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**MUSIC BEYOND MONUMENTS
RE-IMAGINING CREATIVE MUSIC ENGAGEMENT
IN THE LIGHT OF MUSEUM-INSPIRED EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS***

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**Η ΜΟΥΣΙΚΗ ΠΕΡΑ ΑΠΟ ΤΑ ΜΝΗΜΕΙΑ
ΑΝΑΠΡΟΣΕΓΓΙΖΟΝΤΑΣ ΤΗ ΔΗΜΙΟΥΡΓΙΚΗ ΜΟΥΣΙΚΗ ΠΡΑΞΗ
ΜΕΣΑ ΑΠΟ ΜΟΥΣΕΙΑΚΕΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΤΙΚΕΣ ΔΡΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΤΗΤΕΣ**

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ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Στην εργασία αυτή επιχειρούμε το χτίσιμο ενός διαλόγου ανάμεσα στη μουσειακή εκπαίδευση και τη μουσική παιδαγωγική. Ενός διαλόγου που θα μπορούσε να διανοίξει νέες προοπτικές και για τα δύο επιστημονικά πεδία, προς την ανάπτυξη παιδαγωγικών πρακτικών που επανανοηματοδοτούν τη σχέση δημιουργικότητας, μουσικής και ιστορικότητας. Στην πρώτη ενότητα της εργασίας σκιαγραφούμε τα σημαντικά προβλήματα που δημιουργούνται από την επιδερμική αντιμετώπιση της έννοιας της δημιουργικότητας στο σημερινό ελληνικό σχολείο. Η επιφανειακή υιοθέτηση δημιουργικών πρακτικών οδηγεί στην ανάπτυξη ρητορικών που τονίζουν της αξία της, ταυτόχρονα όμως την υποσκάπτει καθώς η επίκληση της δημιουργικότητας δεν

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συνοδεύεται από βαθιές αλλαγές στον τρόπο διδασκαλίας, ο οποίος παραμένει αυταρχικός, κλειστός και προσηλωμένος σε ευτελώς μετρήσιμους διδακτικούς στόχους. Το πρόβλημα περιπλέκεται περισσότερο καθώς την ίδια στιγμή κερδίζει έδαφος η νεόκοπη αντίληψη της δημιουργικότητας ως μιας «ικανότητας» ιδιαίτερα χρήσιμη στις νέες εργασιακές συνθήκες που διαμορφώνονται από την επιβολή νεο-φιλελεύθερων οικονομικών λογικών. Η δημιουργικότητα, στα πλαίσια αυτά, θεωρείται καίριας σημασίας συστατικό του σύγχρονου επιχειρηματικού πνεύματος [entrepreneurship].

Στην παράδοση αλλά όχι ανεξήγητη συνύπαρξη εκπαιδευτικού αυταρχισμού και λογικών της δημιουργικής εκμεταλλευσιμότητας σε ελληνικό έδαφος, θα μπορούσε να αντιταχθεί η συνάντηση της δημιουργικής μουσικής παιδαγωγικής με τις αρχές της σύγχρονης μουσειοπαιδαγωγικής. Το μουσείο ως χώρος δημόσιος ο οποίος παράγει, παραθέτει και προβληματοποιεί τη σχέση των ανθρώπων με το παρελθόν μπορεί να αποτελέσει ένα πλαίσιο για την ανάπτυξη επιτελεστικών, ενσώματων και ανοιχτών στην προσωπική επενέργεια εκπαιδευτικών δραστηριοτήτων όπου η μουσική, το παρελθόν και η δημιουργική πράξη των παιδιών διαμορφώνουν μεταξύ τους σχέσεις ανοιχτές και απρόσμενες. Υποστηρίζουμε λοιπόν ότι μέσα από τη συνάντηση μουσικής και μουσείου, η μουσική εκπαίδευση θα μπορούσε να αποτινάξει τον στερεοτυπικά «μουσειακό» της χαρακτήρα και τις αγκυλώσεις που επιφέρει η προσκόλλησή της σε παραδοχές μιας «μνημειακής» [monumental] μουσικολογίας που ασχολείται με τον ήχο μόνο υπό το πλαίσιο των «μεγάλων αριστουργημάτων του παρελθόντος».

Στη βάση αυτής της λογικής επιχειρούμε την κριτική ανάγνωση δύο συγκεκριμένων δραστηριοτήτων που ανέπτυξαν οι δυο συγγραφείς αυτής της εργασίας. Η πρώτη έλαβε χώρα στο Αθανασάκειο Αρχαιολογικό Μουσείο του Βόλου. Στα πλαίσια αυτού του project η εικαστικός Χριστίνα Νάκου εξέθεσε έργα των μικρών μαθητών της που γεννήθηκαν μέσα από έναν εντατικό διάλογο της προσωπικής δημιουργίας των παιδιών και συγκεκριμένων «στιγμών» από την ιστορία της τέχνης. Οι έκθεση αυτή αποτέλεσε τη βάση για την οργάνωση εργαστηρίων στον χώρο του μουσείου όπου τα παιδιά-επισκέπτες επεξεργάστηκαν με τη σειρά τους ανάλογες ιδέες, έφτιαξαν έργα και έπειτα χρησιμοποίησαν τη λογική των έργων αυτών για να φτιάξουν συλλογικές μουσικές συνθέσεις. Η δεύτερη δραστηριότητα πραγματοποιήθηκε στη Στέγη Γραμμάτων και Τεχνών του Ιδρύματος Ωνάση στην Αθήνα, στο πλαίσιο της Ημέρας Στόκχαουζεν, με τη φροντίδα του αυτοσχεδιαστικού duo Acte Vide (βλ. σχετικά με τη δραστηριότητα αυτή στη διεύθυνση: <http://www.sgt.gr/en/programme/event/1828>). Εδώ τα παιδιά κλήθηκαν να εργαστούν δημιουργικά με ιδέες και λογικές που πηγάζουν από το έργο του συνθέτη Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007). Ενάντια στη μουσειοποίηση της μουσικής του, τα παιδιά επεξεργάστηκαν εναλλακτικές μορφές μουσικής σημειογραφίας, δημιούργησαν γραφικές παρτιτούρες τις οποίες και έπαιξαν, αυτοσχεδίασαν και συζήτησαν για τη λεγόμενη «δαισθητική» μουσική [“intuitive music”] του συνθέτη. Μέσα από τέτοιου είδους συμμετοχικές πρακτικές και ενσώματες

