jazz as the site of its expanded return) and thus takes the conversation to an entirely new level that has yet to be significantly broached. The Manifesto, and my prior and subsequent writing, are among the relatively few exceptions on this account. Short of this shift in perspective, conservative participants in the conversation inevitably resort to their unexamined monocultural assumptions and remain prone to suspicion about appeals for diversity; multicultural arguments do little (nor should they) to appease their concerns given that robust apprehension of what it means to be a musical artist tend to be superseded by politically correct slogans and rallying cries.

When the transcultural shift is invoked, diversity is recognized as intrinsic in the nature of artistry—one cannot talk about one without the other—which opens up possibilities, as in the above passage from the Manifesto, of entirely new vistas of accomplishment in Western classical music and global navigation.

Accordingly, were CBNDA to engage the transcultural step taken by the Manifesto, it might be able to follow suit, sustain the two-way critical vitality noted above as essential to productive conversation, and transform what ends up being a retreat from the diversity imperative, which again from a transcultural standpoint is tantamount to a retreat from artistry, into entirely new artistic and pedagogical considerations.

While CBDNA is entirely justified in its concerns about superficial skimming of diverse traditions, bringing discourse right up to the doorstep provided by the Manifesto for a transcultural turn, CBDNA unfortunately fails to open that door, instead succumbing to a fundamentally flawed pattern that has long beset the field and which may be among the gravest threats to its future. Elsewhere I address common notions, often advanced by conductors, of a music school as a kind of ecosystem, with large ensemble at its core, that requires exceptional measures to uphold sustainability.⁶ In fact, this thinking—largely monocultural—runs sharply counter to the nature of musical artistry as well as complex systems principles of any sort (whether pertaining to biological, social, disciplinary or other systems). Any argument that questions the diversity imperative, without critically interrogating prevailing multicultural approaches against a transcultural (or some other broader framework that is aligned with the navigational trajectories of real-world creative musicians), must be understood as an argument that questions the artistry imperative. While this is clearly not CBDNA’s intention, I would like to propose that this is the resultant effect.

Nonetheless, CBDNA, to its great credit, brings to the fore the above and a number of other issues that might enable the conversation to move ahead and traverse the multicultural-transcultural divide. Following are a number of examples, which I call “unexamined transcultural apertures,” that underscore this point.

Unexamined transcultural apertures

Need for an expanded skill set and knowledge base

CBDNA rightly calls for an expanded skill set for 21st century music students:

Theory, composition, history, appreciation and applied performance are important aspects of the undergraduate curriculum and are mirrored in secondary music education.

We suggest building in students first a foundation of essential skills and awareness, including improvisation/ornamentation and composition/arranging, (which would also include) high level of performance. (CBDNA, p.3)

⁶ E. Sarath, *Black Music Matters*, 2018.

This is, of course, directly in line with the Manifesto's CICP principle and "systematic approach to improvisation and composition,"⁷ which includes rigorous performance and a wide range of other skills, that I view as among the most important passages in the Manifesto, yet is nonexistent in multicultural commentary (even if much of that commentary is typically laudatory) on the CMS report. CNBDA, significantly setting itself apart from multiculturalism (even if not explicit on this principle), further hints at transcultural openings with the following statement:

After this foundation is secure, its base could be broadened to include more diverse kinds of music and approaches to music. (p.4)

Why is this CBDNA statement important? Because it powerfully underscores the need for ethnological diversity to be grounded in epistemological diversity—a key transcultural precept that eludes multicultural discourse. In other words, CBDNA asserts the all-important premise that if meaningful and substantive engagement is a priority, then creative artistic foundations are paramount.

Where the Manifesto takes this quest further is in its more nuanced conception of the CICP creative "identity shift"⁸ neither CBDNA nor multicultural commentary go this far—noted above. This, moreover, enables the Manifesto to fathom a breadth of development, epistemic and ethnological alike, as a vertical unfolding from creative foundations. In other words, and it is important to recognize that not all Task Force members, particularly its multiculturalists, agree on this point—that the three pillars of creativity, diversity and integration are more aptly conceived not as a roughly egalitarian array of change landmarks, but rather as a vertical unfolding from the creative foundations of the CICP. Degrees of diversity and integration are possible from the transcultural creativity-driven unfolding that dwarf what are found even in the most expansive multicultural commentary (including ethnomusicology and progressive music education circles). Indeed, the difference between approaching improvisation, composition and diverse musical encounter as add-ons to the interpretive performance identity and the establishment of a CICP/transcultural identity is of a paradigmatic nature, representing a foundational turn in the whole music studies enterprise.

