

**Commission for the Education of the  
Professional Musician (CEPROM)  
24<sup>th</sup> International Seminar**

***The Legacy and Lessons of  
Professor ‘Dumbledore’  
In Memory of Professor Glen Carruthers***

**July 13<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> , 2022  
On-line**

**Hosted by Southern Cross University,  
Lismore, New South Wales,  
Australia**

**PROCEEDINGS**

**Edited by Associate Professor Annie Mitchell**

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## Foreward

ISME's **Commission for the Education of the Professional Musician** furthers opportunities for dialogue and international collaborations that are thought-provoking and innovative. The 2022 CEPROM Pre-Conference Seminar explored how arts institutions, music scholars and educators, music communities and individual musicians can be empowered to create a more just, more socially embracing and more economically supportive society; expressed in and through their musical practices, teaching and research. CEPROM's 24<sup>th</sup> International Seminar was held on-line from 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> July, 2022, hosted by the Faculty of Business, Law and Arts, Southern Cross University, Lismore, NSW, Australia. The theme for this year's CEPROM was ***The Legacy and Lessons of "Professor Dumbledore"***.

On Christmas Eve, 2020 Professor Glen Carruthers, Dean of the Faculty of Music, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada (2010-2020), former Dean of the School of Music and Professor of Musicology, Brandon University, founding Chair of the Department of Music, Lakehead University, previous ISME Board Member and CEPROM Chair, died from cancer. In myriad tributes to Glen, colleagues, staff, students, community members, musicians and friends attested to his legacy of student-centred leadership, transformative impact, mentorship, meaningful guidance, advocacy and vision. Affectionately known by his beloved students as "Professor Dumbledore", Glen is highly esteemed as 'a visible voice' in music education. CEPROM 2022 explored and honoured the legacy and lessons of esteemed music and music education champions. In the spirit of Glen's care and championship of students, a \$500 prize was awarded to the best post-graduate student presentation.

The final CEPROM session on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July was specifically dedicated to Glen and we welcomed guests; previous CEPROM members, colleagues from Canadian universities where Glen worked, and his lovely wife, Heather (herself a musician); who always accompanied Glen to CEPROM and ISME conferences and became a true friend of many of us.

Significant themes that emerged from the presentations were *New Approaches* to the education of the professional musician, *Teaching Music Practice*, *Careers*, *Community*, and *In Memorium* (to Professor Glen Carruthers). Future themes that were suggested for pursuit in future research include *Sustainability*, *Remaining Relevant to Students*, *Agency*, *Staying Connected*, *Responsiveness*, and *Leadership & Communication*.

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# **Transformative impacts in the existing curriculum: A study of developing learner agency and broadening career horizons**

**Guadalupe López-Íñiguez, Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland**

**Dawn Bennett, Bond University, Australia**

## **Abstract**

Establishing a career as a performing classical musician is strongly linked to 1) facing fierce competition during and after professional studies, 2) the ability of developing a multiplicity of skills that go beyond the craft of the instrument/voice, and 3) being flexible/agile to adapt to the constant changes and demands of the music industry. However, music majors seem to realize this towards the end of their studies in higher music education. This leads to an enormous pressure to become employable when they graduate, leaving many to depend on luck and stressful learning on-the-job situations. Considering this situation, higher music education is under political scrutiny, as it should not only produce graduates, but employable ones – thus, maximising revenue generation. This asks for curricular transformations that have the potential to support music students in becoming agentic and embracing a learner identity – that is being artistically and professionally autonomous, and ready to embrace lifelong learning as an exciting part of their careers. This paper presents a socio-constructivist intervention to broaden career horizons and develop the much-required learner agency in 7 classical music majors. Authentic and scaffolded strategies related to employability in the

music industry, relevant lectures and seminars of increasing difficulty, as well as a panel discussion with international musicians was offered to all participants as part of their studies during a semester-long class. Preliminary results indicated certain areas for improvement common to all participants such as social interaction and communication skills, variety within and beyond performance roles, and occupational and emotional literacy. Taking that into consideration, resources on critical reflection and career planning were further developed during the study. This supported the participants in embracing a positive attitude to learning, a more inclusive view of career pathways and musical identities, and an openness to discussing concerns with colleagues—all aspects related to musicians' learner identity.

