

AESTHETIC BECOMING AS BECOMING OF AESTHETICS: AN EMERGING MANIFESTO FOR CALLING THE TUNE IN MUSIC EDUCATION

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This article presents a manifesto for music education based on the concept of *aesthetic becoming as becoming of aesthetics*: a process through which aesthetics emerges and evolves in relation to people, materials, and practices. Drawing on critical theory, posthumanist thinking, and music education research, the authors argue that music education should be a space for transformation, cultural agency, and ethical reflection. The article explores how aesthetic experience and musical practice can be understood as *world-making*, and how the notion of *aesthetic becoming* contributes to a more inclusive and pluralistic approach to music education. Through a range of theoretical perspectives and practical examples, six principles are proposed as a foundation for a new orientation in music education and research.

INTRODUCTION

Aesthetics describes a sensibility towards what cannot be put to words, yet what interprets and shapes our world perhaps more profoundly than language itself. However, aesthetics also divides and defines: It becomes a battlefield where struggles between classes, cultures and subcultures (may) unfold.

More than any other art form, music permeates our daily lives and societies in ways that are embodied, intimate, and often invisible. Different aesthetics of music may thrive side by side, contributing to a vibrant cultural diversity widely regarded as an asset. Yet music also functions as a force of social ordering (DeNora, 2000), and in this sense, it is not entirely innocent. “Who pays the piper?” one might ask—and while music in democratic societies is unrestricted and increasingly ubiquitous, the question “who calls the tune?” remains a vexed one, especially in the context of music education: Which music to teach? Whose? Why?

In this text, we seek to pave a path for music education by proposing a new foundation—inherently normative, not because we advocate a fixed set of values, but because any such foundation must engage with the question of how music education can contribute to a better world. Hence, a manifesto. As DeNora (2000, p. 20) reminds us, “control over music in social settings is a source of social power.” Music education must be reimagined as a space for cultural agency, ethical reflection, and democratic participation.

Aesthetic becoming as becoming of aesthetics. *Aesthetic becoming* understood as the *becoming of aesthetics* is proposed as a conceptual proposition within this manifesto: A way of framing how aesthetic experience and musical engagement might actively contribute to shaping individuals and communities. In this sense, the manifesto does not prescribe fixed values, but affirms that music education inevitably involves a commitment to envisioning and enacting better ways of being together through music.

What does that mean, and how might it reframe our thinking about music education? *Aesthetic becoming as becoming of aesthetics* shifts attention from ideals to processes. It involves reclaiming aesthetics as a mode of sensing, feeling, and, foremost, as *world-making*. It invites us to ask: What new possibilities emerge when we centre becoming as the ground of aesthetic experience? How might music education become a site not of reproduction, but of transformation?

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Crowther (2021) argues for an “Aesthetics of self-becoming”. While we concur that aesthetics and aesthetic education should empower and promote the development of self-authority and individuality, we aim to demonstrate how, in music education in particular, aesthetic becoming does so by relating to the world. Drawing on and weaving together multiple positions from music education, educational research, sociology, and philosophy, we argue that a specific form of relationality—particularly relevant to music education—emerges. Here, aesthetic becoming and the becoming of aesthetics orbit one another, relationally enacting a co-generative and co-enacted process that reflects the ontological pluralism of aesthetics and becoming.

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON AESTHETICS AND AESTHETIC BECOMING

Formative aesthetic education and Bildung

In Denmark and across Scandinavia, aesthetics plays a key role in the widely influential music educational thinking of the late Professor Frede V. Nielsen. In his *Almen Musikdidaktik (General Didactics of Music)*, first published in 1994, he links aesthetic experience and aesthetic becoming to the concept of *Bildung* (“*dannelse*” in Danish). He establishes that music, as an art form, belongs to the realm of the aesthetic. From this foundation, he formulates how *Bildung* in relation to music begins with the encounter between an aesthetic (musical) object and an experiencing subject, that is, a perceiving and interpreting individual. This encounter gives rise to an aesthetic experience that is potentially formative and transformative, and which may lead to existential development. In turn, this development opens the subject and the world toward one another, creating the possibility for personal growth and *Bildung* (Klafki, 1963). Music education thus comes to be centred around the appreciation and comprehension of musical works; the perspective of the listener.

Such an inherently formative view upon music and music education have been challenged by praxial music philosophy (Elliott, 1995; Small, 1998) that, rejecting aesthetics, claims that aesthetic becoming with regards to music should rather be connected to the *doing* of music, which does not rely on aesthetic apprehension, but on participation and relationships.