παιδαγωγικές προσεγγίσεις, προκύπτουν μουσικές εμπειρίες που μπορούν να συνεισφέρουν σε μια ευρύτερη δημιουργική αναπλαισίωση των ήχων, και της σχέσης τους με τη μνήμη, τον χώρο και τα αντικείμενα.

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims at a critical dialogue between music education and museum education, arguing for reflective, practice-based approaches to learning about the past in an ambivalent present. We begin by unpacking current, conflicting discourses on creativity in contemporary Greek educational contexts, describing a number of 'fences' (in the form of unexamined practices, authoritarianism, imposition of obsolete forms of thinking music and education) that curtail children's creative engagement with music. Such fences form a generalised conception which we refer to as '*museum music*': a stereotyped vision of music as definitive, monumental, canonic collection of historic masterpieces, preserved and restored by expert professionals. Highlighting the complexities that arise out of the curious interaction between this 'monumental' conception of music and emerging neoliberal discourses on fast, effective, skills-and-results-based creative production, we argue that the import of neoliberal discourses in a context where didacticism and authoritarian teaching practices still prevail, short-circuits and undermines both creative practices in themselves and qualitative understandings of creativity, in alarming and seemingly irreparable ways.

At the same time, we recognise that the museum, as a *public* space for including, producing, staging but also problematising people's subjective approaches to the past, can be a powerful, disruptive locus, where linear, singular narrative conceptions of History are revisited and critically relativized. It can thus act as a fertile context for fostering creative engagement with aspects of the (musical, cultural and social) past and as an open space where students can actively construct and present personal narratives. In the last two sections of this text, we inquire into ways in which music education might be liberated from '*museum music*' stereotypes by actually 'taking a ride to the museum', that is, by adopting contemporary museum education modes of practice and bringing critical, open-ended learning approaches into museum spaces. We thus offer two short critical accounts of recent practice-based projects in that direction, carried out at the Archaeological Museum of the city of Volos and the Onassis

Cultural Centre, Athens respectively. In discussing these projects, we reflect on the potential of a situated, museum-based or museum-inspired music education, as a remedy against the vacuum of a placeless, instrumentalised, '*museum music*' education. On the basis of a "performative, embodied approach" to museum education (Hooper-Greenhill 2007: 192), musical experiences of this kind may contribute to a broader creative recontextualisation of the relationships between sound, context and memory.

*Μαμά, όλα τα σχολεία έχουν κάγκελα;
Mum, are all schools surrounded by fences?
(Primary-school child)*

Introduction: An alarming context

On an international policy discourse level, never before has there been such an intense and multileveled debate and research on the relationship between creativity and education (NACCCE 1999; CLASP project, see Jeffrey 2006; Craft 2005; Sawyer 2011).¹ At the same time, never before has there been such a sustained and calculated effort to striate all aspects of educational processes² (after Raunig 2013; see Ball 2003; Kushner 2010). It must be emphasised, however, that this resurgence of creativity discourses is far removed from the Readean we-are-all-born-artists dictum (Read 1943) that lies at the heart of the progressive tradition. Let us be reminded that within this tradition,

The arts education innovators worked on the common assumption that within every individual there lie creative powers capable of being developed through the practice of the arts and that it is the purpose of the creative process to allow individual inner experience to manifest itself in realized artistic form. [...] At bottom lay a passionate conviction that creative work in the arts was a basic human activity which had been taken away by specialization in a complex civilization and which needed to be restored to general participatory use (Leeds 1985: 77).

Central to this perspective on the role of the arts in the cultivation of personal authenticity lies “a tension between the possibilities of self-development and the constraining forces of the social” (Jones 2011: 20). This tension seems to bind together a whole cluster of distinctively modernist artistic visions, leading art educators down a pathway of trying to find ways of nurturing children’s authentic artistic voice without compromising it. Hence the vision of the creative adult as one who resists succumbing, consciously trying to remain faithful to a state of primordial authenticity: “those of us who remain creative in adulthood sometimes look upon the vitality of our work as the survival in us of our childhood selves” (Wilmer 1984: 47).

It is crucial to realise that in our 21st century context creativity has re-emerged but in a dramatically different form: not as mode of practice that frees one from the imposing constraints of the social, from the mechanistic character of productive life, but as an attribute of new modes of production within contemporary capitalism (Rosanvallon 2013). ‘Freed’ from the realm of the arts, it gradually emerges as a very ‘practical’, marketable set of dispositions that equip children with the necessary mindset that links creativity to innovation. A shift is thus performed, from a quest for personal

development that refuses to pre-suppose definite ends, to a view of creativity as a necessary competency for economic survival. As Drotner has aptly argued in relation to recent European Union creativity initiatives,

The EU trends towards harnessing creativity as a lever of innovation and competitiveness for European knowledge economies at one and the same time serve to expand the remit of creativity and narrow its perspective. [...] The link made between creativity and knowledge economies serves to narrow the range of creativity while at the same time making claims to its wide range of applications (2011: 78).

Arguably, any claim to opening up museum spaces for educational projects that emphasise creative experimentation therefore has to be aware of this larger context, within which our work is inevitably situated.