⁷ Sarath/Myers/Campbell, p59.

⁸ Ibid, p. 61.

This poses important ramifications for another CBDNA point, already broached above, where entirely valid concerns are raised about diversification compromising depth.

Challenges inherent in diversification

CBDNA asks:

Might teaching from a diverse slate of offerings risk a shallowness of experience? (p.5)

In other words; how, to paraphrase earlier commentary, can we ensure excellence as we seek to expand the terrain to be covered within the existing parameters of a four-year undergraduate degree without diluting outcomes?

While there is no need to rehash that earlier commentary, what strikes me here is that CBDNA had already begun to delineate parameters for a compelling response, as evident in the prior point and excerpted passage, to its very question. But now, consistent with the confusion I note in its diversity position, CBDNA exhibits hesitation about full embrace of diversity in the name of a received conception of artistry that, in fact, deviates from the CACP foundations of Western classical music and 21st century jazz and other musical navigators.

Artistic/pedagogical excellence

CBDNA states:

The diverse musics to be studied would need experts to teach and perform these musics. Since students should be provided only quality experiences in music learning, where would the many institutions preparing teachers find the resources to hire the high number of expert practitioners or teachers of these many musics? (p.8)

To be sure, an enormously key question, to which it is important to recognize that multiculturalism is hard pressed to provide compelling response, which I believe may be an important factor behind CBDNA's concerns (as it is behind mine).

Aside from the Manifesto's preliminary recommendation of faculty retooling, admittedly a partial measure, key is that, as noted above, the transcultural paradigm shifts the diversity locus from number of musical traditions encountered to depth of creative engagement and infusion of influences in the emerging CACP artistic voice. While multiculturalists are quick to stress engagement with as many cultures as possible, transculturalists assert the need for interior, creative grounding to

underlie that engagement. One can see here why I was excited, at first, to read of CBDNA's co-centering of Western classical and jazz. Now the task is to take the next, transcultural step and give shape, via epistemology rather than generic conceptions, of these lineages. And until the diversity project becomes so grounded, what in reality is, at best, a distanced fascination with the exotic will continue to masquerade as genuine culturally pluralistic engagement and understanding. Here I am with CBDNA 200% in terms of its concerns on this point (however politically incorrect, which in any case is a multicultural construct) in wondering if this may even undermine the diversity enterprise.⁹

Most every music school has long possessed, through jazz, the resources to make transcultural pedagogical inroads available to at least a portion of their music majors, and I believe a strong case could be made for priority to be given to music education majors and teacher training curricula as institutions pursue reform measures. However, as the Manifesto argues, a new paradigm of jazz education is in order. In my writings, I cite the vision of Association for Advancement of Creative Musicians, barely discernible in conventional jazz studies, as a powerful source of guidance in this regard.

At which point, key questions arise in terms of excellence and quality for CBDNA in its coupling of Western classical music and Jazz.

Western classical music and jazz revisited

Having made clear its important position on excellence, CBDNA is unclear on how this applies to music outside of Western classical. What level of expertise and excellence in jazz does CBDNA expect from the 21st century music teacher? Is it on a par with current levels of attainment in interpretive performance? If so, how does CBDNA envision it being realized given the sheer challenges in terms of daily practice and studies inherent in the proposition of mastery of two traditions? Would this not be another version of CBDNA's concerns, but now directed back toward CBDNA, about the challenges of depth of achievement it recognizes are inherent in diversification? If so, why does CBDNA identify these challenges in the context of music outside of the West (classical and jazz), but not within the

⁹ Multicultural objections (not a CBDNA problem) to the infusion of influences in the transcultural framework as a kind of "appropriation" are rooted in misunderstanding of the evolutionary trajectories of creative artists, which further underscores my above concerns about the exclusion of important voices in the change conversation. Creative artists appropriate, meaning deep spiritual infusion of influences in their work.

context of its centering these two central genres in the West? Might this be due to shortcomings in CBDNA's thinking through how its classical/jazz coupling might actually play out? Or might it be due to an assumption on the part of CBDNA that 21st century music teachers do not need to have the same proficiency in jazz that they do in Western classical music?

If the latter statement even remotely holds, then would not CBDNA need to own up to a lapse in judgement in its deceptive framing of 'Western Art Music' and 'Jazz' as central to its vision? Failure to do this underscores concerns I have entertained about jazz being a sort of politically-correct appendage to what is primarily a monocultural classical agenda.