While praxialism certainly expresses an essentiality of music and is a necessary corrective to music educational thinking that has been overfocused on canonised musical works or particular musical skills, we claim, however, that such a philosophy, on the other hand, is also insufficient.

Music is a phenomenon of our current world—something we apprehend and appreciate, and through which musical praxis becomes recognisable. We propose that music-making entails the emergence of a particular phenomenality: The experiential quality by which a situation becomes musical. This phenomenality enables music to be perceived as art, and allows for the reception, use, and circulation of musical works and sonic materials, including those transmitted via electronic media.

Whose Aesthetics? Which aesthetics? Aesthetics where and where not?

Thus, the emergence of *musical aesthetics* when connected to the comprehension of music as a phenomenon cannot be disregarded as merely a cultural idealisation. However, when aesthetics becomes fixed to the notion of the aesthetic object, questions of value inevitably emerge and present themselves as binaries of good-and-bad, beautiful-and-ugly, etc.: *Which music is good, and which not?* This need not be controversial. Yet, because the aesthetic dimension is also formative, the educational dimension becomes inherently moral and political. The question for music education becomes, as initially raised by British music education researcher Stephanie Pitts (2001): Whose aesthetics and from which disciplinary area?

In a Danish school context, Music is considered an arts-based subject, but it has not always been like that. Until the 1970s Music as a subject in the school was closely connected to formative education and religious and national upbringing. Becoming an arts-based subject set Music free as a subject in its own right, but at the same time, it relegated music as subject to the realm of the less important. While there has been an ongoing discussion within the field of music education about contents and goals and the role of music education in general education, political discussion about general education is hardly ever concerned with music¹.

The transformation of music into an art-based subject has broadened its scope, but also raised new fundamental questions for educators: Which music should they teach, and on what basis?

Asking the question “whose aesthetics?”, Pitts (2001) offered an overview of contemporary debates surrounding the music curriculum in British schools, set against a historical trajectory similar to that of Denmark: Music had shifted from being a formative subject to becoming an independent, arts-based discipline, and at the present state the debate was about broadening the perspective to encompass the multitude of ways in which people interact with music in present society with a growing emphasis on inclusivity. The accessibility of

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music expanded exponentially during the 20th century, a trend that has only increased for the past 25 years with the rise of digitalisation, the internet and emergence of streaming services. On one hand music – as a sonic product – is ubiquitous and seeps into all aspects of everyday life and society. On the other, the sheer abundance of choices has rendered *taste* an increasingly individual matter. It is almost as if each singular individual now inhabits their own distinct music culture, and to ground music education in any shared or common music culture seems increasingly futile.

From the English as well as the Danish perspective, Pitts's question from 24 years ago appears just as relevant today: When music is arts-based and music education is aesthetic education, the question remains: Which music by whom and for whom is to be included in a curriculum; how and why, and who gets to decide?

***Bildung* and Aesthetics in society: Evaluating Critical Theory.**

Critical theory already a century ago disrupted the philosophical conversation about beauty, art, and aesthetics. Drawing on Marxian analysis, it emphasized how aesthetics is constantly evolving as they become embedded in society's changing structures of production. Adorno, in particular, focused on the development of music in society, formulating what DeNora (2000, p. 1) calls “the music and society nexus.” He argued that beauty cannot be safeguarded by any philosophical doctrine or category, yet it is certainly not merely “in the eye of the beholder”. Aesthetics becomes as art is interwoven with societal structures: Art can serve as a force for emancipation, but also as a tool of domination and social control. Who, then, gets to decide what is beautiful?

Aesthetic becoming as *Bildung* encapsulates this tension. From a critical perspective, the question of *Bildung* becomes as controversial as the question of “Whose aesthetics?” As much as *Bildung* expresses a desire for emancipation, self-authority, and freedom, it also becomes a matter of education—of knowledge, values, and (en)culturation. This raises the question: “Whose *Bildung*?” Aesthetic *Bildung* and aesthetic education become tied to cultural values, and the aesthetic becomes something one can succeed or fail at. Belonging to a certain class may mean being able to perform a certain kind of aesthetic experience—such as sitting through a string quartet performance and expressing appreciation.

