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Keynote lecture: *Music in the digital space: tracing pedagogical places in the new sonic media*

Friday 10.06 at 10.00

Venue: Bergen University College, room TBA

Keywords: Music education, digital culture, popular music, pedagogy, philosophy

Abstract: In this keynote I explore a variety of digital environments and actions that define these environments as musical places with an interest of discussing an alternative philosophical rationale for general music education. I will begin from an observation that, musical agencies are increasingly constructed in late modern society without the intervention of music educators. I propose that this observation should guide the empirical attention of music educators to late modern digital sonic practices, and convince them that, instead of lamenting the loss of their pedagogical authority in formal contexts, they should look forward to tracing places in digitally mediated networks that empower themselves to be co-authors of musical meaning. I will also suggest that such circumstances, places are not only traced, but also traded, as pedagogical actions and interactions become redefined as cultural transactions that constantly define new musical agencies and identities.

I will root my discussion philosophically in the tradition of critical pragmatism, arguing that, music education profession has a need to anchor its empirical observations of musical practices with critical theory, without subsuming to the pessimism of negative dialectics. One obvious field of interest where this is relevant is contemporary popular music, which is increasingly mass mediated with the aid of business-oriented models, and which involves a heavy concentration of cultural signifiers around simple marketable concepts as a basis of its global appeal. From the standpoint of critical pragmatism, it is possible – and relevant – to partake pedagogically in transactions of commercial digital music culture without losing one's critical perspective on how the market place produces musical agencies and identities.

Key questions addressed by the lecture:

How are musical agencies and places of musicking constructed in today's digital spaces?

How is musicianship defined in and by today's digital culture(s)?

In your eye, what kinds of musical agencies and places of musicking should music education focus on in years to come?

Recommended reading:

Miller, P. (DJ Spooky). 2008. *Sound Unbound*. MIT Press.

Miller, K. 2012. *Playing Along: Digital Games, YouTube, and Virtual Performance*. Oxford.

Väkevä, L. 2012. Digital Artistry and Mediation: (Re)mixing Music Education. *National Society for the Study of Education* 111(1): 177-195.

Preparations for the session:

Familiarize yourself with the above-mentioned texts. Write some critical notes while you read and choose one point you want to contest. Also, think, and write short notes, about what kinds of musical actions, agencies, and values are highlighted in current music education climate in your own country: What kinds of musicians are educated and why? Whose interests are served?