



FACULTY OF EDUCATION
PHD DISSERTATION DEFENSE

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Disrupting the “maestro”: Tuneful youth insights for engaged music education

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ABSTRACT

This innovative project has been designed, implemented, and disseminated through public performance and website, *with*, *for*, and *by* high school students. The dissertation answers the following research questions: 1. How do students articulate their perceptions and experiences of engagement in music making? 2. How do these student ideas and perceptions figure into pedagogical practices for teaching music and further engaging in music making and school? 3. Are student ideas being heard? Why or why not? By whom? How could we better translate youthful insights to local and national audiences? To answer these questions, thirty students collaborated with the researcher who is also a music teacher in situ over a two year period with sustained and varied critical ethnographic methods used throughout. For instance, interviews, document analysis, reflexive observations, music making, and musical performances were collected and analyzed collaboratively through a creative fugue-like process. A Song Writers Club arose from the process at Sydney Academy. The teacher collaborated with the students such that the duties of the club were shared which included studio production, musical instruction, accompaniment, and equipment management. Students were encouraged to write, perform, and record songs and to talk about their experiences with the teacher during two interviews. Documentation of the process was shared with the students via video, song, journals, and images. Students emerged with a sense of confidence that they could transfer their insights into teaching and learning gained during musical performance into other educational settings. This dissertation is presented in both traditional text (reading), and musical/visual constructions (hearing and seeing) of the students on a website. Readers are encouraged to read this

dissertation on line which will facilitate the transition between the two modes (<http://saswclub.wix.com/saswclub>).