Art as a cultural phenomenon means dominance and class demarcation. *Bildung* for some, and easily consumable aesthetic products for the uneducated masses. Art, however, Adorno claimed, as the productive activity represents the possibility of resistance. The inherent

subjectivity of aesthetic experience cannot escape that the aesthetic object represents a material and factual objectivity because it is *produced*. There is resistance in the aesthetic object itself. It is produced, not only by an aesthetic subject, but by society, and hence it is also a fact of society. Society is embedded in the aesthetic object as the aesthetic object is embedded in society. The more, society wants or desires from the aesthetic object – such as beauty, expression (of freedom, spirituality, and, foremost, subjectivity) – the more the aesthetic object can *object*. In *Philosophy of New Music* (1949/1975), Adorno developed the idea that a composer can – in fact *should* – insist to resist or disregard beauty, in order to let music speak.

Adorno's theory of music was "grand" – monolithic and impenetrable (DeNora, 2000). It became possible for him to hail Arnold Schönberg as a composer who spoke the truth by letting the aesthetic object object, as opposed to other composers who spoke false as they hid the objection behind a sheen of pleasure and familiarity. In his analysis of the historic development that led to Schönberg and the current situation in music, however, Adorno seemed constrained by the very conception of music which dominated the tradition he was analyzing: The tradition of perceiving music as spiritual enlightenment and the musical work as the focal point of subjective expressivity and contemplation. Thus, the theory could not help appearing idiosyncratic, and as DeNora says, "Adorno's work also has the power to frustrate; his work offers no conceptual scaffolding from which to view music in the act of training unconsciousness, no consideration of how music gets into action." (DeNora, 2000, p. 2)

TOWARD AESTHETIC BECOMING

– Non-binary possibility spaces in understanding, mapping and shaping the future of music education

We now infer that a shift in focus is necessary in order to liberate the aesthetic in music education, through emphasising transformation, dynamism and emergence. Maintaining *aesthetic becoming* and *Bildung* as core elements in music education, we challenge static or binary notions of beauty and artistic value, which always points to what we can disagree on: *What is beautiful? What sounds good?* Taking inspiration from critical theory, we argue that aesthetics in artistic and educational practices holds emancipatory potential. Following Adorno, we acknowledge that art's critical force depends on its ability to resist instrumentalisation and to *let the object object* rather than affirm or please. In this light, we understand phenomenality as the condition under which music may appear as emergent other, as something that interrupts or reconfigures. It is this productive tension between experience and resistance that we see as central to the transformative power of art and to the notion of aesthetic becoming,

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understood as the unfolding of subjectivity and meaning through aesthetic experience.

In the following we explore how aesthetic experience in music—the apprehension of tones, timbre, sound, resonant materials, and embodied performance—can be understood as processes of becoming. Research in creativities—emphasizing the plural—helps illuminate how artistic practice is not only expressive but also generative, and how aesthetic experience is deeply tied to acts of making and becoming. The aesthetic object: The work, the piece of music, we assert, based on phenomenology, is itself becoming – not as a correlate of subjective experience or subjective achievement, but as a site of unfolding potential shaped by context, interaction, and interpretation.

We suggest that *aesthetic becoming as becoming of aesthetics* offers a possibility of change.

Proposing aesthetic becoming as the becoming of aesthetics, we aim to articulate a view of musical subjectivity that is not confined to the autonomous self, but emerges through evolving relationships between people, practices, and materials. Becoming, in this sense, involves the self—but a self that is always in formation, shaped by its entanglements with others and with the aesthetic and material conditions of musical practice. Drawing on Braidotti's (2019) notion of posthuman subjectivity² we understand aesthetic becoming as a creative praxis in which subjectivity unfolds through embodied engagement. This resonates with a *Bildung*-oriented perspective, where the self is not a fixed endpoint, but a dynamic process of formation through aesthetic and ethical encounters.

Post-human perspectives: troubling dualisms of aesthetic and artistic practice

If artists focus on the ontological supposition of *becoming* artistic (Braidotti, 2019), how is this captured as aesthetic practice? Artistic practices produce particular material performances that incorporate embodied movements and produce particular intensities of “making-with” materials (Haraway, 2016, p. 58, further theorised in Murris & Bozalek, 2019)³. The artist's identity drives artistic practices of becoming/embodying art(s), that constitute and are constituted by a diffractive creation process. What then do music educators do that connects and materialises as aesthetic becoming.

