

## **Welcome to *Praxis***

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It is a pleasure for us to offer the inaugural issue of *Praxis*, the online journal of the Sam Houston State University Center for Music Education. The journal will support our mission of bringing together teachers, performers, scholars, and artists to empower practicing music educators and graduate students to become more influential practitioners. We hope it will facilitate discussion, disseminate information, provoke thought, and encourage excellence in the teaching profession.

The arts, and music in particular, have been recognized as vital to a complete education throughout the history of the western civilization. From antiquity, education has linked truth, beauty, thought, and culture with artistic creativity. The value of this ancient wisdom has been repeatedly confirmed as current research continues to explore the methodology of learning. We believe that learning encompasses a broad range of human endeavor, requiring engagement and activity that must transcend a traditional classroom. Music and the arts provide an essential educational key to unlocking a student's creative potential

In many ways, thinking is itself an artistic endeavor. The dramatic breakthroughs of modern technology are the results of applying of creativity in scientific settings. At a fundamental level, a scientist's creativity is essential to transforming thought and knowledge into understanding and innovation. Music and other arts disciplines are a particularly effective means for teaching and applying creativity to the process of thinking and learning.

Creativity is a broad term for a multifaceted process that involves synthesizing skills, knowledge, application, innovation and analysis. Music, as a discipline, provides a channel for individuals to be immersed in creative thought that can lead to both personal reflection and transformation. In order to properly educate the next generation, we must effectively communicate and nurture the creative impetus of our society.

It is important to state clearly that music and the arts have unmistakable intrinsic value. We certainly become better, more creative and more accomplished thinkers through education, but we value studying the arts for their implicit worth. Consider the difference between I. M. Pei's architecture and utilitarian construction; Shakespeare and most textbooks; or J. S. Bach and an advertising jingle. These differences illustrate the priceless nature of contributions of a genuine artist. Art is the custodian of culture.

*Praxis*, like the Center for Music Education, is designed to reflect the complex interplay among the elements of creativity and artistic education. By bringing together practitioners, educators, artists and scholars, we hope to expand our understanding of music and the arts. We firmly believe that art and music enhance the education and creative thinking skills of students. We are committed to helping practicing teachers apply creative principles to the future of education.

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