

RESPONSE TO “REFLECTIONS ON THE MANIFESTO” (CHATTAH, SNODGRASS, HOAG, SAYRS, LAITZ)

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One of the primary aims of the College Music Society Task Force on the Undergraduate Music Major was to stimulate thinking, dialogue, and action leading to a music studies framework that is more aligned with the 21st century musical landscape. The resultant “Manifesto,” among the most widely-discussed documents in the long history of change discourse in the field, has been an important catalyst toward these ends, even if the ultimate impact of the report remains to be seen. Juan Chattah, Melissa Hoag, Steven Laitz, Elizabeth Sayrs, and Jennifer Snodgrass have furthered the conversation in their recent collection of essays called “Reflections on the Manifesto,”¹ which issues a number of challenges to the report that I believe will only aid in this shared quest to optimally serve current and future generations of musicians, if not the broader realms of education and society.

I view it as particularly significant that these perspectives come from colleagues in the field of Music Theory in that this discipline has long been among the most scrutinized in change debates. As I conveyed a few years ago to former Society for Music Theory President L. Poundie Bernstein, the music theory community if nothing else faces a serious PR crisis—with widespread concerns harbored among many outside the field, particularly in reform circles, that this domain remains bound by approaches that are out of synch with today’s musical landscape, if not in important ways even ineffectual. For example, the website of a highly visible musicianship initiative distinguishes its approach from the “rote teaching” and other limitations in musicianship pedagogy that are “prevalent at conservatories and other institutions of higher education.”² In arguing forcefully that this kind of perception is ungrounded, the above authors—several of whom state that this thinking is perpetuated by the Manifesto—assert that the time has come for a more informed understanding of what is happening in many theory classrooms. I believe this is an important position and I thank the authors for placing it front and center. In making their case, these colleagues also examine and question some of the basic assumptions of the Manifesto, including the positioning and conception of its three pillars of creativity, diversity, and integration. This is precisely the kind of inquiry that is needed if the field is to move forward.

Although I am lead author of the Manifesto, I do not reply to their critique as a representative of the Task Force; in important ways I have begun to distance myself from the conversations that have transpired in the aftermath of the work of that group. As I emphasize in a companion essay that reflects on the task force and other music studies reform initiatives (including the June 2016 CMS Summit on 21st Music School Design) through the lens of diversity, I find myself increasingly convinced of the need for an entirely new kind of change conversation if the field is to take its next evolutionary strides. Here I frame my response to the above authors from the standpoint of what I call “Lower Order” and “Higher Order” change visioning (Sarath, Myers, Campbell 2016), arguing that the thrust of their critique reflects a lower order orientation, whereas the Manifesto is a higher order document (albeit early stage) that needs to be read as such.

I submit my thoughts with the greatest respect for the formidable expertise that I regularly encounter among colleagues in the music theory community, the above authors being no exception. At issue are the extent to which that expertise aligns with the needs of today's musicians, differing perspectives on what a 21st century musicianship curriculum might look like, contrasting readings of the Manifesto and perceptions of progress in the direction of its recommendations, and—perhaps most important—the level of critical inquiry that guides deliberations. In hopes of stimulating productive dialogue, I pose questions—at times to specific authors—that are intended to elicit a reciprocal kind of exchange in any subsequent conversations that might transpire. From this standpoint, I invite readers to keep in mind an overarching question that I believe the entire field needs to grapple with yet scarcely registers in change conversations: Why, given the expanded needs of 21st century musicians (and educators, scholars, etc), does musicianship instruction continue to be relegated to the field of music theory?

While there is no denying that even posing this question, let alone advancing a response, only exacerbates the already charged nature of this exchange, I cannot see how this and similar big questions can be evaded any longer if related dialogue is to have any substance. In hopes of diffusing tensions, I strive to situate my arguments when possible within broader contexts, which I believe contributes to the critical integrity of the discussion. In line with this, I also briefly broach some of the controversies within the task force itself in the formulation of the Manifesto. I hope my assertion that discourse in music studies on significant contemporary themes—diversity perhaps foremost among them—remains in an embryonic stage will help underscore my appeal for an entirely new visioning wave to emerge from exchanges such as the one at hand.

Preliminary clarifications/corrections

If more productive conversation is to ensue from the Reflections, it is important to address a number of the authors' misconceptions and misrepresentations in response to the Manifesto. I begin with some of the more blatant examples, with others to be taken up later.

Says takes issue with the Manifesto's view of creativity, arguing that it is not a conception of "creativity writ large." In other words, in the report's identification of improvisation and composition as foundational modes of creativity, Says seems to infer a kind of values hierarchy in which, as she puts it, "performance of other people's works, a brilliant theory, or a compelling analysis of your own or others' works do not rise to the same level of creativity." Hoag, perhaps taking Says' interpretation further, states that "the *Manifesto* limits the definition of creativity to improvisation and composition."