On a Greek research and policy level, never before has the rhetoric for creative learning and the role of the arts in education enjoyed such popular recognition³. Yet it is important to note the particularity of the Greek case: in the Greek educational context, recent tendencies to link creativity with the development of entrepreneurial skills were never preceded by a phase of radical child-centred movements characteristic, for example, of the British context from the mid 1960's to the late 1970's (see Abbs 2004; Ross 1978; Finney 2011). Neo-liberal approaches to creativity are therefore effortlessly progressing from a historicist, skills- and talent-based educational model that was never critically problematised or systematically undermined. Hence, the import of such discourses in a context where didacticism and authoritarian teaching practices still prevail, results in a double failure: prevailing education norms curtail any real possibility for an emancipatory prospect of creativity, but also (and worse) we are unable to realise the extent to which dominant, economically driven conceptions of creativity constitute a mockery of liberal education.

We would therefore like to begin with a direct provocation: in Greece of 2014, we live in the era of the *pretentious embracement* of creativity as a tenet of the education process. Children are asked to draw on their 'favourite' this or favourite that, on their most 'beloved' this, or their most beloved that, only to find their words and works squeezed within a ruthless process of curriculum delivery. And of course this focus on choosing one's 'favourites' carries with it a disconcerting flavour of consumer-oriented mentality based on the neo-liberal dictum that mistakenly purports that "the autonomous chooser is capable of infinite manipulation by the structuring of the environment" (Marshall 1996: 94). Children are indeed *pressurized* to be creative, only to see their endeavours torn by the procrustean demands for 'efficient learning' and competencies development. Rhetorical calls for creativity are not mere words: they are utterances that contribute to the construction of visions of worthwhile learning.

Children are well aware of such visions, but more often than not, they see their creative efforts driven towards neutralization and instrumentalisation. Their meaning is emptied or deliberately sidetracked, and any possibility of appreciating their creative potential is rendered irrelevant, leading to a considerable level of confusion.

Meanwhile, in the classroom...

“Write creatively” a child is told, “about your favourite place”. The child makes the mistake to believe in the truth of this call, and writes passionately about her most beloved place and her experiences with her loved ones in that place. And she writes in a way that invites, even demands the response of the reader, calling the reader to engage. At which point, the hand of correctness falls strong: “you should focus on external description”, the teacher observes.

What exactly is this precious exteriority and how can it be threatened by the inclusion of subjectivity and the appropriation of personal context in a description? What is so 'internal' in a subjective account of intimate and social experiences bound with a much-loved place, and what is at stake when this 'internal' element prevails? It seems that such accounts are first and foremost a threat to the kind of reification that glorifies monuments, rather than histories, neutral frames, rather than loaded contents, building shells, rather than interiors. It is the same kind of reification that makes it possible for the municipality of Athens to maintain only the exterior facade of proto-anarchist squat Villa Amalias in 2014, while internally demolishing its entire structure one night, in hope that the histories that were constructed within and around its rooms will eventually wane and disappear in local cultural memory, leaving only the simulacrum of a pleasant neo-classical monument for passers-by to marvel at, and curious future internet users to search and virtually reconstruct according to the dominant fashion of their times.⁴ And while this architectural equivalent to a lobotomy involves evident, physical processes, it marks a larger shift, involving less visible, intangible monuments, and the systematic extraction and obliteration of the subjectivities and personal histories that are capable of internally shaping and de-monumentalizing these structures.

To encounter a D Flat in a scale of C is a discrepant variant, it threatens order. We either live with it as an atonal event, reconcile ourselves to momentary chaos – or we reassert order by ‘diminishing’ it (Kushner 2010: 2).

And this is what the teacher does. In her eagerness to develop the stated educational aims by bringing back to normality the child’s attempt towards expression, the teacher reveals herself: focus on the exterior, remain superficial.

On the teacher's desk sits a grammar exercise. It aspires to refine 5th grade primary school children's skills in turning a written passage into imperative, and unintentionally delineates a characteristic vision of what it means to sit in a Greek primary classroom today. The passage to be used in this exercise reads like this:

Get into the class, sit down, open your notebooks, write down your exercises. Then split in groups, cooperate silently, deliver your work.

The work delivered, it is now the music teacher's turn to enter the classroom. She does bring some melodic percussion instruments in the room – indeed her lesson purports offering 'hands-on' musical experiences. But one must not be prematurely conclusive: the instruments are to be played generally by those children who take music lessons outside school, and this only when they happen to forget their recorder (the main instrument taught in the class); and of course playing is clearly controlled by the music teacher during all phases of the activity. At those moments when children that do not belong to this privileged sub-group are asked to play, they are quickly asked to stop, as to their teachers' ears they sound as playing "with no sense of rhythm". All this takes place in a context of worryingly frequent yells – failed attempts to enforce discipline. Ironically, in such a music-learning environment, the prime musical act, that of listening (as creator/improviser/composer/performer, or as an audience member) has been confiscated. For 'listen' means 'obey', and the process of learning music ends up affirming the age-old preconception that music is only for the talented few. Significantly, this single-stroke suppression of the active and critical agency of listening is accomplished through hands-on musical activities, not through teaching music history and theory – which might be thought of as an improvement (but certainly not by the children of this class).

The above narrative, derived from informal talks with a primary school kid in Athens of 2014, might sound rather too 'personal'; but the few research findings that exist, seem to confirm the problematic place of creativity in Greek music education contexts. It is clear that singing and performing notated music continues to dominate music teaching in primary Greek music classrooms, with music history and theory dominating in secondary educational contexts, and "[t]he least implemented creative music activities" being "composition, either vocal or instrumental" (Zbainos & Anastasopoulou 2012: 58). Moreover, although music teachers in Zbainos and Anastasopoulou's study recognised the importance of creativity in music, they held a strong belief in the idea that musical creativity resides only in the talented few (Ibid.). Although music teachers seem to believe (on the level of rhetoric) that creativity is an important aim of music learning and an important attribute of musical engagement, there seems to be confusion as to how and whether creativity can be taught. Kampylis, Berki, & Saariluoma in their study of pre-service and in-service teachers' conceptions

of creativity report that “83.9% of prospective and 85.3% of in-service teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that creativity can be developed in any person” (2009: 21). At the same time, “[a]lmost two out of five (40.3%) prospective teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that creativity can be taught” (ibid.).