### **Keywords**

Agency, career development learning, employability, growth mindset, higher music education, identity construction, learner identity, metacognition, self-regulation

### *Dedication:*

*To Glen Carruthers. A dear friend, sage advisor, brilliant mind, and valued colleague.*

### **Introduction**

Around the globe, music majors study music because they are passionate about it. They may have a notion of how difficult it can be to establish a career in performance, but the excitement of being able to dedicate themselves to music overrides all else. Burt-Perkins (2008) and others have found that music students' career related concerns tend to surface in the first year of study, when they see the quality of music making around them. These concerns are often heightened as students become more aware of the nature of music careers and the fierce competition for work.

Awareness also comes in the form of negative media and graduate outcomes statistics. Many Western countries conflate graduate employment rates with the quality of post-secondary education, fuelling negative media about the arts and increasing pressure to produce “employable” graduates (Ramberg et al., 2019). In Australia, for example, the assumed economic unimportance of the Arts and Humanities led the Federal Government to increase student contributions for these programs, making them far more expensive than programs in science, engineering, and maths (Titelius, 2020). The economic value of creative higher education for graduates in relation to their employability is also a concern in Europe (e.g., Bloom, 2020; REACT, 2021), where economic inequalities in the music industry (Bull, 2019) and increasing cuts for arts education are becoming the norm.

Despite a persistent narrative about the divide between higher music education and the realities of musicians’ work (Bennett & Bridgstock, 2015; Calissendorf & Hanneson, 2017; Dobson, 2010; López-Íñiguez & Bennett, 2020; Schmidt, 2014), there are myriad examples of innovative curricula and pedagogical approaches that have had a transformative impact on students’ career thinking. Glen Carruthers (2019, p. 209) wrote that many institutions have tried “to reconcile curriculum and identity, broadening the scope of higher music education to include more career-relevant courses ... and modules”. However, as Glen pointed out there is often “a missing link. Although identity and curriculum can be symbiotic, a catalyst is required to bind the two together. The catalyst lacking in most legacy curricular is agency” (ibid). This article describes the impact of fostering music students’ learner identity to encourage the agency through which students might begin to create their musical futures.

## **The importance of being a learner**

In precarious industries such as music, the task of remaining employable demands the regular and strategic self-renewal of skills and knowledge (Gill, 2002), realised through a *learner identity* (López-Íñiguez & Bennett, 2020; 2021; López-Íñiguez et al., 2022). Alongside learner agency, this study sought to develop a learning mindset among student musicians, fostering their curiosity about the many developmental and exploratory opportunities made available to music students (Brown, 2009; Ha, 2017; Varvarigou, et al., 2014).

In the pre-professional context, “learning how to learn requires learning to be a learner” (Sinha, 1999, p. 41) who is open to exploring possible futures and to regulating identity and career thinking in line with each new experience (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). We defined a learner identity as a central identity of socio-constructivist orientation with which individuals identify and construct themselves as learners in different educational and developmental contexts (Falsafi, 2011).

## **Theoretical framework**

Perceived employability – students’ confidence that they will successfully transition into the workforce – is strongly correlated with efficacy beliefs. Efficacy beliefs underpin student health and wellbeing, retention, study success, academic engagement, and agentic behaviours (Berntson & Marklund, 2007).

Following Vygotsky (1978), we sought to create a constructivist learning ecology (Barron, 2006). Specifically, we designed a replicable class that featured authentic and scaffolded strategies in support of students’ metacognitive engagement, active participation, and experiential learning. The study was grounded in the three modalities of learner identity construction defined by Falsafi (2011) as *in* activity, *on* activity and *cross* activity (see Figure



1). Such construction is situated and encompasses both intra-psychological (e.g., motivational, emotional) processes involved in the construction of learner identity, and the inter-psychological processes developed through working and learning with other people (Falsafi & Coll, 2015).

