



Clive and the Creative Now

Jackie Roberts

Clive was a tower of a man... physically tall and charismatic, yes... but, metaphorically speaking, he seemed to have that extra-special vantage point that saw further into things, the bigger picture, while taking in every detail, colour, texture and perspective. Perhaps this came from his early life experiences as much as from the later personal and professional transformations of his musical and spiritual journeying with Paul Nordoff and the children they worked with, and even later, the enrichments of his other partnerships, and the comradeship of his teaching with Alan Turry.



Picture 1: Clive Robbins and Jackie Roberts at the Nordoff-Robbins 50th Anniversary (Nordoff Robbins London Centre, October 2009)



Picture 2: Clive Robbins and Jackie Roberts with Nordoff Robbins students from London and Manchester (Nordoff Robbins London Centre, October 2009)

Jackie Roberts is a Senior Music Therapist and former Clinical Tutor on the Nordoff Robbins Masters program, where for many years she taught clinical improvisation. She is experienced as a music therapist and supervisor in NHS specialist child and adolescent mental health, child development, and with adults. Jackie has published in music therapy and psychology books and journals. She teaches and supervises internationally, is a Visiting Lecturer to Hokkaido Health Sciences University (Japan) and runs her own private music therapy and supervision practice in London.

Email: jzroberts@blueyonder.co.uk

Clive was an intuitive, a romantic, as well as thinker: he himself writes about his sense of destiny and, most centrally, his sense that through MUSIC, beyond all kinds of difficulties - emotional, mental and physical - the CREATIVE NOW could be experienced as a vital, healing integration of the personality. He witnessed children blossoming as indeed he experienced himself flowering as a teacher and music therapist. He knew how to learn from the children about the dynamics of human relationship, development, behaviour, self-expression, and the internal world of imagination which was expressed and explored in music therapy. Clive understood the constructive, transformational elements of music in relationship, the organisation of personality integration, and the infinite possibilities of music in reaching out to the human heart and human potential. He could communicate better than anyone the generative function of music as therapy. He had an extraordinary gift for words, for articulating the experiences of music and meaning-making that lie beyond words: subtle shifts in the music and the musical relationship. He, with Paul Nordoff, found a way to express what was happening in music and music therapy, a taxonomy that was forged from empirical observation above and beneath the surface of things, and always avoided jargon. I

remember him describing his and Nordoff's struggles to find the exact words when writing *Creative Music Therapy*, particularly the wording of the Rating Scales, which offer a clinical framework to their concept of the Music Child.

It is hard to find adequate words to say thank you to Clive who, with Carol Robbins, was my teacher for 3 memorable, formative months during my training programme in 1981, and in many meetings annually thereafter when he visited the UK. His teaching inspires and remains a living, constantly re-creative memory in me. Clive taught from living experiences, acutely felt and observed, and poetically, viscerally communicated. His teaching has left its mark on thousands of students and colleagues all over the world. This, I feel, stems primarily from the authenticity of experience in his voice, his humanity, the way he spoke, directly informed and illustrated by clinical experience and example. This authenticity was fundamental in my growth as a therapist, teacher and researcher into the Creative Now, where meaning is made by music touching and nurturing the roots of our being. With a puckish, down-to-earth sense of humour, a new hat, a child-like delight about a drive in a Mini Cooper, a new restaurant, Clive's approach to life and living can be described in one of his favourite words... unabashed!

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