Associate Professor Alex Ruthmann, New York University (USA)

Alex Ruthmann is Associate Professor of Music Education and Music Technology at NYU Steinhardt where he teaches courses at the intersection of music, education, technology, design and entrepreneurship. Alex leads the NYU Music Experience Design Lab (MusEDLab.org), which researches and co-designs new technologies and experiences for music making, learning and engagement with youth, school, community, and industry partners. Alex is Past President of the Association for Technology in Music Instruction, and currently serves as Associate Editor for the Journal of Music, Technology and Education. He is Co-Editor of the forthcoming Oxford Handbook of Technology and Music Education with Roger Mantie, and Co-Editor of the forthcoming Routledge Companion to Music, Technology and Education with Andrew King and Evangelos Himonides. At New York University Ruthmann has launched over 20 software and experience design projects with partners such as the New York Philharmonic, PBS, Herbie Hancock, Peter Gabriel, Theolonius Monk Institute of Jazz, UNESCO, and the Urban Arts Partnership.

Lecture: *Design-based approaches to creating musical technologies and experiences with and for young people and educators*

Wednesday 23.11 at 09.00 Auditorium 128, Bjørn Christiansens Hus

Keywords: music experience design, design-based research, collaborative design

Abstract: Technologies for music making and learning are most often designed without the input and active involvement of the educators and children who will use them. Most technologies originate as a professional or amateur tools with all of the necessary complexities that interfaces for music making for experienced users require. These software programs, hardware, and apps are often adopted for use in education because they are exemplar tools used by professionals in the music industry.

In the hands of an experienced music technologist educator, these tools can be adeptly integrated into use with less experienced and novice student users in engaging ways. However, the complexity of these tools can often mean teaching much about the technology before getting to creative music making. Facing the current reality that music and arts teachers around the world are finding less and less time in schools with their students, it can be challenging to take time away from more traditional music education experiences to make room for creative uses of technology.

This presentation will provide a peek into a user-centered, design-based approach collaborative design and development of new technologies and experiences for music making, learning and engagement together with young people, educators, cultural non-profits, and industry partners at the NYU Music Experience Design Lab (MusEDLab). Though the MusEDLab context is unique, I will share practical strategies, design processes, and a web-based development and data collection platform that can be adapted by researchers, in-service teachers and teacher educators for creative music making and learning directly with music children want to experience. The iterative "design studio" approach used in the MusEDLab will be presented and workshopped through hands-on experiences in the session.

Key questions addressed by the lecture:

How can young people and educators be engaged in the collaborative design of curriculum and technologies to support learning?

How might technology and curriculum design activities be structured as research inquiry?

What might be afforded through an application of design-based inquiry methods to improve music learning and teaching?

Recommended reading:

Gothelf, Jeff & Seiden, Josh (2013). LeanUX: Applying Lean Principle to Improve User Experience Design. Sebastapol, California: O'Reilly Media.

Dirksen, Julie. (2015). Design for How People Learn (2nd edition). San Francisco: New Riders.

Brown, Andrew. (2002). Experience design and interactive software in music education. Visions of Research in Music Education, 20. Retrieved from http://www-usr.rider.edu/vrme~/.

Preparation for the session:

Browse the various projects online at http://musedlab.org/