The Manifesto advances no such viewpoints, and in fact posits a uniquely broad and inclusive account of creativity. "Restoring improvisation and composition to their rightful, foundational status," the Manifesto emphasizes, *does not* subordinate performance and analysis, but in fact aims to render the *entire scope of music study a creative and highly-skilled endeavor*.³ In other words, creativity throughout the spectrum of musical development is an essential aim; it is not viewed in the Manifesto as an either-or, or better-or-worse, affair. Why need the identification of improvising and composing as foundational be construed as privileging? In fact, the Manifesto

argues that when positioned accordingly, improvisatory and compositional foundations promote levels of creativity throughout the musicianship continuum that might not otherwise be possible. And as is abundantly evident throughout the Manifesto, its idea of the ‘entire scope of music study’ spans a uniquely broad range that includes music from around the world, embodiment, technology, entrepreneurship and a host of other areas.

Consider, for example, the systematic approaches to improvisation and composition studies concept in the Manifesto, which unite a multitude of areas—including “multiple improvisatory and compositional approaches, a wide range of modal-tonal-post-tonal pitch systems and rhythmic practices, aural skills, performance, movement processes, history, culture, aesthetics, cognition, and mind-body integration”—that expand the creative process spectrum in ways that are relevant to both traditional and contemporary music. In other words, by grounding the spectrum in comprehensive improvising and composing studies (not just cursory exposure), a unified matrix of creativity emerges that would not be possible without such foundations. More recently (Sarath, Myers, Campbell 2016), I explore how this systematic approach lays groundwork for creative development along a number of prominent themes in music studies and educational reform, including technology, critical thinking, entrepreneurship, student-driven growth, and consciousness/spirituality. This builds on prior work (Sarath 2013) where I delineate an inner mechanics of this creativity spectrum, which I might add includes a look at how interpretive performance exhibits improvisatory features.

This is not to assume that this is the only model of ‘creativity writ large’ conceivable, and I would be eager to hear Sayrs’ and Hoag’s thoughts on alternatives. I would also be keen to hear from them accounts of musical creativity that might involve foundations other than improvisation and composition, or perhaps no foundations at all. Meanwhile, I would urge them to reread the Manifesto keeping in mind this broader perspective, and the actual commentary the document provides in contrast to their misperceptions of it, on this important topic.

A similar pattern emerges when it comes to integration, which as Hoag writes, “is defined in the *Manifesto* as the instructional synthesis of keyboard skills, aural skills, and music theory, as well as (to a lesser extent) performance and music history.” I am hard-pressed as I reread the Manifesto to see how the integrative scope posited in the document could be reduced to such a limited range, not to mention neglect the improvisatory and compositional processes that, as just noted, are key to its broad integrative vision. In fact, this expanded scope is precisely the reason that the Manifesto emphasizes its departure from conventional thinking about integration as largely the linking of performance, theory, and history. Consistent with that conventional view, however, Hoag confines the horizontal dimensions of the integrative spectrum to a small spectrum of what is possible and needed, and more importantly overlooks the vertical pillars—again, improvisatory and compositional creativity—that are key to overlying connections. I will go more into what I mean by vertical and horizontal approaches shortly.

We see yet another misrepresentation in Hoag’s portrayal of the Manifesto’s stance on diversity, which she describes as “the inclusion of repertoire from outside the Western concert music tradition: jazz, musical theater, and popular music.” Although this truncation is not nearly as egregious as the above misrepresentations (Sayrs’ on creativity; Hoag’s on creativity and integration), the omission of music from across the globe that is a significant component of the

Manifesto's diversity vision is conspicuous given that there were three ethnomusicologists on the Task Force and others significantly engaged with world music, not to mention the ramifications of this omission in the context of contemporary diversity discourse. I will comment further on the authors' Reflections from both creativity and diversity standpoints below, drawing parallels between a "creativity gloss" and "diversity gloss," where in both instances horizontal breadth is sought oblivious to important vertical contours that make possible even broader kinds of scope than those typically advocated.

The above discrepancies between the actual words and principles of the Manifesto and the above authors' critique of those words and principles are fundamental impediments to the kind of conversation that will be necessary to move forward. Hoag states that her "bibliography lists forty-three published articles from 2010 to the present that focus on creativity, diversity, and integration (as they are defined in the *Manifesto*) (parentheses hers) in some central way," attempting to show that, indeed, significant activity along the lines of what the Manifesto advocates is already in place. However, I believe it is clear from even the brief analysis above that there are radically different conceptions at play of how creativity, diversity, and integration are construed in the Manifesto and by the above authors. It is also important to note contradictions between Hoag's claims that improvisation and composition are widespread in musicianship coursework and Snodgrass' data, which indicate limited use of improvisation and modest incorporation of composition.

