

*Introduction to the Special Issue***Music and Imagery**Joanne Loewy^{1,2}, Ralph Spintge^{3,4}¹*The Louis Armstrong Center for Music & Medicine, Mount Sinai Beth Israel, New York, NY, USA*²*Icahn School of Medicine, New York, NY, USA*³*Department of Algesiology and Interdisciplinary Pain Medicine, Regional Pain Centre DGS, Sportklinik Hellersen, Lüdenscheid, Germany*⁴*Institute for Music Therapy, University for Music and Drama HfMT Hamburg, Germany*

How does music elicit imagery? How does imagery influence our understanding of music, particularly in its strength and potential to alter our medical perceptions beyond the sounds inherent but relegated to audio experiences? Ancient scholars such as Aristotle and Hippocrates used imagery to enhance healing. The body's unique systems may be more easily integrated through a 'mind's eye' whereby implicit knowing may be instinctually resourced and expressed through sound, and music. Each of us can imagine what an image of nature, or beauty, or that of a desired place or person, we can think about what such a concentrated thought may add to an experience of music within our body. In the past two decades, we are growing in our understanding of how music and mental elements may interconnect systems, that expand belief, and in turn influence resilience, pain perception and even further, blood flow and neuroimmunological function. It is our mind's intentions, and the spirit, which arguably blends our intentions with a reliance on fate, that can conjure up historical experiences from our past or stretch us toward a reach for future fantasies.

Welcome to the special edition of 'Music and Medicine' themed 'Music and Imagery.' This is the first journal of its kind that encompasses the work of therapists and practitioners who have researched and developed the clinical use of music and imagery in their practice. The music of the body speaks to our health or dis ease, and our inner thoughts, where within these pages, are expressed creatively through imagery. This can clearly add a new and impactful domain to the practice of music and medicine.

This journal, themed as 'Music and Imagery' marks another milestone in the marriage between music medicine

and music therapy. It is apparent that music therapists are seeking deeper answers from music and imagery data that correlate the clinically significant music and imagery elements with an effect that is reliable and perhaps replicable. Furthermore, music therapists tend to have high regard for studies that analyze critical components of the music exchange, that are inclusive of thoughts accompanied by visual images, which may be quite difficult to quantify, though not impossible.

It is evident that the pioneering work of Dr. Helen Bonny is amongst some of the most mainstreamed, pronounced practices that exist in the general imagery and visualization literature of our day. As doctors and nurses, psychologists, psychotherapists, child life specialists and social workers seek methods where patients have mechanisms of creativity and control through their use of imagery, we are certain that music-and in particular prescribed music, as applied within a psychotherapeutic context, has significant capacity to enhance the landscape for healing.

In music and medicine, we are constantly seeking ways to expand how we can institute music in a way that can enhance treatment strategies. In this important journal Guest Editor Alison Short has brilliantly taken on 'Music and Imagery' in medicine. Dr. Short has compiled a broad range of articles from current music therapists and allied colleagues that practice from varying perspectives including GIM. The writings in this issue incorporate models of live music and theoretical models of how the clinical decisions of music and imagery are made: in clinical work with individuals, groups, and a variety of settings, including pain, ICUs and clinics, bedsides and community centers. 'Music and Imagery' promises to be a unique and broad compilation but perhaps most importantly, it is a theme that is based on the active practices of those who have studied and utilized music and imagery, and their clear desire to bring together deeper thinking and understanding about the most critical elements of music imagery, providing a gateway for how we might expand our practices to incorporate imagination and deeper thinking into our clinical practices. We are grateful for the efforts of Dr. Alison Short and all of the authors. We hope that you enjoy this special issue.

PRODUCTION NOTES: Address correspondence to:

Joanne V. Loewy DA, LCAT, MT-BC Address: The Louis Armstrong Center for Music & Medicine, Mount Sinai Beth Israel, 16th and 1st Avenue, 6 Silver, 21, New York, NY 10002, USA. Email: JLoewy@chpnet.org| COI statement: The authors declared that no financial support was given for the writing of this article. The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.