Artists offer theorisations of artistic engagements with places, people, histories and practices that invite explorations of/on/through aesthetic education. Artists, according to Hickey-Moody et al. (2016, p. 217), connect these roles of aesthetic and artistic which “allows pasts to fold back into presents in unexpected ways, bodies ... to become other than who they have been, and corporeal forms [to change] physically and emotionally”. It is this plasticity of “dancing into the unknown” (Barbour, 2018, p. 79) involving the reshaping, remoulding and resetting of materials, ideas and self (as expressed through and with the body), that allows the spontaneity of *meetings* – a multiplicity of engagements – and creates the momentum of artistic and aesthetic practices. This onto-epistemological *becoming* with the moments and momentum of artistic and aesthetic doings, as evidenced in the physicality of performing or composing and indeed listening to music, the feature of making-with materials involves the openness and “response-ability” (Haraway, 2016) of a “body-mind” (Murriss, 2016) to what is forming aesthetically and artistically. This view of “form” – not as a container made by pre-existing, pre-determined constraints abstracted from self – is significantly different from many views of aesthetic music education (as structures, material organisers and ontological ways of being a musician) that we encounter in our work (see Weaver & Snaza, 2015; Lather & St. Pierre, 2013).

Developing a menu of possibilities for aesthetic becoming in music education requires us to develop a manifesto for a more pluralistic, multidirectional view of music education “propagating outward” (Barad, 2007, p. 76) beyond/across/within disciplinary boundaries. Barad is particularly interested in *how disciplinary boundaries are (re)made*. With this focus, we move towards a recasting of aesthetic music education to see and re-see how the salience of practices and knowledges *merge* with new understandings of how, when and where we are “making-with” each other and the world rather than merely creating representations of aesthetic “reality” (Barad, 2007, p. 139). Here we seek to de-couple the specific language of a discipline from its original context to open up new possibilities for making-with disciplines. Transdisciplinarity de-territorialises aesthetic practices, producing a new type of generative activity. Disciplines can thus be untangled to make new, posthumanist re-seeings of the potential for decentring the human and recognising the role of more-than-human elements, shifting our notions of materials from inert things waiting to be manipulated by human skill and control (Ingold, 2009) to active “ontological heterogeneous partners” (Haraway, 2016, p. 17) engaging with us in “*material-discursive practices of aesthetic becoming*” (Murriss, 2016, pp. 6–7).

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If we take a feminist new materialist lens then the concepts of *diffraction* and *diffractive analysis* become ways of enquiring into the *ontologies of difference* and *relationality* that underscore the interconnectedness of aesthetic and artistic practices⁴. What does this mean for music/arts education? What are the sites for contesting aesthetic education as a “generative and productive way of knowing – and mattering – that are more multiple, complex, and discontinuous than the master/dominant discourses of White, Western, colonial patriarchy” (Taylor, 2020, p. 5), and therefore, in both practice and research, are generative sites at which to “become in-tune-with” (Taylor, 2020, p. 5)? What matters when we radically re-situate, and indeed deconstruct, forms of new knowing, re-seeing and re-doing, through an extension of the interconnectedness of artistic practices and aesthetic education?

Let us give you an example. In a study (Burnard et al., 2021) which explored the multi-dimensional nature of musical silence in performance genres, attention was drawn to the role of silence as an aesthetic judgement in establishing an authorial voice. This work sought to further understanding of how the relation between silence and sound can affect aesthetic judgements of/on differing temporality, spatiality and texture, and how aesthetic judgements impact the audience’s perception and the sensing of its relational activity in music performance. Applying a diffractive analysis of silence in relation to sound provided insights into what constitutes an authorial voice in aesthetic education.

By paying close attention to the encounter and the resultant patterns and difference making, we can develop a diffractive methodology of aesthetics that is situated, experiential, material, affective and dictated by dimensions of each arts discipline, especially music⁵. The ontological understanding of subjectivity is an endless process of becoming. We see this in the aesthetic sensemaking of musical enactments with the “vital materiality” or “material vibrancy” (Bennett, 2010, p. xiii) that runs through and across bodies, both human and nonhuman, and emerges as aesthetic becomings. This perspective invites a rethink to address our co-constitutive entanglements with nonhuman entities which is made visible in the experience and enactment of any music performance. Here we are proposing a shift in emphasis toward the dynamic unfoldings of humans and nonhumans.

But, how is this type of aesthetic becoming playing out in higher education? As a segue to thinking about music education in higher education which emphasises the openness and possibility of the future, let us explore the plurality of aesthetics in relation to creativities.

Aesthetics and Creativities: What Matters?