Void.

Music-as-monument: ‘*Museum Music*’ Education⁵

After forty years of discourses on creative music education, what we are left with is its pretentious exterior dressing. Children are still not trusted as creative beings, as capable of worthwhile thinking, and the development of their musical voice does not figure as a valid aim of musical education. Obsolete forms of music education practice continue to prevail, even when attempts of ‘modernization’ are used. Long live ‘*museum music*’ education:

Students today continue to experience “alienation” from institutionalized classroom music from practices that date back to “post-second world war” curricula, when “pupils were educated in Western classical music and folk music, mainly through singing and music appreciation classes . . . [and] were required to study music with whose delineations they largely had no point of identification” ([Green] 2008: 89). With little affinity to the cultural meanings that this kind of museum music represented, students faced the compounded problem of instruction that paid too much attention to music’s abstract properties (Allsup & Westerlund 2012: 131).

‘*Museum music*’ education unequivocally accepts as its premise that it should transmit the values of western art music, aptly summarized here by ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettl in his description of the *Music Building*:

There is a pyramid, at the top one of two or three composers. There is the preeminence of large ensembles and grand performances, and their metaphorical extensions to other grand, dramatic events in life. Talent and practicing go together in a way, but they are also opposing forces, the one both practically and philosophically a possible complement for the other. There is great value placed on innovation, but it is the old and trusted, the music of the great masters of the past, that is most respected (Nettl 1992: 139).

The view of the composer as master, and of the musical work as autonomous masterpiece, whose truth is to be preserved through a performance practice of the highest standards, lie at the root of these principles. The music teacher in our classroom

story still operates firmly within the context of the above-sketched principles, despite attempts to create a classroom practice based on hands-on musical activities rather than music appreciation lessons and abstract teaching of music theory. She singles out students who follow a western art music conservatory education pathway (who thus are seen as operating within a talent/practice dialectic), curtailing any possibility for experimentation. For genuine experimentation cannot be neatly packaged in ‘school’ performances: it just cannot guarantee ‘clean’ ‘readymade’ products. When one feels as a bearer of a tradition of the great masters, as a bearer of musical excellence, when one knows that music is about experiencing the aura of great performances, why bother with school-kids’ experimenting? After all, children first need to learn how to play an instrument and be familiarised with ‘The History & Theory of music’ before they may even begin contemplating the possibility of engaging with composing. Composition, in this perspective, is a professional activity, which begins only after appropriate specialist training that carefully excludes the majority and promotes a few singular cases. This logic is rooted in specialist skills-based instruction, coupled with a stance of worshipping the ‘great musical past’, and searching for those innate geniuses that would continue pursuing *Greatness in Music* (to use the title of a book by Alfred Einstein 1941; see also Dahlhaus 1983: 9).

Interestingly, “[b]y the time Europe reached the height of its imperial power, the composer had acquired a status and composition a significance unprecedented in the history of Western music” (Nooshin 2003: 249). This coincided with the advent of museums of ‘Mankind’ (e.g. the British Museum, that opened its doors at 1759, or the Louvre, which opened in 1793) and their role in establishing closed grand narratives about the development of human ‘civilization’: “The collection, the international exhibition and the museum have each been firmly situated as ‘committed participants’ in colonial histories (Barringer and Flynn 1998: 4)” (Wintle 2013: 185). Thus, from a historical point of view “museums belong to an era of scientific and colonial ambition”, rendering “comprehensive collecting as a form of domination” (Bal 1992: 560). At the same time Art Museums began to establish forceful unified and unifying narratives that enforced notions of European superiority based on the search for Beauty – for example, see Aloys Hirt’s (1815) justification for the opening of Berlin’s *Königliches Museum (Altes Museum)* that emphasises the need for establishing the German nation’s value not only on the will of the arms but also in the arts (in Tenekentzis & Spirou 2014: 72 & 89; see also Daskalothanasis 2015: 179-18).

Historical musicology, seemingly the appropriate discipline to tackle such matters in a self-reflective manner, has rarely dared to research and theorise the links between colonialism, the ‘work-concept’ and claims to Western art-music’s superiority (Bohlman & Bergeron 1992; Goehr 1992; Born & Hesmondalgh 2000). Those branches of musicology that even attempted to grapple with such issues have often been

scapegoated and effectively marginalised as specialist sub-disciplines or worse, passing fads; the examples of New & Critical Musicology are topical in this respect.⁶ Since 2005, Richard Taruskin, singular author of *The Oxford History of Western Music*, and his publishers have faced international critical scrutiny for propagating what Tomlinson (2007) describes as “Monumental Musicology” –a comprehensive, dominant narrative on over twenty centuries of music-making– at a time when the linearity and singularity of music and the predominance of ‘Western Histories’ have all been revisited and subverted, in both theory and practice. In 2013 the same publishers launched the Southeastern and East Central Europe update to the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians – perhaps the equivalent to the Louvre of music history – by praising it as their “largest undertaking to date, with the purpose of updating and rounding out the coverage of south east and east central European subjects.”⁷ Needless to say, both resources are highly expensive, subscriber-access only texts, for the privilege of those participating institutions that can cover an annual all-inclusive subscription fee. Criticism, it seems, can poke a finger or two at the unstoppable machine that collects and reifies musical processes into externally valued ‘museum artifacts’; but it can never pause or alter its course.