Therefore, while I applaud Sayrs' appeal for music theorists to arrive at a "discursive space in which we as a community can move beyond the (Manifesto) productively"—a desire that I also hold for the entire field of music studies—I believe that key to this aim will be, in fact, moving *more deeply into* the Manifesto to get at the heart of its vision.

An important next step is to look more closely at the lenses through which musicianship and the change conversation are typically viewed. The above misconceptions are indicative of what I call "lower order" assumptions pre-empting the "higher order" visioning that the Manifesto advocates as necessary to the emergence of a viable 21st century music studies paradigm.

Lower and Higher Order Change Discourse

I first introduced this idea in an address at the 2013 conference of the National Association of Schools of Music and have further evolved the concept since. I provide but the briefest overview here, inviting readers who are interested to peruse Sarath, Myers, Campbell (2016) for a fuller commentary. In a nutshell: Lower order change discourse seeks reform through modifications to the prevailing paradigm, higher order seeks change through foundational rebuilding of the entire music studies enterprise from its curricular and conceptual roots on up. Whereas lower order discourse approaches improvisation and composition as add-ons, or perhaps as pedagogical aids to existing coursework, higher order is predicated on a wholesale shift in musical identity from music interpreter (who may engage with improvisation and composition in various coursework) to Contemporary Improviser-Composer-Performer (CICP), for whom engagement with these foundational creative processes is more than the cursory encounter found in select coursework, but central to their very sense of musical being. In short, higher order visioning is rooted in a

improvisation/composition-based “creativity turn” as the basis for entirely new music studies worldview.

Entirely new levels of diversity, integration, student driven development, critical thinking, technological application, pedagogy, entrepreneurship, etc. are possible when this foundational shift occurs. However, whereas this expanded spectrum tends to be viewed from a lower order perspective in terms of a horizontal inventory, higher order conception recognizes the importance to vertical principles to overcoming what I call the “Central Impasse” that remains a major obstacle in change conversations. I am talking about the challenge confronting every field of addressing an ever-expanding knowledge base with nonchanging curricular time and space. We can’t keep adding things to the conventional assembly line, which is horizontal thinking. Nor will a bigger assembly line suffice, even if there were room to build one (which thankfully there is not; artistic development is not a linear affair). Instead, this kind of horizontal thinking needs to open up to vertical dimensions that are key to the foundational shift needed. And as I will emphasize below, engagement with CICPs—including in musicianship coursework—is key to students invoking this identity shift.

What, then, do I mean by vertical? Here several features of the higher order vision are pivotal. First is what I call the “self-transcending” principle. Improvising and composing take awareness to interior dimensions of musical engagement that are transcendent of the conventional disciplinary and style categories that prevail in academic and commercial music circles. In other words, CICPs access realms of musical experience and understanding in which overlying compartments, even if their respective underpinnings are contacted in but seed form, are seen as differentiated manifestations of an overarching musical wholeness. And once these seeds are planted and watered through the creative identity shift, levels of potential meaning, comprehension, interconnectedness, and rigor in virtually any area contacted—within an unprecedented horizontal expanse—increase substantively. Therefore, while Hoag and Sayrs extol creativity as writ large, they provide little basis for how this might be cultivated; I do not believe anything in this direction is possible without vertical penetration that is unique to improvisation and composition, particularly when these core processes are part of musical identity.

A second principle, that of self-sufficiency, or student-centered development, illuminates how this happens. Here the relationship between epistemological breadth, the emergence of the personal creative voice, reflection, and self-directed study and practice is key. The broader the epistemological expanse, for which systematic approaches to improvisation and composition are unmatched, the more robust the personal artistic voice. As aspiring improvisers/composers reflect on the relationship between disciplines, genres, and other influences encountered as directly informing this individual creative voice, they establish highly personalized, intimate connections to not only these particular domains contacted but the overall enterprise of musical development, in doing enlivening and strengthening strong auto-didactic, self-driven tendencies toward further growth. In other words, where aspiring CICPs begin to see a host of musical materials, disciplines, cultures, experiences and imaginings as part of a channel for expression of innermost emotions and impulses from deep in consciousness, an entirely new impetus for study, practice, and wide-ranging growth is established that simply cannot be equaled when improvisation and composition are absent from, or even peripheral to, artistic identity. Entirely

new kinds of horizontal breadth are possible that exceed that advocated in the writ large arguments advanced in the Reflections, with the vertical grounding of the musicianship enterprise also circumventing the Central Impasse that is key to breaking the reform logjam.