It is no surprise why creativities research (which sees all creativity as inherently multiple and diverse) attests to the disruption of dominant framings of learning and teaching over the last twenty years. In light of the radical shifts that the twenty-first century anthropocene are producing in terms of what it means to be human (and more than human), the imperative for locating, differentiating and theorizing multiple creativities, generated by expanding domain-specific and domain-general approaches, involves forms of authorship and judgments (i.e., who and how creates) which are essential to aesthetic education (Burnard & Colucci-Gray, 2020).

The understanding and operationalization of seeing and doing and co-authoring things differently, by deviating from established pathways are, as argued by Harwood et al. (2017), confront us head-on with “the hegemony of developmental and neoliberalized conceptions of subject learning” (p. 176). What if aesthetic education could offer *a new vision for developing participatory practice possibilities in order to catalyze change?*

Diverse and differentiated creativities urge us to rethink and re-vision the way we author new knowledge, new learning, and new ways of engaging with the aesthetic experience and teaching in a world of fast-changing educational landscapes. Teachers find teaching for creativity and teaching creatively (Cremin & Chappell, 2019)—along with documenting creative pedagogies in the years of formal schooling—a challenge. In addition to this, there is an impact on student creativity demanded by standardization and risk-averse approaches. Yet there are still teachers and researchers who have found a way to ignite, enliven, and foster wonderment and aesthetic awareness in their classrooms by *acknowledging diverse creativities across an integrated ecology*.

An increasing emphasis on creativity in the teaching of subjects and for teaching creatively, particularly in sciences, but equally as well as arts, indicates the ongoing importance and need to prioritize meaningful embodied learning with material enactments of learning that creativity, no matter how hard to define, or which creativity we are educating for, can be learned and taught aesthetically.

Diversifying and pluralizing creativities displaces the whole panoply of what we see as aesthetic education. Fostering multiple creativities can play a crucial role. This comes in realizing transformational change from co-authorship which is redefining what pupils, families, and our communities need from our schools; what educators need to thrive in the profession; and what our pupils need to flourish in their

“ Facilitated creative processes among participants who are not necessarily musically ambitious.

lives. Thus, thinking through the ways in which educating for diverse creativities is a bold new agenda in this post-pandemic and digital era. This addresses the initial question posed at the outset of this article concerning Stephanie Pitts “whose aesthetics?”

Reconfiguring the concept of “creativities” as a core element of aesthetic education allows us to rethink one of the most significant concepts in society. From this premise, the plurality of creativities (rather than the outmoded singular use of creativity) addresses a performative space (rather than a representational space) acknowledging different and diverse enactments of aesthetic education.

What if the aesthetic is a performance?

**A phenomenological perspective on music-making:
Aesthetics’ contextuality**

If the aesthetic is understood as a performance, we open new ways of studying and framing the productive act in music—and begin to question the assumed objectivity of the aesthetic object, whether in artistic practice, educational settings, or research contexts. As we suggested earlier—drawing on Adorno—it is precisely the productive aspect of music that may hold emancipatory potential within education. Reframing the aesthetic as performance invites us to rethink this very notion of productivity. Too often, productivity is linked to the creation of products—objects, things, events—ultimately, goods that are fit for purpose, meet certain (aesthetic) criteria, and can be circulated within systems of further production.

We have suggested (Bruun, 2023) how *music’s phenomenality can be understood as becoming*: the objectivity of the aesthetic experience in music cannot be claimed as a cultural factuality (e.g. Nielsen) as this will in turn put too much weight on subjectivity; but neither can the objectivity be disregarded as abstract, constructed or fictitious. It is on this background we may formulate a situated society music nexus that is not “grand” as Adorno’s critical theory, but in return offers some insight into how music gets into action (DeNora, 2000). Creative processes can bring to light that aesthetic becoming can refer to an *aesthetics of here and now*, and in this here-and-now, to answer Pitts’ question, *aesthetics* appear as nobody’s, everybody’s and anybody’s. Facilitated creative processes among participants who are not necessarily musically ambitious, but who rather desire or even feel obliged to *participate*, manifest how, amidst what may in the moment be beautiful or ugly, immersive or laborious, extraordinary or plain, aesthetic experience and aesthetic becoming may spring up as the immediate sensuous sense of sense-making.