‘*Museum Music*’ Education as a practice that prepares students for appreciating the cornerstones of the past, giving them access to a system that perpetuates their preservation leaves little room for alternatives: in such formal music education settings “the exchange of different forms of knowledge or know-how is neither encouraged nor valued” (O’Neil 2012: 167). Musical-work – and text-oriented – music education functions as a ‘disciplinary device’, limiting the possible by *ordering* the body (Bergeron 1992) in much the same way that traditional museums limit the possibilities of interpretation, prescribe the ways in which items are to be viewed, and delineate a whole range of appropriate modes of audience conduct:

The beings within museums come to be the memory of nature and of life, excluded from the field of relations, [...] framed within the *natural drawers* of the order of repetition [...] Images placed within museums, submitted to an aesthetic pattern, find their own place and come to be monuments, reliable witnesses, memory records (de Souza Chagas 2007: 158).

One could therefore draw a parallel between this approach to museums’ ‘interior’ life and music education practices that promote music-making as a ‘sealed’ ‘professional’ activity. Members of such an activity are prepared for perpetuating performance practices that monumentalise the musical past, excluding it “from the field of relations”, framing it “within the *natural drawers* of the order of repetition”. Not an unfamiliar picture at all, we believe.

However, contemporary challenges complicate things even further. The worrying current “shift from a knowledge economy to a creative economy” (Farmakis in Buitrago 2013: 7), rapidly emerging under the auspices of banks & consultancies (Buitrago’s open-access 2013 “Orange Economy” handbook being a prime example in this respect) is not without its impact on the monumentalisation of music in educational contexts. The implicit lesson to be learned from museums according to this paradigm is plain and simple: there is (ergo there should be) no such thing as free culture (Buitrago 2013: 97). Through all-pervasive copyrighting and a revamped definition of intellectual ownership as exploitable content creation, masterly creativity can and should be capitalized upon, while creative endeavours that happen in free-access, free-accumulation contexts and have little measurable impact on particular target markets should be discouraged, and eventually opted out completely from knowledge and education industry sectors. We argue that such emerging attitudes towards an economically driven cultural management of creativity maintain deep connecting threads with currently educational policies that Drotner (2011, see above) shows as limiting the scope of creativity, while widening its applicability.

The museum revisited: Practice-based reflections

We would like to stress, however, that the museum can also be a powerful, disruptive locus, where History as a linear, singular narrative is disassembled and recontextualised, and its fixed objects unsettled and re-animated (Nakou 2009). Museums constitute potential *public* spaces for including, producing, staging but also problematising people’s subjective approaches to the past (Kioupkiolis 2014). Therefore, from a music education perspective, their educational value might be seen as lying in their potential for offering students a pathway for creative engagement with aspects of the (musical, cultural and social) past and a space where they can actively construct and present personal narratives. In this paper, and against the context sketched in the previous three sections, we would therefore like to suggest the possibility that by ‘taking a ride to the museum’ (that is, by adopting contemporary museum education modes of practice), music education might be liberated from ‘*museum music*’.

Museums, and more generally, cultural institutions that stage approaches to past cultures “accept a role in the field of aesthetic education as a major responsibility” (Myers 1988: 102). The question we would like to pose is how music and music education can function within museum-based contexts in ways that subvert ‘*museum music*’ education and the monumentalisation of music as neutral, surface-value content. Recent efforts to nurture musical creativity within museum contexts have emphasised

that learning music is an act of discovery rooted into intense experimentation with composing and improvising, in a dialectical relationship with listening and developing technical mastery and a multilevel understanding of the social situatedness of musical practices. Such efforts are based on “a paradigmatic shift in how we think about music learners [...] shifting the focus from viewing music learners from within a deficit versus talent/expertise framework” (O’Neil 2012: 167). Their roots are to be found in the lessons learned from *Creative Music Education* movement, that see improvisation and composition as core processes that enable students to cultivate their authentic inner sensibilities and at the same time relate their work to contemporary aesthetic concerns (Finney 2011; Kanellopoulos 2010).

Doing away with monumentalising musical pasts, such perspectives sought to connect music in schools with the open programme of the avant-garde experiments of the 1960s, problematising the notion of composer-as-authority, and thus the relationship between composition and control, and blurred any clear-cut distinctions between music and noise, randomness and order, intention and reception, ‘highbrow’ vs. low forms of musical culture. Pioneer creative music educators such as John Paynter and R. Murray-Schafer did not only wish to discover children’s creative potential but to create a fresh and innovative stance towards sound exploration.

Reasoning with sound involves what Schafer and many others have described as direct contact with the raw elements of sound in situations where these elements can be freely manipulated in order to gain understanding of the intrinsic properties of sound and their various configurations (Walker 1984: 79-80).

Through such attempts, it was argued that the children would develop a stance towards *all* music. As Paynter would argue many years after his first endeavours,

Music’s most compelling quality is that it has no history: ‘nowness’ is of its essence (Paynter 1997a, 1997b). The study of musical history is not the study of music because, regardless of the culture of the age in which it was composed, a piece of music has no relevance except for those who perform it and listen to it at the moment when they perform and listen (Paynter 2000: 27).

How could one work on the basis of the idea that music’s ‘nowness’ constitutes its most compelling quality within the context of a museum? To build such an approach one needs to break away from a monumentalizing approach to the past, away from perspectives of the past that are rooted on objectivist notions of heritage: “Heritage itself is not a thing and does not exist by itself – nor does it imply a movement or a project. Rather, heritage is about the process by which people use the past – a ‘discursive construction’ with material consequences” (Harvey 2008: 19). Adopting this

perspective one ceases to view music as neatly packaged in ‘works’ that are handed down to us as our musical heritage. And instead of focusing to familiarising students with musical works of the past, one focuses on a creative search for how we build our relationships with ideas, issues, techniques, worldviews, and sensibilities of people that came long before us.