This model also provides a basis that help students arrive at whatever musical destinations best enable their unique gifts to blossom and be contributed to the world. When Sayers questions the Manifesto's advocacy of "an improviser-composer-performer-centric creativity (as) the primary goal for all music students," she imposes significant misconceptions in her reading of the report that strongly suggest a lower order, strictly horizontal lens. For one thing, her use of the term 'goal' conflates the erroneous assumption that the foundation is synonymous with the destination with the argument in the Manifesto for new foundations that promote an infinitude of destinations. While the Manifesto clearly calls for the return of the CICIP, largely due to its process scope, as the guiding orientation for a 21st century paradigm, this is framed as a basis that could support any number of conventional and newer career pathways. Again, the CICIP identity is the basis for vertical penetration that is the basis for self-driven, horizontal navigation—and thus career options—that are otherwise likely to remain elusive.

Moreover, Sayers' use of the qualifier "centric" runs starkly counter to the higher order self-transcending principle, and closely related concepts such as the systematic improvisation/composition studies continuum cited above. Instead of areas conceived as gateways that open up to broader connections, for which from a higher order standpoint a CICIP identity is unmatched, domains from the lower order perspective are seen as vying for space. Improvisation and composition, even if posited as fulfilling this self-transcending gateway function, are seen as competing with other areas in a strictly horizontal paradigm. However, because this lower order perspective is only capable of seeking solutions to the expanding knowledge base through further horizontalization, it can only be assessed as unsustainable. Again, there is simply no space to keep on adding things, a point that goes unaddressed, consistent with lower order commentary, in the Reflections. Thus, while it is important to hear concerns such as Sayers' and Hoag's above about the privileging of improvisation and composition within an ostensibly hierarchical creativity framework, it is equally important to consider these concerns as indicative of a lower order perspective that is ill-suited to breaking free from this self-perpetuating horizontal confinement.

Who is equipped to teach musicianship in the 21st century?

Further groundwork has been established to address this question, which was posed earlier. From the standpoint of the higher order identity shift, entirely new frameworks based in the CICIP model and taught by practicing/professional CICIPs need to become the norm. I trust it is clear that I am not talking about instructors for whom improvising and composing may be, as it were, a hobby, or pedagogical enhancement (which is valuable but only part of a much broader picture). I am talking about the need for students to be in the presence of artists who embody the same kind of professional—and spiritual—immersion in a domain that we see in top practitioners across fields, whether physics, mathematics, medicine or sport. Just as we would presume a violin major would study the instrument with a top professional practitioner on that instrument, why not the same when it comes to improvisation and composition in musicianship coursework (and elsewhere)? These criteria need also be key to hiring and tenure/promotion.

Colleagues who have invoked the creative identity shift, typically early on in their development, will be far more disposed to advocate, and equipped to administer, a corresponding approach to core musicianship terrain, and transmit not only skills but an aesthetic awareness to students. While clearly the professional expertise of the Reflections authors is extraordinary in other areas related to music theory, there is little in what can be inferred from their bios—and their commentary—that they meet the above criteria for 21st century musicianship pedagogy. Which is consistent with what I typically encounter in the field.

And while it is important to acknowledge that musicianship coursework is at a number of schools taught by professional composers, this must be recognized as but partial movement in the direction I am talking about; even if composers improvise during the composing process, this is not to be conflated with the path of the improvising musician (who in this instance also composes as part of the CICP process scope), grounding in an improvised music aesthetics, and so on. Here a conspicuously marginalized topic in change discourse is the need for what I call a 21st century “rhythmic intelligence,” rooted significantly—though not exclusively—in African American practice. Even a cursory look at musicians who excel in these capacities— Steve Coleman, Vijay Ayer, George Lewis, to name a few MacArthur fellows of the past decade, and other notables such as Jane Ira Bloom, Esperanza Spaulding, and Bobby McFerrin—underscores these points. Whereas European classical music is typically cited as the primary source for “common practice” Western harmony, African American music needs to be acknowledged as the primary source of 21st century rhythmic common practice—a realm whose mastery requires as rigorous a program of study and practice as any other. I very much doubt that this principle factors prominently if at all in even the most progressive conversations about musicianship (I would invite any of the above authors to cite exceptions), and if it did, the question inevitably arises—where will we fit this additional foundational area?

Again, only through a vertical shift, rooted in a creativity-driven transformation in artistic identity, will horizontal challenges be met. But here another issue arises, involving ethnocentric patterns in conventional as well as lower order curricular discourse, even as the latter lays claim to diversity, that preclude serious consideration of the significant tools black music offers these challenges.

