Community music: a handbook


Abstract

A book of ideas, a catalogue of experience, a mass of personal stories, a collection of inspiring musical exercises and a historical perspective. Community musicmaking is exploding across Britain and this book will help you develop new insights into the practice of running workshops and making new music with people, whatever their culture, skill or background. In McKay's own chapter in the book, as he writes: "The aim of this chapter is twofold. First, it traces the historical development of the idea of community music. It does this with particular emphasis on community music's relation to aspects of the 1960s countercultural project and its legacy. This involves looking at the role of free jazz in music education, links with the burgeoning community arts movement, the radical politics and social ideas frequently claimed by those central to community music. Community music remains imbued with the spirit of improvisation, and I think it important to acknowledge the special role played by that particular music (as opposed to, say, classical music outreach teams, grassroots folk or more recent world music projects) in its development. Second it narrates the development of the More Music in Morecambe community music project through the 1990s, its successes and (mini-)crises, its beliefs and practices. It considers the origins of MMM in some of the earlier musical/theatrical performance practice of Welfare State International, and locates MMM in the context of the rise of community music as a social-cultural phenomenon in Britain. This involves discussion of ways in which the radicalism or idealism of some of early community music has been knocked and/or maintained."
This Handbook addresses community music through five focused lenses: contexts, transformations, politics, intersections, and education. It not only captures the vibrant, dynamic, and divergent approaches that now characterize the field, but also charts the new and emerging contexts, practices, pedagogies, and research approaches that will define it in the coming decades. The contributors to this Handbook outline community music's common values that center on social justice, human rights, cultural democracy, participation, and hospitality from a range of different cultural contexts and per