Building on this, we could recast an approach that rejects a view of music history as an account of “a series of stepping-stones, a journey from one masterwork to another” (Cook 1998: 72), prioritising instead the exploration of *how* we build ways of thinking and narrating the past. Constructing our sense of history by asking questions such as ‘what is the meaning of the past?’, and ‘how are we to relate to ways of thinking and feeling used by people that came before (and away from) us’, would lead us to a completely different understanding of notions relating to the musico-historical process:

The historical process would reside not in musical works –the stepping-stones– but in what lies between them: the continuously changing (as well as geographically variable) patterns of conception and perception which brought those works into being (Cook 1998: 72).

The “story” that is “History” (Treitler 1984) would thus be less a linear narrative of consequentially linked cultural events, and much closer to an ever-evolving, malleable and dynamic network of subjective experiences, re-conjured and reconfigured on a public, everyday basis. And then, on the basis of a “performative, embodied approach” to museum education (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007: 192) we could begin working on the idea of musical experience as a creative recontextualisation of the relationship between sound, context and memory.

We would thus like to offer two short accounts of recent practice-based projects in that direction, and to conclude with a few critical reflections on the potential of a situated, museum-based or museum-inspired music education, as a remedy against the vacuum of a placeless, instrumentalised, *‘museum music’* education.

Children ‘sounding out’ art history: Traces of a creative response to visual art history through music fragments

Contemporary artist and workshop leader Christina Nakou (b. 1973) brought into the site of the Athanassakeion Archaeological Museum of the city of Volos, Greece, the exhibition “Traveling in Time through Art” (February-March 2012), a staging of primary school age children’s artworks that were created in the context of a series of workshops during 2010-2011 on the subject “A travelogue through the Art and History world”. In this year-long project, Christina and her primary school age students sought to create Art on the basis of an active dialogue between artistic experimentation and the study

of aspects of the history of Art. Christina singled out particular moments in the history of Art –Cave paintings, Attic painted pottery, repetitive textures from arabesque decorative art of Muslim and Mozarab Spain, China’s Terracotta Army, Early Renaissance painting in the Low Countries, and more– and set to work with her young students on the basis of exploring the feel, the context, the materials and aspects of the logic of those past forms of artistic expression. Their explicit aim was to establish a pool of ideas that would lead the group to experiment with techniques, materials, contextual aspects of each period and style so as to produce their own original creative work. The artist-workshop leader of this project consciously tried to retain the primacy of creative elements in this process, creating the necessary space for children’s active re-appropriation of meanings and practices to their own ends. Having said this one should point to the limitations of looking at children’s creative endeavour primarily as *responses* to carefully selected works of the past. For this may ultimately facilitate an inevitably hierarchical reading of children’s output, and render it worthy of attention only to the extent that it shows a responsive understanding of aspects of pre-selected material from an art history canon. This raises concerns over the possible imposition of pre-determined ways of reception of children’s work in the context of a museum exhibition.

At the same time, however, the very act of exhibiting children’s artistic output of this year-long work in an Archaeological Museum is an act of re-thinking not only children’s artworks themselves, but also of the very idea of what it means to be in a museum.



Museum ceases to be a one-sided exhibition space, becoming a vibrant space that invites and requires our own creative response to the past. Thus, through this exhibition the museum is cast as an open space that does not limit itself to a singular cultural and artistic narrative, but as a space that stages students’ own dialogic endeavours aspects of the cultural past. In this way this project induced “an understanding of museums as

‘contact zones’ (Clifford 1997) in which dialogue occurs” (Witcomb 2003: 12). But this dialogue had to incorporate the visitors’ creative response. Christina therefore invited a musician and music educator (Panagiotis) to collaborate in a series of visual art- and music-making workshops that would enable our young visitors to immerse themselves in a process of active artistic experimentation based on the logic of the exhibition, but also to transform this experience into a collaboratively composed *music* performance.



We first decided to work on a pattern making exercise that was based on arabesque decorative art. Using paper and scissors the children produced, under the guidance of Christina, little repetitive figures.



Putting them in a sequence, we initiated a discussion as to how these patterns might be seen as music scores. In the process of "[t]urning shapes into musical patterns" (Chronaki & Kanellopoulos, 2008: 70), we experimented with repetitive structures, using the children's artworks as a guiding music score. Experimenting with different layers of repetitive patterns we composed a piece.



We then chose Cave paintings as our theme. We listened to stories about the paintings of those remote ancestors, we inquired into how it must have been to create in those caves, we discussed with Christina the possible meanings of those early drawings. She gave us sand, charcoal, clay, ash, to create our own 'cave' drawings in candlelight.



We then spread musical instruments and sounding objects in the exhibition space. Sitting in a circle, we tried to bring forward ideas images and feelings that relate to the experience of cave-painting and that could guide us in trying to begin thinking in sound. Trace. Fear. Hunting. Strange night sounds in the forest. Desire. These were among the most powerful images that emerged. Experimenting with foot sounds. ‘Hunting’, running after someone, running to hide. Using xylophones and metallophones in a variety of ‘improper’ ways we then tried to create strange ‘night’ sounds. Claves and woods rambling on the floor – fire sounds. Fire sounds could also come from gently shaking big sheets of tin foil. Electric toothbrushes rattling inside the bodhran or on the strings of a cimbalom, dark scary sounds – fear. Experimenting, individually and in groups, discussing, rehearsing. Making different sound gestures with the aim of creating a palette of dramatic sound events that could be combined in different ways. Eight subgroups were formed, and we performed. I (Panagiotis) tried to conduct the performance assuming the responsibility for initiating various combinations of those composed gestures (which however retained a significant element of improvised flexibility).