Working for more than 20 years with group composition with children and young people, as educators we (Bruun, 2023; Burnard and Younker, 2008) find that when we establish a dialogue with children through creative co-working, aesthetics is present, but always as something negotiable; not ephemeral but objective in a fundamental sense: it resists. The dialogue we aim to kindle in our work with composition with children is of experimentation with sound, performance, repetition, rhythm – the parameters that eventually will prove musical as a piece of music emerges. A piece of music emerges, not as an achievement but as a successful performance where we manage to agree and sense something becoming. The aesthetic here is not connected to notions of beauty or expression, but solely to an immediate, unforeseeable instance of agreement; not something we agree about but something that, for a moment, agrees with us. Aesthetic becoming here is inherently embodied, enacted and communicative (Malloch and Trevarthen, 2009) as it is linked to *the becoming of music* as meaning-making manifested in mutual exploration of everyday togetherness.

Conceiving the aesthetic as a performance enables us to understand creativity as inherently communicative—a process through which meaning is created, negotiated, and co-authored. Creativity becomes the space where aesthetics comes into being as becoming. This may seem like a subtle shift, but we argue that it opens up significant new possibilities for understanding how music professionals and educators can be empowered to call the tune on what is being (co-)authored; on how diverse meanings can be/ are conceived and engaged differently within different cultural contexts. It is here that the transdisciplinary reveals itself as an ever-present potential—where new meanings continually give rise to further possible meanings.

Perhaps musical creativities can be an invitation to a constant development of participatory practice possibilities, as they invite teachers/facilitators exactly to catalyze change through an open reflection in the interface between people and materials – sound and sounding objects – and ideas? Thus, the contextuality of aesthetics in a co-creative musical situation is not so much political as it is ethical. It offers an opportunity to become-with; resistance is here positive as it is about becoming rather than negating. It does not mean that power issues are not at stake, and in every pedagogic situation there is a responsibility to balance and ensure that voices are heard. Still the aesthetic moment occurs as transcendent: Where sense is made because something makes sense, and you sense that you are coauthoring the doing of sense-making – music is yours.

“ What is aesthetic becoming as becoming of aesthetics in music education and research?

AN EMERGING MANIFESTO FOR CALLING THE TUNE IN MUSIC EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

We conclude our attempt to formulate what aesthetic becoming can mean in education and education research, particularly in music education, with an emerging manifesto: what is *aesthetic becoming as becoming of aesthetics* in music education and research?

What follows are six assertions that offer starting points for dialogue, debate and reflection, enactment and urgency for music educators to call the tune on doing things differently in music education and research. They concern aesthetic becoming that is re-defined here as it, in music education, merges with continuous co-authoring and co-enacting the aesthetic. They grow out of the arguments shared in this article and represent an attempt to do things better.

1. *Aesthetic Becoming fosters aesthetic meaning-making as world-making.* Investigating (research) and promoting (pedagogy) aesthetic self-development and education through creativity in context, cultivating and exploring dialogue and experimentation, and investigating performance and communication in an everyday perspective contribute to an *aesthetic becoming as becoming of aesthetics*. – “How becomes..?” and “What happens?” rather than “What is..?” (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009; Bruun, 2023; Burnard, 2012; 2022). Thus, *aesthetic becoming supports calling the tune for music educators* to play with experimental pedagogies and research methodologies that transcend identity borders and demarcations.
2. *Aesthetic Becoming requires diverse diversities in (co-)authoring a plurality of creativities.* A plurality of creativities allow us to explore becoming as dialogue and as exploration, of expression and of beauty – such as the ability to think and act in original and meaningful ways by (co-)authoring a plurality of creativities that arise through artistic and cultural creativities, scientific, entrepreneurial and digital, artificial and material creativities – but also encompassing both the ordinary everyday and emanant creativities coping and surviving, even flourishing, in the 21st century as we move within and from home to work and community (Richards, 2017; Burnard, 2012).
3. *Aesthetic Becoming involve experiences of aesthetics as a vitality that moves contextually-* like rivers - that flow through distinctive practices, and diverse creativities that shift the recognition of in-the-making embodied musical learning, the intra-action of human and nonhuman sound materializing and the materiality of the body in its experience of music as a play space and aesthetic judgements and cultural values (Burnard and Kobli, 2024).