Diversity/Race

Stepping back for a moment from any particular form of diversity, here is where a higher order understanding of the individual voice is pivotal. When Sayrs “worr(ies) about what it means to encounter other cultures for the primary purpose of developing your own artistic voice,” she provides a clear example of a lower order diversity lens shrouding higher order principles. She also, as Hoag does earlier, distorts the actual wording of the Manifesto, conflating her term ‘purpose’ with the term ‘locus’ that is used in the report. When the Manifesto states that “the primary *locus* for cultivation of a genuine, cross-cultural musical and social awareness is the infusion of diverse influences in the creative artistic voice,” it identifies a deep interior basis for broader cultural infusion, not the confining of this quest within narrow, individually defined boundaries. Consider, however, how significantly the meaning shifts when ‘purpose’ is used instead in that sentence. Whereas ‘locus’ refers to the establishment of an inner platform for apprehending and cultivating deep connections with the outer musical world, ‘purpose’ in this

context suggests a kind of self-centered, distanced orientation in which the impetus is to mine what one can from various musical sources with little regard for cultural origins, let alone any subsequent relationship with those sources. And, consistent with this misreading, thus Sayers erroneously concludes that “what we are actually being asked to embrace is not diversity per se, but the use of diversity for the construction of an individual "genuine global artistic identity." Nothing could be further from the Manifesto’s words and vision.

The above patterns are characteristic of what I call an overarching “diversity gloss,” where amid a general appeal for a more pluralistic music studies paradigm, overlooked are important “diversity topographies” that are key to a more comprehensive approach to this all-important topic. The higher order creativity vision already considered, and ramifications of lower order vs. higher order conceptions of creativity, are but one example of areas that neglected. Another involves the important contributions inherent in African American music to 21st century cross-cultural/transcultural navigation, related to which both social justice and musical casualties of the diversity gloss might be noted. I am continually flabbergasted that conversations on diversity in music studies in America transpire oblivious to the 1) highly charged black-white racial backdrop that grips our nation and world, and 2) the extraordinary musicianship resources black music brings to the broader quest. On the first account, it is simply not part of the culture of music studies discourse, even with ever-escalating pro-diversity rhetoric, to seriously engage with race, which fuels—on the second account—continued marginalization of key musicianship foundations. Jazz, for example, is the most robust site in which the systematic approach to improvisation noted above is found. The point is not that jazz encompasses the totality of what today’s musicians need, but that it is invaluable as a self-transcending gateway that opens up to a broader expanse. The horizontal confinement of lower order thinking is oblivious to this paradigmatically progressive view of curriculum and pedagogy. And as I examine below, the CMS Task Force that produced the Manifesto was not immune to these lower order, veiled ethnocentric/racist patterns.

But here I am curious about Sayers’ remarks in response to the Manifesto’s acknowledgement of “African American music” as an important source of tools, when she notes that “jazz record sales are even lower than classical, (though) there are other reasons for studying jazz.” What is the reason for pointing out that jazz record sales are low, other than to challenge the Manifesto’s advocacy of African American music? Moreover, why not bring into the conversation rap or hip-hop, where record sales probably dwarf those of most other genres? When she then seems to qualify her stance by stating there are ‘other reasons’ for studying jazz, she never mentions what these might be. Sensing nonetheless from her words that she, perhaps among the five authors, has reflected on diversity issues beyond the politically correct stance on this issue that pervades music studies and its reform conversation, I would be keen to hear her thoughts on this particular (benefits of black music) issue, and diversity more broadly construed.

I am also interested in her and others’ account of what kinds of conversation transpires about black music from social justice standpoints, in music theory circles. In other words, to what extent are questions like these placed front and center: Inasmuch as African American music is undeniably at the heart of American (and much global) musical culture and practice, where is its place in the core musicianship curriculum? As add-on/ornament to a largely European orientation? If so, why? What are the ramifications of this orientation in light of the Black Lives

Matter movement? Might there be an argument for—as I title a chapter in a new book (Sarath, Myers, Campbell 2016)—a Black Music Matters movement?

I pose these questions not only because they are consistent with my and the Manifesto's recognition of African American music as uniquely rich in 21st century core musicianship properties, but also from a critical inquiry standpoint. Inasmuch as our individual thinking is, at least to some degree, shaped by our professional affiliations, I believe participants in deliberations about curricular and aesthetic worldviews need to be vigilant about assumptions they may have inherited from their respective fields. My pedagogical views on jazz and black music aside, I have from my earliest days as assistant professor been an outspoken critic of the jazz education paradigm that has largely taken hold in music studies. Rhetoric along these lines was toned down by my colleagues on the Task Force prior to the release of the Manifesto, which brought back recollections of admonishment I would receive years ago from faculty mentors: "You know you will be needing letters from some of these (jazz education) people in your tenure file."