Deconstructing Stockhausen: Scores from the basement

In December 2014, improvising duo Acte Vide (Yannis Kotsonis and Danae Stefanou) ran a one-off workshop with 10-13 year-old children, in connection with the Onassis Cultural Centre's (OCC) Open Day dedicated to Karlheinz Stockhausen (See: <http://www.sgt.gr/en/programme/event/1828>). The day was one in a series of annual open access, free events, which in previous years included tributes to John Cage, Luciano Berio and Mauricio Kagel. The events themselves, a flagship in the OCC's attempts to encourage broad, heterogeneous audiences to engage actively with music of the recent past which has traditionally been considered complex or elitist, are worth noting here in their approach to '*museum music*'. Following the Cagean idea of "Musicircus" (1967; see Fetterman 1996), an unscripted happening where several unrelated activities are chance-allocated a time and place in the same large hall so as to coincide at random, the Cage Open Day had involved a concurrent but in fact heavily curated presentation of several pieces on all building floors, halls and foyers. In the following years the principle was extended to the other composers.

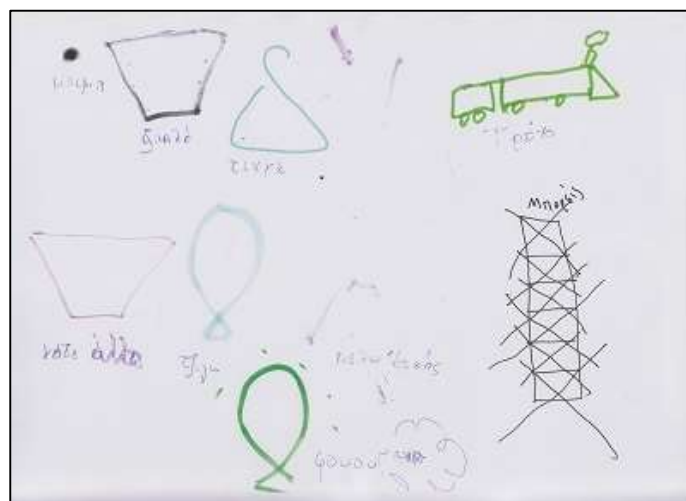
After several discussions on the format of these days, the Stockhausen Open Day was the only event not to feature simultaneous performances. Nevertheless, the concept of a heavily packed and somewhat theatricalised programme was retained. Audiences wandered from foyer to foyer, following a pre-determined yet seemingly 'natural' flow of showcased pieces in transient spaces, framed by vexed whispers, elevator jingle sounds, and ambient noises from the stairs and floors below and above each performance space. The precious exterior, the image of a performer or chamber ensemble gesturing through complex-sounding music, was conserved. No matter if the audience did not know what piece was played on each floor, or how each piece might differ from each other. 'Focus on exterior description' – our schoolteacher would have felt right at home.

Half an hour before (and seven floors under) this guided tour in what could have been nicknamed the Innocuous Pop-up Stockhausen Museum, twenty-three children were packed inside an underground rehearsal room with a battery of mishmash objects and odd-looking instruments, a box of pencils and crayons, and a stack of papers. The workshop, entitled "Music without notes" played on the idea of using alternative modes of notation, a modus explored by Stockhausen in some detail, both in his graphically notated pieces and his prose scores from the 1960s, and particularly the two collections of his so-called "intuitive music". In deep resonance with the May 1968 student uprisings in France and anti-war protests in the U.S., stylistically echoing the verbal action scores of the Fluxus movement (1962-1965) and New York School experimental composers such as Christian Wolff (particularly his 1968 *Prose Collection*), these scores

only consist of verbal, sometimes deeply poetic or meditative, instructions, and are in effect exercises in ensemble improvisation, self-observation, and developing group dynamics.

In this encounter, however, we did not dwell so much on the artifacts themselves. Rather, the workshop considered the implications of Stockhausen's practice, in a hands-on context. We made a three-fold attempt to a) coax meaningful sounds and textures out of everyday objects, b) create our own collaborative notation, a set of group systems for writing sounds down and turning what is written into music and c) make music with others, people we were meeting for the first time and might not have that much in common with. Stockhausen's intuitive music, in itself a step away from the ultra-modernist ideals of original, specialist, rational and technically complex musical composition, was seen as a springboard, much like Stockhausen had treated examples of non-staff notation by his American contemporaries.

Having improvised in group with an object of their choice, and looked briefly at examples of graphic and verbal notation from the 1960s to the present day, children formed groups of 3 to 5 participants, and created their own musical scores and performances thereof. Ages and backgrounds were varied to an enormous extent, yet somehow all groups managed to negotiate ways in which to make their scores, and their performances work, with minimal input from us. Things were not always smooth during this process. "I'd like to go" said two participants in the break, just after realising they would have to collaborate with younger children. "Besides", one of them explained, "I know proper music anyway." His group, however, short of one, was not particularly bothered. They welcomed another two participants, an autistic teenager with his caregiver. Together, the group created a score entitled "Something Else". A collection of shapes, each labelled with an onomatopoeic sound, derived from participants' ideas over their peers' favourite object or action, and the sound each of them made.



By the end of the workshop children had collaboratively composed five original scores, in a combination of graphic and verbal notation, and each group had performed them for the others, sometimes twice because the music “was more beautiful now [they] got to hear one another”. At this time, several floors further up, other children were slowly coming in with their families, to spend their afternoon marvelling at the staged, tableau-vivant style exhibits of expertly played, though incomprehensibly framed, Stockhausen repertoire, and to enjoy the rare privilege that is free access to a music largely sustained thanks to its capacity to accumulate symbolic, elite culture capital.