4. *Aesthetic Becoming gives purpose to posthuman aesthetics where we consider the possibility of aesthetics as emerging out of continuous relatings and enactments in conversations and intra-actions with and between materials and material performances performances.* This incorporates embodied movements and particular intensities of *making-with* which recognizes that nothing makes itself but is in a constant state of becoming with materials, environments, bodies and aesthetics. This involves a close attuning and attentiveness to explore the materiality of relational spaces and how they unfold differently according to a posthuman *aesthetics possibility* (Barad, 2007; Haraway, 2016)
5. *Aesthetic Becoming implies a critical stance towards the existing order.* It emancipates by maintaining that art is an inherently productive endeavour (Adorno 1949) and insisting that artistic practices as well as aesthetic education and research bring this productiveness to light. The productive endeavour will reveal itself in open, experimental processes that highlight its everyday, mundane character.
6. *Aesthetic Becoming aims at Bildung:* the growth of an autonomous self that engages in dialogue in communities and society, expresses itself, and ultimately may pass on *Bildung* (Klafki, 1963; Bruun, 2023) to others. It inspires new pedagogic, artistic and research practices. Aesthetic becoming as becoming of aesthetics stresses the relational aspect in music: that music makes world through its inherent power of spelling out the transient communal inner (DeNora, 2000).

IMPLICATIONS FOR MUSIC EDUCATORS AND MUSIC EDUCATION RESEARCHERS

In the spirit of this radical vision of aesthetic becoming– meaning an aesthetics that

- is created, shaped, moulded and negotiated locally
- is contingent, situated, and continually redefined
- is expressed by perpetual becoming of *the aesthetic*
- is an aesthetics that needs to be pervasive both in music education and research if we are to engage fully with the aesthetic becoming.

We ask: What are the implications if we are to educate individuals and communities who can envision and enact *aesthetic becoming as becoming of aesthetics* through educational necessity?

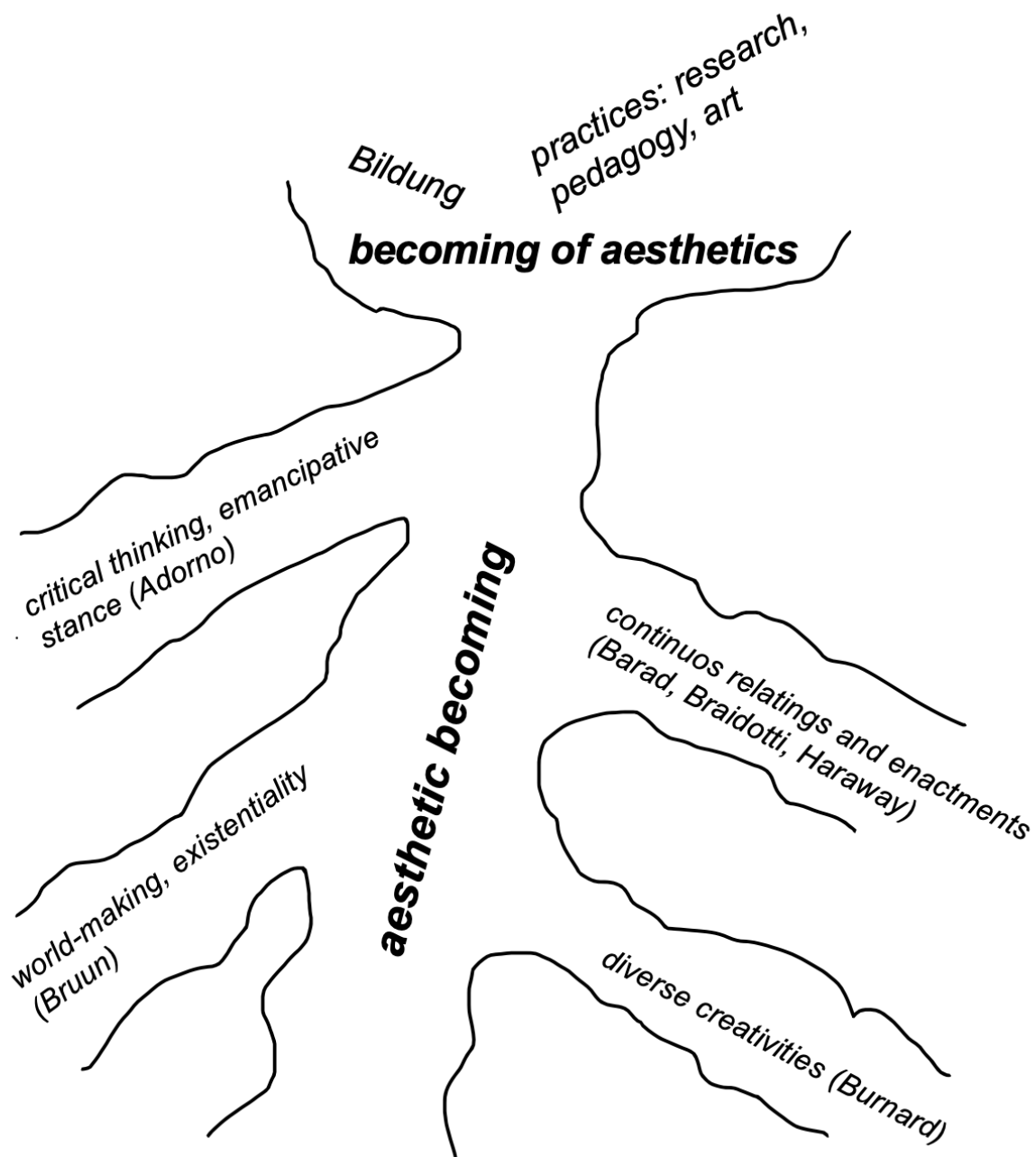
“ We encourage nurturing spaces of experimentation in education as well as art and research.