Regardless of whether or not one agrees with my assessment of jazz studies, my point is that I have stepped back and critically interrogated—from its conceptual underpinnings on up—my primary professional discipline, and delineated an entirely new paradigm. I want to see this kind of inquiry, even it results in arguments in support of conventional paradigms, to be the norm among all participants in change conversations. While we see in the Reflections arguments that music theory has expanded its horizons in the past 15 years or so, which is really not that long a time frame, we see very little (not just in Laitz's thoughts), of critical reflection of a paradigmatic nature. Let's face it: The inertia of both the conventional model and also lower order change discourse is fierce: Unless colleagues commit to intensive introspection into the conceptual patterns and practices that have been inherited *from both paradigms*, the prospects that the kind of liberation that is possible and urgently needed are minimal. As a white male, I am continually reminded that work on both fronts—whiteness and maleness—is a lifelong endeavor. The idea that the field of music theory, let alone music studies at large, which from its inception has been predicated on the inherent superiority of European classical music (and arguably male practitioners within that tradition), could possibly in a bit over a decade (a time span intimated in the Reflections) have established a culture of robust critical inquiry into these roots is preposterous; if anything this only underscores how deeply are the racist and sexist tendencies rooted.

I gain very little sense from the Reflections on the Manifesto that it is yet foreign to the culture of music theory's progressive wing, let alone its mainstream, to engage in this kind of critical interrogation on diversity.

Internal controversies on the Task Force

As stated above, the CMS Task Force that produced the Manifesto was not immune to these patterns. Given the fact that the report literally went viral on a global scale, I have often thought that it might be highly valuable to the field if the various controversies encountered in the formulation of the report might be brought to light. I was thus happy to see Juan Chattah mention in his introductory comments to the Reflections that "not all perspectives of TF members made it

into the final document,” even if he and I might cite different examples of this and assess them differently. In my view, the fact that lower order arguments did not pre-empt the higher order thrust of the Manifesto is key to its strong impact as a visioning catalyst.

To give an example along epistemological lines; one task force member, not a CICIP, felt the document over-emphasized improvisation and proposed a significantly emended version with the term deleted at strategic points (including the systematic approach to improvisation studies passage that to me is the essence of the document). Another member took that thinking further in insisting on a platform that, instead of “privileging creativity” as the document was characterized, would aim toward what was described as a “broader, and more integrative approach.” Yet never were organizing principles elucidated that would lead to that unitive approach, nor a breadth identified that matched what the Manifesto would ultimately advocate. Again, a lower order horizontal lens—just as seen in the above authors’ Reflections—that is oblivious to all-important vertical dimensions, and their self-transcending capacities, generated adverse reactions to a higher order document and attempted to reduce its scope even under the guise of expansion.

There were also controversies along cultural lines, particularly when it came to mention of African American music. In an earlier version of the Manifesto that was (even) longer than the final report, a task force member objected to the over-emphasis on jazz. Having long encountered lower order readings of jazz that overlook the powerful tools it offers 21st century musical navigation, I had been cautious all along and tried to use the term sparingly in drafting the Manifesto. Evidently I was not cautious enough. I did an immediate word find and word count, only to discover that in a document of almost 16,000 words, the word jazz appeared but a few handful of times, often in sentences that listed an array of genres (e.g. classical, jazz, Brazilian choro, Persian dastagh, etc.) to emphasize the need for greater cultural breadth. Yet, astonishingly, this was deemed “jazz privileging.”

While readers may interpret this particular anecdotal example however they wish, I believe it strongly confirms my above thoughts about the extent to which music studies reform remains confined to a notably embryonic level of diversity discourse in general, and is prone to deeply entrenched ethnocentric/racist tendencies when it comes to black music in particular. Again, one does not just declare a pro-diversity commitment and then move forward without also committing to the hard work that we all need to do to dig deep into the bedrock of racism we all carry. Here I believe the intimate link between diversity/black music and musicianship needs to be recognized as a key gateway to the next wave of visioning in our field. While few would likely take issue with my assertion that music studies has yet to seriously grapple with the issue of race, my parallel assertion that music studies has yet to seriously grapple with the issue of musicianship—which I do not believe can be considered apart from race—will likely raise some eyebrows. My experience on the Task Force, deliberations that have transpired in the aftermath of the Manifesto’s appearance (including the Reflections on that report), and related events (see the accompanying essay), support this assessment.

Happily, task force leadership prevailed along both epistemological and cultural lines and allowed a document to emerge undiluted which would potentially make maximal contributions to a field in urgent need of new ways of thinking and action. But if the contributions of the

Manifesto are to be fully harnessed, it needs to be read through a higher order lens. Above, I have distinguished between lower and higher conceptions of creativity, diversity, and integration. As important are distinctions between lower and higher order conceptions of critical inquiry—without which this important area will remain yet another among the litany of change buzzwords.