Conclusion: On jumping fences

In this paper we began by describing a number of ‘fences’ (in the form of unexamined practices, authoritarianism, imposition of obsolete forms of music education values) that curtail children’s creative engagement with music. We also tried to conceptualise the general context of emerging discourses on creativity, showing the ambivalent character of claims to creativity and the conceptual twist that neoliberal discourse have effected on conceptions of creative expression. Music education has thus to fight against two fronts: the continuing imposition of ‘*museum music*’ education practices and, at the same time, the neoliberal trend that aligns creativity to newly evolving logics of production of immaterial capital. In this paper we tried to offer some ideas and suggestions as to how this double task could be performed on the basis of an active dialogue between museum education and musical creativity. Taking a break away from the classroom or the music practice room, going off to the museum, might provide a potentially fruitful pathway for addressing issues of how music education deals with the (musical) past in new ways. The museum as a site for music experiences could potentially create a music education vision that might enlighten both general and specialist music education.

Music and museum education began to discover each other right at the moment when music education set out to offer a set of much broader perspectives as to its role and scope. Their intersection was enabled as the former freed itself from its role as a vehicle for the modest appreciation of canonic musical masterpieces, allowing for the possibility that music learning and musical engagement might have a different role to play in students’ life than that of creating the ‘cultivated audience’ of the future, or of catering for the new breed of professional performers. The projects described earlier might be seen as attempts to think of education in and through music in ways that go beyond the fences built by authoritarian practices, but also by practices that promote instrumental notions of creativity. They constitute acts of opening up creative

possibilities that counter dominant '*museum music*' perceptions, through music-in-the-museum initiatives.

However, as Peter Abbs has aptly summarised,

education in its dominant institutional form has become training, has become investment, has become business and management, has become delivery of skills, has become measuring and grading and ranking, has become social control and certification (2003: 24).

We therefore ought to be careful. All too easily we can fall into the trap of offering museum-based workshops that conform to the logic of neoliberal management of children's free time. For what is currently at stake is not the propagation of creativity as a replacement to more traditional, history- and theory-based music education models, but the total instrumentalisation of creativity as a 'good-for-everything' recipe, ready to be adapted within all kinds of contexts with little or no consideration of agency. Consistently critical, and self-critical, approaches to any creative experiment, are therefore of immense importance in this process. For instance, both of the practice-based approaches outlined in the previous section assume creativity as a central mode of establishing links with the past and encouraging an active, collaborative, cross-modal experience. Yet, much within this collective music-making process remained within the control of the teachers or co-ordinators. Experiments were largely initiated by the adults; and not having the opportunity to work in-depth and over a large period of time, but achieving nonetheless a 'final' product/performance, meant that many aspects of the performances, particularly formal and structural ones, could not be thoroughly worked out. Thus, issues of fragmentation and the resultant inevitable incompleteness (which might, for some, lead to superficiality) should not be ignored.

If we are to defy instrumentalisation, we have to pursue music-in-the-museum projects that create open contexts for study, and go beyond the logic of hierarchically structured, competency-based learning environments. A core issue in this effort is the possibility of sustained engagement. A major shortcoming of the two aforementioned projects has been their one-off character. Were they to involve several meetings over several weeks, or were there to be many more such projects, across different spaces and initiatives, it might be possible to cultivate a consistent sense of exploration beyond monumentality, beyond precious exteriors, through and amidst the fragile contexts of cultural artifacts. We therefore have to invent a variety of ways for making time, for making space. We have to make time for dedicated, collaborative museum-based or museum-inspired education initiatives in music and across the arts; and we have to make space for the emergence of contexts where education is re-situated, creativity re-thought, history re-assembled through personal, sustained engagement. Looking across these fences, contemporary museums may be reconceived as spaces that

enable children in creating a dialogue between their personal creativity and aspects of the musical past. And museum exhibitions may not just demonstrate how things were in a different, idealised time, but invite children to travel through fragments, creating their own reading of the past, linking it to a lived, internalised 'present'.

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Endnotes

¹ See the 2014 World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) [themed "Imagine-Create-Learn: Creativity at the Heart of Education", November 2014] that was "dedicated to *innovation and creative action in education* where top decision-makers share insights with on-the-ground practitioners and collaborate to rethink education" (See: <http://www.wise-qatar.org/2014-summit-creativity-education>).

² For an extensive consideration of how these two seemingly conflictual trajectories stem from the same conceptual base of neoliberal educational ideology see Kanellopoulos, 2015.

³ See the recent Creativity in Education Conference organised by the Learning Sciences Society of the city of Drama, Greece, November 2014, <http://eteadramas.weebly.com/> ; also the "Critical, creative, dialectical thinking in education: Theory and Practice" conference organised by the Greek Institute for Applied Pedagogy and Education (ΕΛΛ.Ι.Ε.Π.ΕΚ – Ελληνικό Ινστιτούτο Εφαρμοσμένης Παιδαγωγικής και Εκπαίδευσης, Athens, May 2006).

⁴ See Kathimerini newspaper, 23.09.2014, at: <http://www.kathimerini.gr/784960/article/politismos/polh/to-kelyfos-kai-to-mellon>

⁵ In using this neologism we are not referring to music education in museum contexts, but rather wish to highlight a friction. The term describes a dominant vision of music as highly priced exhibit or artifact, a 'museum music' very much reliant on notions of the musical work-as-monument, which will be unpacked in the context of 'monumental musicology' later on in the paper. On the other hand, we wish to juxtapose this vision to a dynamic practice of music education in museum contexts. The former refers to a prevailing cluster of conservative educational practices, whereas the latter is a reference to emergent responses and reactions against such practices.

⁶ For a recent set of responses to this phenomenon, see the 2010-11 special issue of *Radical Musicology*: <http://www.radical-musicology.org.uk/2010.htm>

⁷ Oxford Music Online, "Southeastern and East Central Europe Update Project", accessed 23 January 2015: <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/page/seceurope>