Music education once served as a tool for national and religious upbringing, offering clear directives on what to teach and why. Today, music educators face an open-ended landscape, shaped by artistic plurality, cultural diversity, and ethical complexity. The question “which music to teach?” is no longer answered by tradition, but requires a reflective and relational stance. This is precisely where the manifesto finds its relevance: as an orientation for navigating this openness with purpose and care.

First, we invite you to take these 6 principles as points of departure in rising to the challenge of supporting ourselves, our students, other music educators and researchers to go beyond the world *as it was* and *as it is* and enrich it by asking “*how it can and should be?*”, like rivers and streams that never stop flowing or run dry. So, we need to actively invite experiences and ideas that grow out of aesthetic becoming such as re-envisioning music education and research as an entanglement of aesthetic becomings as a relational force enacting with the materials of music moving beyond the habitual ways of responding, seeing musical objects and hearing music, but rather, transgressing their own and other’s assumptions, norms and disciplinary boundaries.

Second, each of these principles enact the *aesthetic of becoming as becoming of aesthetics* which open us up to hitherto untapped capacities to catalyze change, like when the force of rivers meet/cross, a *threshold between two possibilities is crossed* (Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, 1987); a condition for engaging the possible. So, we need to actively invite experiences and ideas that grow out of *aesthetic becoming* in making-with music as a relational force which significantly changes how we understand one’s own *aesthetic becoming as becoming of aesthetics*. By this we mean shifting from acting over our material partners in already made sequences of making to embracing the uncertainty, vulnerability and mutual partnership of making-with the vital materialities of music and radically human ability to sense one’s being in relationships.

Third, we encourage nurturing spaces of experimentation in education as well as art and research. In teaching, the pedagogical processes, the experiment is the place where neither teachers nor students, children nor adults, know the outcome, and where the outcome is not given. This place where we strive together for something to become, but it is not given that we will succeed, contains infinite possibilities for aesthetic becoming. This is where the *aesthetic* emerges as a world-making work in which one can participate and enact aesthetic becoming. This is where aesthetic becoming is enacted as a becoming of aesthetics. This is where music educators can play a new tune.



Aesthetic becoming in music education and research: the relational force of streams that flow and bend which enacts continuous change.

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Endnotes

¹ An agenda is currently being set regarding song and singing together.

<https://kum.dk/aktuelt/morgensangsmissionen/om-morgensangsmissionen>.

² Braidotti (2019) describes posthuman subjectivities as involving “a materialist process ontology based on immanence and becoming” (pp. 53–54). This ‘becoming’ is a “creative praxis of actualisation of the virtual” (p. 54).

³ ‘Worlding’ as used by Haraway (2016) is an embodied and enacted process – a way of being attentive to the world with the whole person, where we engage in relentless processes of ‘becoming with’ a world in which “natures, cultures, subjects and objects do not pre-exist their intertwined worldings” (p. 13). “Making-with” is a term coined by Donna Haraway (2016, p. 58) which recognises that nothing makes itself but is in a constant state of ‘becoming’ with materials, environments, bodies and constructs.

⁴ ‘Musical enunciations’ is a term coined by Stoianova (1993), who considered the working of graphic scores works and gestural compositions as non-fixed objects in favour of process, play, experimentation, multiplicity and multi-directionality, with a disregard for effacing the compositional subject and object.

⁵ ‘Me-thodology’ is a relatively new term used by Edward (2018) to explore the fluidity between researcher (sense-maker), performer (sense-making) and author (sense-theorised) in practice-led projects.