Higher Order Critical Integrity: Multiple Paradigms principle

Central here is what I call the “Multiple Paradigms Principle,” the basic idea for which could not be more simple: It is not enough to advance a given account in respect to one or more aims (e.g. the three pillars). Rather, it is essential to frame a given account in contrast with at least one alternative framework. Brief considerations of lower and higher order approaches to creativity, diversity, and integration in the above analysis are an example, with the same principles applicable to other areas. In other words, I distinguish between two paradigms. Moreover, while change advocates are accustomed to defining their preferred approach in distinction to conventional practice, the multiple paradigms criterion takes visioning a significant further step in requiring the juxtaposition of one’s preferred position in contrast *to another change platform*. As just seen with diversity, it is not sufficient to proclaim a pro-diversity platform without critically interrogating how it compares to some competing diversity platform. Otherwise, both the inertia of the conventional, neoEurocentric framework, and that of the lower order platform that seeks to modify it, will continue to constrain progress. Among the reasons that I characterize the Manifesto as a higher order document is that it fulfills the multiple paradigm criterion by distinguishing its conception of creativity, diversity, and integration from prevailing views on these topics.

In my own work, I take this a step further by delineating two higher order platforms, one creativity based, another consciousness based, and thus am able to situate my advocacy within a yet expanded scope. Thus, in addition to even more developed readings of the three pillars, I differentiate between lower and higher order approaches to technology, entrepreneurship, student-centered learning, teacher training, critical thinking, and other areas. Again, I do not in any way therefore suggest that the models I advance are thus to be embraced as the final authority, but simply wish to indicate that I have had to step back and critically examine my assumptions against not just one (lower order) but two alternative (also another higher order competitor) platforms to frame my perspectives. I invite the above authors to do the same, and believe that if this practice were widespread it could revolutionize the integrity of critical discourse in our field. I do not believe we would see the gross misrepresentations of the Manifesto to which the Reflections authors have succumbed, were this protocol in place. This approach sheds new light on not only the terrain of musicianship studies, the faculty profile of who teaches it, but also heightens critical examination of the profile of those engaged in change conversations. While change discourse must always include all voices, it must also be grounded in a culture whereby all participants critically interrogate the worldviews and assumptions of all voices.

Here I might also note that while I was happy to see some mention in the Reflections of the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*, which I view as a rich source of interesting information and ideas on musicianship instruction, I find very little critical inquiry in that journal of a

paradigmatic nature—in other words, inquiry that penetrates to the most foundational assumptions of the field itself, and certainly that which juxtaposes serious and informed investigation along the above lines of contrasting paradigms. I find the *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* to be a considerably more robust resource of this kind.

Closing thoughts

As I read and reread the above authors' essays, I marvel at the enormous things I am sure I could learn from each of them in their respective classrooms, let alone from them collectively. Perhaps the feeling might even be somewhat mutual were they to witness my work. But this is not about what any of us do as individuals, it is about overarching patterns in a field that is urgently in need of a new level of visioning and corresponding practice. I have attempted to further delineate the parameters of a new level of visioning, upon which the Manifesto is based, and remain convinced that the kind of change it identifies has, contrary to the thrust of the Reflections, yet to be achieved on any significant scale. Even viewing the Reflections from a lower order perspective, Snodgrass' admission that improvisation is minimal in musicianship coursework—despite Hoag's claims to the contrary—confirms my assessment. Hoag, for example, characterizes the “generalizations and claims made throughout the *Manifesto*” as “broad and baseless,” failing to “reflect what is happening in the majority of our classrooms right now.” I don't think Snodgrass would agree with that. Thus, while Sayrs and Snodgrass are justified in their insistence on the importance of data, this assumes that the data align with the arguments they intend to support.

And this is before examining these findings from a higher order perspective. Data that may appear compelling from a lower order perspective may be less so, if not even self-incriminating, from a higher order perspective. Little in Snodgrass' survey, or the authors' commentaries, indicates anything beyond the approach of creativity, diversity, and integration as add-ons to existing coursework; pedagogical aids. While, as I have stated, these pedagogical strategies are of value, the Manifesto advances a paradigmatically new approach to the three pillars. Therefore, even were a case to be made for the lower order accomplishments that be being claimed, these only underscore the significance of the higher order vision of the Manifesto.

In the accompanying essay (Sarath 2016 A), I cite a number of facets of the CMS Summit for 21st Century Music School Design, including the music theory breakout session, that are consistent with this assessment. While I have only positive things to say about Snodgrass' and her co-facilitators leadership at the session, she would likely agree with my assessment that the conversation that transpired was less far-reaching in terms of critically interrogating the theory paradigm than she had hoped. Even after my attempt to dislodge things, it fell back into a notably mainstream kind of dialogue. I could not help but wonder—where are all these progressive theorists, or at least the perspectives thereof, that purportedly have long been utilizing concepts from the Manifesto long before its appearance?

