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Basic Concepts in Music Education
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How dare this study knock the very foundations from beneath me! I have spent my life practicing and studying music, sure of my direction, confident that I am enlightening my students with exactly what they need. It seems that I have, instead, been exercising a certain arrogance in determining what it is that I think they need, teaching it to them with passion, and then evaluating them in how well they have absorbed it all. This is, in fact, the way in which I was taught. Weren't we all taught in this way?

I do not regret any of my education or training in the practice and skills of making music, and I do believe that the *actual exercise of making music* is primary to what we musicians are all about. However, I must now posit this question: What *is* a musician? Is it someone who holds degrees in music, or someone who simply makes music, or is it both, or either one? Who decides? The university gate-keepers? Can one who makes music passionately, skillfully, but with no degree in music, be called a musician? I do not know the correct answer (if there is such a thing), but it seems to me that the answer to the last question is an emphatic *yes!*

Is there a gap between philosophical research and the music practitioner? Yes, there probably is such a gap, but the bridging of it means changing the way musicians are educated from the beginning. Along with learning the artisan skills of performing music, the student must be led to reflect critically on what it is that she does and why she does it. She must decide for whom and for what it is intended. Finally, she must ponder what place the endeavor is to have in her life and in that of society. In this way, I (we) would all experience critical reflection as a natural part of our work and lives.