If not, and jazz is indeed viewed as on equal footing (as implied in the heading) as classical, then it seems to me that CBDNA needs to confront another question for which commentary is conspicuously absent in its vision statement. This involves the need for foundational curricular overhaul, including ensembles (meaning requirements, rehearsals and concerts), that by any reasonable reckoning, would be essential in the broader kind of musicianship comprised of CBDNA's classical/jazz centering.

In short: Would CBDNA support significant change in ensemble requirements to make the broader musicianship possible?

Self-cultural grounding

CBDNA—in its strong articulation of another key transcultural precept—emphasizes the importance of musicians being grounded in the music of their primary culture/s as the basis for broader exploration. Multiculturalism, in its zeal to celebrate the music-culture relationship in societies across the globe in general, conspicuously neglects—and in so doing undermines its very mission—this principle when it comes to the place of American music in American music school curricula.

I am thus thrilled to see that CBDNA is profoundly aligned with the Manifesto and my personal vision on this account:

We suggest that a musical citizen's genuine musical contribution is cultivated in them by their culture. When they move to a new culture, they create their own sense of belonging by assimilating into the culture of the new home, musical and otherwise. Thus, we ask: Should our students, whose families either have long lived in or been recently drawn to living in, our

pluralistic culture, bound together primarily by Western sensibilities and aesthetics, be then foundationally educated in western art music and jazz as a way of belonging to the whole? (p.5)

While I might word the statements a bit differently to avoid unnecessary complications (by multicultural and perhaps other objections), the point is abundantly clear.

Again, however, I would like to hear CBDNA address more fully questions raised above regarding its classical/jazz coupling. And what it makes of the Manifesto's approach to that same general principle, as well as the Manifesto's concordance with CBDNA when it comes to the importance of self-cultural grounding.

The above examples are just a few that support my concerns of CBDNA's falling short in engaging with key premises of the Manifesto, and also not examining the depth of its own monocultural orientation. My hope is that CBDNA will consider these points as gateways to new kinds of conversations within its own ranks and the field at large.

Further topics

Popular music

The above analysis lays groundwork for other topics that CBDNA broaches. For example, CBDNA's concerns about popular music are tinged with no small bit of monocultural denigration of other musical paradigms, and also multicultural tendencies to view the musical world in terms of discrete compartments (a problem that pervades multicultural discourse). A transcultural view of the musical landscape recognizes from the outset the African American roots of most popular music, and thus allows CBDNA to address concerns from an entirely new vantage point. CBDNA's questions about the endurability of pop music (p.6), and thus its essential value, could shift from individual pieces (but even here I wonder—what about all the oldies stations?) to popular music as part of a vast African American musical wave in the world's musical ocean—for which questions about endurability and impact have long been answered. Moreover, CBDNA could then take a leadership stride that is inherent in its own commentary—involving harnessing the resources jazz offers popular music-making and pedagogy—but which is unfortunately overlooked. Jazz musicians since at least the 1970s have made powerful and innovative forays into popular music has largely eluded popular music advocacy and pedagogy; CBDNA could counter this multicultural lapse by embracing the Manifesto's transcultural foundations.

Large ensemble and student-driven pedagogy

CBDNA argues for the large ensemble to continue to occupy a dominant place in the curriculum and that it could be the site for significant innovation. While the Manifesto also acknowledges new inroads that might open up in large ensemble, this is within a broader context of curricular change and differs fundamentally from CBDNA's view of large ensemble as the "trunk" of the music studies curricular tree.

A number of key questions arise:

Where in the musical world do we find examples of musicians who have gained substantive improvising and composing skills, as well as abilities for creative collaboration with diverse cultures, in large ensembles? Or does CBDNA, linking back to above concerns, view these 'newer' areas as peripheral, thus requiring lower levels of achievement than in Western classical performance? If not, who will teach the new paradigm of large ensemble, and where will this individual gain his/her skills? Would this not in itself require wholesale curricular reform?

These questions in turn raise concerns about CBDNA's views on the issue of self-driven development, meaning the enlivenment of capacities in students to chart their own pathways and adapt to a continually changing musical world. Consistent with educational thinking across fields, empowerment of music students as self-sufficient learners needs to be regarded as among the highest priorities. Moreover, key to student-driven pedagogical approaches—which the Manifesto emphasizes works in tandem with rigorous curricular structures—are process-rich learning environments, from which the large ensemble experience as conventionally approached is most distant. Though CBDNA alludes to some emergent large ensemble model that may expand conventional approaches, I believe my above questions underscore the shortcomings in this thinking when it comes to the sheer scope of skill areas that 21st century musicians will need. Therefore, while CBDNA's concerns (p.7) are not unreasonable about the extent to which students have had sufficient experience to make informed decisions about their musical pathways, the question still remains—are faculty that have travelled very different pathways than what the 21st century calls for more qualified to make these decisions?

