

Dear Readers,

We are presenting you hereby the next, fourth issue of the *Contexts of Music Education* academic journal published by the Faculty of Composition, Music Theory, Conducting, Eurhythmics and Music Education of the Grażyna and Kiejstut Bacewicz Academy of Music in Łódź. You will find here articles of short academic discourses character, information on the research currently conducted in different Polish academic centers, as well as reports on interesting academic conferences and seminars. The content is divided into regular, topic-related sections.

The first section – **Dissertations and academic articles** – comprises six articles. The first of them, written by **Jacek Błeszyński**, is titled *Music as a form of non-directive therapy – pedagogical and logopaedic determinants* (p. 11–22). The author, who is a special needs pedagogue and speech therapist, shows the importance of music in a non-directive therapy. The article by **Zdzisława Szczech** – *Towards the rationality of statement and action, and the employment of mirror neurons in music education* – consists of two parts. In the first part (p. 23–38), the Author refers to the philosophical and social thought of Jürgen Habermas when writing about the need for changes in music education. **Andrzej Michalski** in his article *The two most recent concepts of elevating music education in Poland* (p. 39–46) presents assumptions of a nationwide discussion on the project concerning a new discipline in the field of Art, the faculty of Musical Arts and analyzes notions connected with the ontology of music pedagogy. **Elżbieta Szubertowska** discusses her own experiences and research conducted among pupils, pedagogy students and music teachers in her article *A contemporary teacher in view of the problems related to in-class listening to music* (p. 47–60). The article by **Krystyna Juszyńska** *Educational role of music criticism from historical and contemporary perspectives* (p. 61–74) shows an important social and cultural role of music criticism. **Rafał Majzner** presents methodological assumptions employed by Professor Christian Elssner in his work with young singers, as well as analysis of the most important elements of the method in his article on *Potential application of elements of Christian Elssner's method in the soprano voice training of secondary-school pupils* (p. 75–85).

In the second section – **Young People's Forum** – there are two texts. **Aleksandra Jacukowicz** presents findings of the research encompassing Polish students of instrument performance faculties and professional musicians in her article *Stress in musicians-instrumentalists* (p. 89–96). The

Author applied the Questionnaire on Psycho-social Threats for Musicians in her research. **Gabriela Plewicka**, a psychology graduate of the University of Łódź, in turn undertakes to create, on the grounds of conducted research, a psychological profile of choirmasters in her article titled *Choirmasters' personality profile* (p. 97–118).

In the **From experience** section, there are two presentations. **Agata Jarecka** (p. 121–130) presents the figure of Stanisław Firlej, a renowned Polish cellist and pedagogue, who was conferred on the honorary doctorate degree by the Academy of Music in Łódź in recognition of his artistic achievements. **Małgorzata Kaniowska** (p. 131–155) discusses activities of music schools within a local community, based on the example of the 1st- and 2nd-level Music Schools in Ruda Śląska.

The fourth section – **Reviews and reports** – presents three texts. **Magdalena Grajter** (p. 159–162) reports on the 3rd edition of the “mYear Festival of Musical Imagination”, held on 18th-20th March 2016 in Wrocław. The main part of the event was a competition concerning aural skills, in their broad sense, held in two categories: music school pupils under 20 and “open” category for all the interested with no age limit. **Magdalena Grajter** (p. 163–164) also describes the seminar on *New technologies and the development of aural awareness in musicians* that took place on 21st April 2016 at the Grażyna and Kiejstut Bacewicz Academy of Music in Łódź. The seminar was connected with a presentation of the specialist laboratory for ear-training classes on the premises of the Regional Center of Culture, Education and Music Documentation. The event was organized by the Chair of Music Theory and the Research Unit on Aural Perception of Music, operating within that Chair since 2013. **Ewa Kumik** (p. 165–168) presents an account of the 4th National Academic Conference from the *Contexts of Music Education* cycle that was held on 22nd-23rd April 2016 at the Grażyna and Kiejstut Bacewicz Academy of Music in Łódź. The keynote of the conference was music in the education of children and young people. There were 54 speakers altogether: pedagogues, psychologists, teachers, postgraduates and final-year students, including some guests from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Latvia. It was the first time the Minister of National Education and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage assumed the honorary patronage over the event.

Enjoy reading and please feel welcome to publish with us,

Ewa Kumik
The Editor-in-Chief