

**Aspectos da Música e da Musicalidade de Paul Nordoff e suas  
Implicações para a Prática Clínica da Musicoterapia**

*Análise Crítica da Literatura*

Aspects of Paul Nordoff's Music and Musicality  
And its implications for the clinical practice of Music Therapy

*André Brandalise*

Book's author

QUEIROZ, GREGORIO J. PEREIRA DE. Apontamentos: Sao Paulo, 2003.

It was the year 2000, at the Xth Brazilian Conference of Music Therapy (in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil), where I got to know the music therapist Gregório Queiroz. The author was attending a Nordoff-Robbins workshop that was being taught by Dr. John Carpente and myself. Several days after the Conference, I received a letter from him (he lives in the city of São Paulo) describing his feeling in getting to know the work of Paul Nordoff and Clive Robbins and also how touched he was with Edward, a clinical case that Nordoff and Robbins presented in the book called "Creative Music Therapy" (1977).

From that time on, Gregório and I became good friends and he joined me in my continued exploration of the work of Paul Nordoff and Clive Robbins. We found an author who influenced Paul Nordoff's musical thoughts: the philosopher of music Victor Zuckerkandl. We began studying three important Zuckerkandl's books: *Man the Musician*, *The Sense of Music* and *Sound and Symbol*. *Sound and Symbol* was of particular interest to us as it was discussed often by Nordoff in his "Talks on Music", series of lectures given in 1974; these lectures resulted the book intitled *Healing Heritage*, edited by Clive Robbins and Carol Robbins, in 1998. It is important, then, to say that the Queiroz book's title is very appropriate with the content. His intention is to make a dialogue with Paul Nordoff's ideas, expressed in *Healing Heritage*, through what he considers Nordoff's music and musicality.

Among several important ideas discussed by Zuckerkandl, i.e., ‘music’ and ‘musicality’ were of most interest to Queiroz. Thus, Queiroz’s book *Aspects of Paul Nordoff’s Music and Musicality and its implications for the clinical practice of Music Therapy* is the result of his work that attempts to connect Zuckerkandl’s concepts of music and musicality with Paul Nordoff’s thoughts on music and music therapy.

Two main themes are the focus of Queiroz’s book. The first theme concerns the nature of human musicality. He proposes questions such as: what musicality exists in human beings? Is it an attribute of some individuals or it is an attribute that belongs to the human species? What is the role of musicality in humans? Is it just to appreciate music? Queiroz’s second theme has to do with music’s nature: what is music? What is inherent in music that does not have to do with aesthetical, psychological and acoustical evaluations?

Ultimately, writing in his first language (Portuguese), Queiroz shares his understanding about what music therapy is, with music as one of the central elements in the process.

The book consists of seven chapters and was published by Apontamentos, the first publishing company owned by a Brazilian music therapist (Renato Sampaio). The aim of the publisher is to increase the number of books available in the areas of music and music therapy. The book “Aspects of Paul Nordoff’s Music and Musicality” is not only directed to music therapists, but also to other professionals interested in learning about the phenomenon of musicality.

Queiroz’s book does not open with a forward, but with a preface where he acknowledges colleagues whom he considers important in motivating and encouraging him in this journey through the work of Paul Nordoff and Clive Robbins. Among his Brazilian influences are: Maristela Smith, Cleo Correia, Lia Rejane Mendes Barcellos, Renato Sampaio (publisher), Juliana Carvalho and myself.

The organization of the book is logical and coherent. The author begins the book by considering the topic musicality. Then, he discusses music and music in music therapy. In order to provide further information and the conclusion of the book, Queiroz includes, as an addendum, a smaller book containing eleven musical scores. Among these scores are some of Nordoff-Robbins themes such as “Something is going to happen” (from one of Nordoff and Robbins’ clients, Audrey) and also themes composed for Luiz Augusto, a 16 year-old client of Queiroz.

In chapter one, Queiroz presents his concept about musicality. For him, musicality is a part of human nature and is something that allows humans to produce and to enjoy music. He complements this notion with an important thought: he says that musicality also allows humans to be developed through music. Queiroz has particularly studied a lot the work of the philosopher of music Victor Zuckerkandl. In chapter one, it is possible to identify part of this influence. Zuckerkandl was one of the philosophers who used to say that musicality is an attribute of all human beings. Also, in this first section of the book, the author states that musicality is not only the ability that human beings have to establish relationships with sounds, rhythms, melodies, etc. but is also a means for humans to perceive the world’s reality. Musicality, in other words, allows human beings to integrate elements of the world.