I believe the Manifesto's CICP model provides the best of both worlds in its breadth, integration, diversity and rigor atop the process-rich grounding that supports student-driven development.

I also believe the CICP is key to resolving what might be called the “large ensemble paradox,” which may be among the most elusive challenges in change visioning. As noted above, the basic idea is that well-designed curricular change, which must take place from the foundations on up, has the potential to harness synergistic interplay inherent in the CICP skill spectrum that yields a kind of musicianship that enhances the large ensemble experience, even if students may spend less time in that format in the emergent curriculum.

When all is said and done, the curricular landscape—including ensembles—must be directly conceived around the creative trajectories by which real-world musicians navigate the musical landscape. I believe it is particularly instructive to look at the last decade or so of MacArthur Fellows in music, including Vijay Ayer, Tayshawn Sorey, Regina Carter, George Lewis and Steve Coleman, and the many other CICPs of our time, for powerful guidance.

A particularly problematic passage

CBDNA cites that from “ample evidence around the world . . . the future holds promise for the alleged anachronisms” of “Western Art Music and jazz.” (p.3).

CBDNA continues:

If expanding parts of our global village are embracing Western art music (sic), should we not educate musicians to be essential citizens of that village? In our haste to embrace the diversity of the world’s music, are we ignoring a twenty-first century world that is increasing its embrace of the western art music tradition? (p.3)

Aside from the fact that jazz suddenly disappears from CBDNA’s visioning (perhaps when it is needed most?), does not this passage indicate what can only be construed as an egregious case of musical and cultural colonialism?

In other words: If, as CBDNA has eloquently stated, grounding in music of one’s own culture is essential for music students in America, ought not this apply to all cultures? Ought not, therefore, the highest priority for 21st musicians and music teachers be grounding in creative music foundations that enable them to celebrate—through improvisatory/compositional collaborations, infusion of diverse influences in the personal creative voice, and resultant understanding—the relationship of music and culture in all populations and geographical regions to

which their careers take them? Is the CBDNA proposition that, when it comes to dealing with the diversity of the world in which we live, we should be primarily training musicians and music teachers to take Western music into other cultures not chilling in its intimation of a kind of cultural supremacy?

I am thinking too of the well-known studies that have shown little black girls opt to play with white dolls rather than black dolls. A repeat study 50 years later (<https://www.colorlines.com/articles/fifty-years-later-black-girls-still-prefer-white-dolls>) shows not much difference. Are not aspirations to prepare music teachers to take Western music into other cultures a version of the same problem?

Closing thoughts

I have replied at length to CBDNA given the important issues it raises, the longstanding prominence of band and large ensembles in the curricular and cultural foundations of music studies, and my sense of a strong commitment from CBDNA to the kind of conversation that will be key to this leadership. While I have raised a number of challenging questions and concerns, as well as expressed support for key CBDNA directions, I hope the constructive intent of my remarks is sufficiently clear as to invite further exchange around those points and others.

I might also mention that I will soon announce the formation of a new organization called *Alliance for the Transformation of Music Studies* (ATMA) that is predicated on bringing together colleagues who share this commitment. While I envision ATMA—which translates roughly from Sanskrit as “soul”—to be a forum in which exploration of consciousness, spirituality, creativity and new dimensions of diversity and activism will be prominent; most important is that it serve as a forum in which a wide range of voices can coexist and coevolve in a new culture of critical dynamism. I believe the next wave of visioning in music studies will be driven by, at once, unprecedented critical analysis of the conventional paradigm, rigorous interrogation of the patterns that have constrained efforts to reform it, and unprecedented penetration into what it means to be a musical artist in this still new century. As I have endeavored to show through the CACP framework, limited capacities (by monoculturalists and multiculturalists alike) to fathom the roots of this creative template in Western classical music and its role in contemporary navigation indicate shortcomings in both conservative and progressive ranks in respect to the artistry imperative. The diversity crisis in the field is a direct casualty, and I would also add impaired critical inquiry capacities and others to the list.

My hope is for ATMA to sustain a conversation unlike anything the field has seen and that CBDNA, which I believe has much to offer and gain from this conversation, will be part of it.