Musical and academic standards at York were high – sometimes intimidatingly so – but I had been given confidence by John's induction session for new first years: he had ranted about the new government policy which was changing the status of polytechnics to universities, set us a group composition task which I later discovered was akin to those in *Sound and Silence*, and reminded us that the breadth of skills required of a musician meant that while the person sitting next to us might be better at one aspect of our future study, we would each have our own strengths, to be nurtured and challenged during our undergraduate years. Teaching, research, music-making and personal development were not easily separated for John, both in his own work and in his attitude towards his students.

At times, John's incredible energy and focus could be exasperatingly pedantic, and I hugely regret that the last conversation I had with him was on the matter of 'erroneous capitalisation' in the *BJME* review of his final book, *Thinking and Making: Selections from the Writings of John Paynter on Music in Education*. 'What will people think?' he asked, indignant again, and I felt sorry that standards were perceived to have slipped from his almost impossible heights. Aiming for the best was characteristic of John's approach: in music education, this meant that all children should have the chance to achieve their full potential, and all teachers should be encouraged to teach with conviction. With these simple but essential premises he contributed enormously to the status and purpose of music in schools, and he leaves a tremendous legacy of inspiring writing and personal influence, to which a great many people owe a great deal.

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doi:10.1017/S0265051710000392

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In 1970 I abandoned a career in orchestral playing to become a teacher of music in schools. Although I am glad that I had the chance to play professionally, I am even more pleased that I pursued the profession for which I had been trained because interesting things were occurring in school music. As it happens, 1970 was also the year in which *Sound and Silence* by Paynter and Aston was published.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051710000392 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The 1970s might be described as the sparkling decade of music in schools but also the decade of turmoil. So many shibboleths were being cast aside: music appreciation, national songs, the theory of music, the history of music. And why were they being cast aside? They didn't work. They didn't engage pupils. At times, teachers of music wondered why they bothered. On the other hand, extracurricular music was flourishing, with county and national youth orchestras nurturing the musically brightest and best. This was reflected at local levels in burgeoning school orchestras, stemming from the free instrumental tuition provided by local education authorities. As a working music teacher, I tried to inject the excitement of extracurricular playing into classroom teaching, developing the so-called *classroom orchestra*, eventually publishing a range of compositions for use in timetabled lessons by the often neglected 'non-specialist' pupils.

With similar pupils in mind, John Paynter promoted composition, self-directed group work and personal expression in favour of the theoretical study of music. His powerful advocacy in *Sound and Silence* and in the Schools Council Project: *Music in the Secondary School Curriculum* that he led, filled me with admiration and despair. Was my work wasted because it relied to some extent on notation and traditional harmony and pulse? I was unsure, so I invited JP to visit my school (Ferndown Upper School in Dorset) to witness my pupils' achievements. Alas, the visit, though willingly agreed to by him, was cancelled because of ill health, but the link had been established, and over the years we became close friends.

As we got to know each other better, we visited each other's houses, relished trips to National Trust properties and sampled good food and drink. Conversation seemed often to revert to schools, to music and to broader aspects of education. We occasionally differed over the basics: John valued experiment, uncertainty and daring while I tended to be more cautious. Despite some success, a lot of success in JP's case, we both felt that our messages were not reaching fully those for whom it was intended, that our common aim for music in schools to be expressive, above all else, was met too seldom.

The friendship between us strengthened. John shared with me his profound grief at the death of his first wife, Elizabeth. We explored the philosophy that informed his compositions, his continued work in musical education and his religious beliefs that sometimes seemed to lie awkwardly alongside his detached, analytical thinking in other spheres. I was privileged to get to know his second wife, Joan, and to witness the happiness they shared in his final years.

Those in the music education business admired JP for his writing, his erudition and his musical integrity. I did too, but I also valued his reticence, his anxiety, his fear of rejection, his intellectual bravery and his warmth. Despite his innate tact, he did let rip with some frankness on occasion. I won't release the bombshell yet, but I think he hit the bull's-eye of the problem of music in schools through a remarkably simple observation – rather like the little child in the dénouement of *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Now, what could he possibly have said?

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https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051710000392 Published online by Cambridge University Press