In chapter two, Queiroz mentions that the brain processes music not only in one hemisphere but in both, which reinforces the idea that music seems to have an integrative function in terms of perception.

In chapter three, Queiroz discusses meaning in music. According to him, music is more than a blank slate receiving projections and meanings from human beings. He gives an example: if music were only a blank screen able to receive projections, as a movie screen, there would be no difference, then, in listening to Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony and *Carneirinho, Carneirão* (a Brazilian children’s song, similar to *Twinkle, twinkle little star*). Influenced by Zuckerkandl, Queiroz contends that the meaning of musical tones exists in its own nature. Even though the author acknowledges that other philosophers have

stated similar thoughts, Queiroz wanted in this book to focus on some of Zuckerkandl's concepts and ideas.

Chapter four re-emphasizes Queiroz's reliance on the writings of Zuckerkandl. For example, he quotes Zuckerkandl who states that the musical tones exist before music in a way similar to numbers that exist before math. A tone is a musical event, because it contains within itself a whole system of tones. The tones relate to each other based on what Zuckerkandl calls "dynamic quality," (p. 54), that is, each tone is part of an order. This idea is reminiscent of what Paul Nordoff (1998) said to his students in 1974: "...you must think of the scale as a statement [*he plays the scale*]...and what it is stating is its presence, its potentiality, its creative self" (p. 3). To Paul Nordoff, scales have a "creative self." The close influence that Zuckerkandl had on Nordoff's work is apparent.

In the opening of chapter 5, Queiroz provides a summary of the contents of the book to this point. Chapter five discusses the therapeutic uses of music by a closer examination of the work of Paul Nordoff. The author's primary question is: what was Nordoff able to accomplish therapeutically using artistic procedures in music therapy? In order to illustrate some of Nordoff's work, Queiroz highlights the example of "Edward" in the book *Creative Music Therapy*. One of the remarkable moments of this process is the fact that Nordoff harmonized Edward's crying in the keys of F#, A and B. To this end, Queiroz considers "creative gesture" as the most important of Nordoff's abilities, with which he was able to consider children's expressions the cause of his music. Children were the center of his music rather than his own musical intentions.

In chapter six, Queiroz describes one of his own music therapy cases with a 16 year-old boy called "Luiz Augusto." Queiroz and a co-therapist worked Luiz over 21 sessions. This client did not have a diagnosis except for a general classification on his chart as having a neurological disability. He was non verbal, with a poor capacity to communicate, and his relationship with the world seemed to be very narrow.

The last chapter is the conclusion of the case study. The main goal with Luiz Augusto was to help him to engage in music and, in doing so, to facilitate his process of being in the world. The therapists created music based on Luiz Augusto's motor movements. For instance, based on his legs' movements, therapists improvised a descending theme using the Dorian mode. The reader is able to see a transcription of the improvised music in the addendum of the book.

I consider the book's cover an important metaphor for Queiroz's book. It is a drawing of a snail, scientifically called *Nautilus pompilius*, or simply nautilus, and it is, according to the author, a very old symbol which represents the fundamental proportional patterns that can be found in nature's forms, such as diatonic scales. These fundamental proportional patterns are also found, according to Gregorio Queiroz, in the formation of the dynamic qualities of the tones. Queiroz's book *Aspects of Paul Nordoff's Music and Musicality and its implications for the clinical practice of Music Therapy* attempts to connect Zuckerkandl's concepts of music and musicality with Paul Nordoff's thoughts on music and music therapy. For these two authors and for Queiroz, tones are part of a natural order and musicality is part of human nature. Through musicality human beings, like Edward and Luiz Augusto, demonstrate that can better integrate their lives in the world and the world in their lives.

## REFERENCE

Robbins, Clive; Robbins, Carol. **Healing Heritage: Paul Nordoff Exploring the Tonal Language of Music**. Gilsum, NH: Barcelona Publishers, 1998.