Therefore, while Sayrs does not mince words in response to comments made in the Manifesto that made her “bristle,” it is important to note that others may also bristle at her and other Reflections authors' reactions to, and as I have pointed out, misconceptions about the Manifesto. And of course, yet others may well bristle after reading my response to those Reflections, and

particularly my view that, as noted earlier, in order to move “beyond the Manifesto,” the music theory community and music studies at large must first move more deeply into it to take its next evolutionary strides. I take a further step in responding to the question I posed several times above—regarding who is most equipped to teach musicianship in the 21st century: I firmly believe the time has come for the field of Music Theory to relinquish the central role it has played in this core instruction in order that today’s students may 1) gain the broader spectrum of skills and understanding that they need, and also 2) that the extraordinary expertise of music theory colleagues may then be optimally harnessed—even if largely situated in the curricular upperstructure rather than the core—by these students. I believe that just as performance faculty typically play a recital as part of their interview process, musicianship faculty need to similarly display their prowess as professional improvisers and composers, with hands in diverse musical streams including the black roots of American musical culture, when they are considered for appointment and promotion.

While these views may depart from the norm, I find it difficult to imagine how anyone who believes in the importance of core musicianship to the success of our students in today’s world cannot place them front and center as the basis for a new paradigm (not just ornamental change).. However, not wishing to preclude such arguments, I believe the onus is as much on the music theory community to make a case for the conventional model, or some variation thereof, than for advocates for paradigmatic change to make their case. Until we actually see a coherent and compelling argument for conventional or modified conventional models, the perspectives advanced in the Manifesto must be taken as anything but what Hoag characterizes as “baseless.” I also believe it is incumbent upon the National Association of Schools of Music—from any number of the standpoints it has advocated, including creativity, diversity, integrative learning, relevance, sustainability of the field—to directly intercede in this central transition and make this important to the accreditation process.

Above all, I have sought to open up the conversation to new kinds of considerations and exchange by posing key questions that might enhance further deliberations. To those above I add the following in closing to the Reflections authors and anyone else who wishes to contribute:

If musicianship pedagogy exemplifies the principles delineated in the Manifesto, at least to some reasonable extent as is being claimed, then was there any need for a Task Force in the first place? Or might it be that, indeed music studies is still in need for review and reform, but music theory in fact is leading the pace when it comes to a viable 21st century vision? What would any such reform in other areas of music studies look like? Are we talking about foundational overhaul, or modifications to the existing model? To what extent might the music theory community be characterized as self-reflective, regularly engaging in critical interrogation of not only its practices but its status as a ‘paradigm’ among possible other models? How might the self-interrogative thrust of music theory be compared to other disciplines in music studies? To what extent do diversity conversations in the discipline center music studies issues within the black-white racial dynamics? More particularly, to what extent do colleagues who incorporate black music and other sources in their coursework critically examine the assumption that musicianship is fundamentally a European enterprise? And assuming that there is shared desire for any approach to open up connections to the broader musical landscape regardless of core or initial orientation—might the following question serve as an interesting, productive, and perhaps less

charged guide for conversation: What might be pros and cons for the modified conventional approach that centers European common practice harmony and opens up connections from that vantage point, and one that centers African American music (or some other cultural source) and opens up connections from there?

And as indicated earlier; with any response that these questions might elicit, I would celebrate corresponding questions that might be directed toward me (or others) that, as I have attempted, help clarify possible misconceptions, and refine the discourse. I believe this kind of communication will spawn ramifications that go far beyond music studies and extend to education and society at large.

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¹ Log on to symposium.music.org (which is within the College Music Society website) to see the Reflections. Under symposium page, select “components,” then scroll down to “CMS forums” and then scroll down to “Reflections on the Manifesto.” In order to view the Manifesto, scroll down further to “Transforming Music Study from Its Foundations: A Manifesto for Progressive Change in the Undergraduate Preparation of Music Majors.” The Manifesto is also available in Sarath, Myers, Campbell (2016).

² http://www.miami.edu/frost/index.php/frost/programs/experiential_music_curriculum/in is the link to the Experiential Music Curriculum at the University of Miami Frost School of Music. A presentation on this promising initiative at the June 2016 Summit for 21st Century Music School design similarly alluded to how it differed from what were characterized as the passive

and outmoded approaches that prevail in much musicianship coursework. I might add that I have been teaching for almost 25 years an improvisation-based approach to core curriculum music theory and aural skills, for classical performance and music education majors, at the University of Michigan that shares principles with the much newer Miami program.

³ Transforming Music Study from Its Foundations: A Manifesto for Progressive Change in the Undergraduate Preparation of Music Majors, p.11