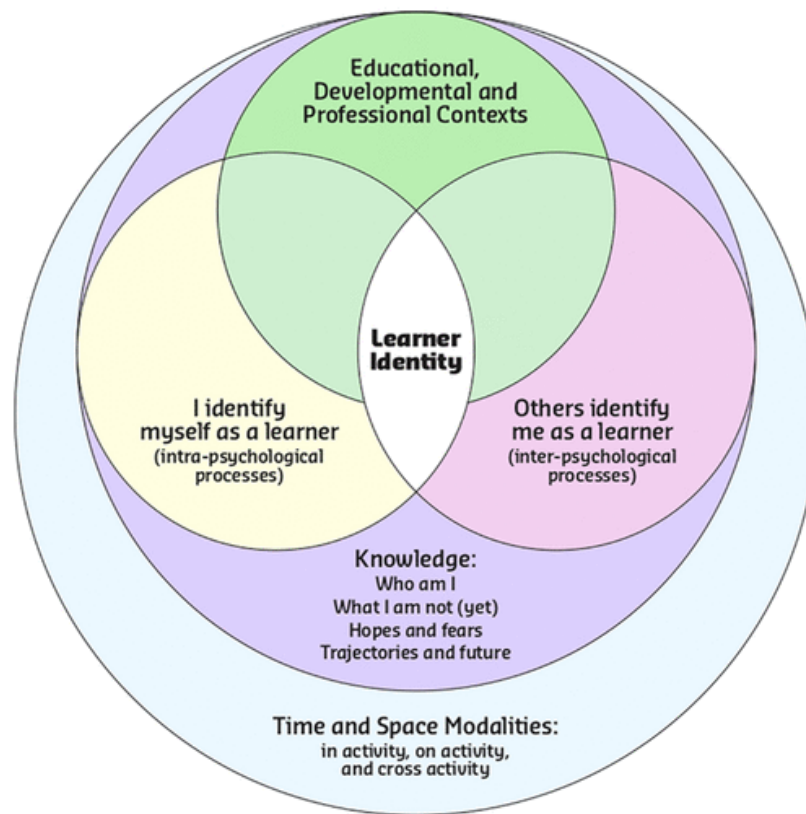


Figure 1. Characteristics of the learner identity model. Reproduced from López-Íñiguez & Bennett (2021), with permission.

## Method

The study explored students' career-related thinking and confidence and drew on the findings to transform a previously generic class on career development into a student-facing career intervention. We asked three questions:

1. To what extent might a semester-long class be transformed using student-derived data?

2. How effective is the intervention in helping students to become conscious of their learner identity?
3. Is this approach scalable without additional funding or curricular space?

Participants were purposefully selected and came from five different nations and diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Invitations to participate were relayed via the head of the music department. Students signed consent forms following the guidelines of the national advisory board and students were not obliged to participate. Ethical approvals were obtained from the institution's research ethics committee. The seven participating students (P1-P7) were classical musicians (female  $n = 5$ , male  $n = 2$ ) enrolled in post-graduate studies. Participants committed to participating in research seminars across a 12-week semester and they were compensated with one study credit following the European Transfer Credit and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Phase 1 featured semi-structured interviews with each participant. In Phase 2, participants created personalised employability profiles using an online tool (Bennett, 2019). The tool prompted students to rate their confidence in relation to self-management and decision-making, academic self-efficacy, self-esteem, professional identity, conceptualisations of self and employability, emotional intelligence, and career commitment and agility.

Findings of Phases 1 and 2 informed the design and content of four 90-minute lectures and seminars of increasing difficulty (Phases 3A and 3B). Phase 4 featured a discussion panel with eight musicians who were internationally recognised as being highly proficient in multiple roles. Student participants provided feedback on all four phases via email. The study employed phenomenological, lexicometrical, and descriptive analyses as appropriate for each phase.

## **Results**

### **Phase 1: Interviews**

Participants' professional profiles and developmental needs were coded by applying lexicometrical analysis using Leximancer software to the interview transcripts. Participants highlighted the importance of *performance* but also the need for variety within and beyond performance roles. To achieve this, they realised the need to develop greater industry awareness alongside personal, artistic, and professional autonomy. All participants articulated the need to develop their skills and industry experience. Increased autonomy was again a feature, as was the need to develop work-life balance.

Participants noted that social interaction and communication skills were crucial to establishing and maintaining their careers. They also recognised the importance of *networking*. However, the development of such skills was sometimes labelled as something to tackle "in the future", despite being described as urgent. Finally, participants discussed personal commitments, life design, and the need to think ahead.

### **Phase 2: EmployABILITY self-reflection**

Students' responses to the online employABILITY tool (Bennett, 2019; Bennett & Ananthram, 2021) revealed a lack of confidence in students' self-report of occupational literacy. Analysis revealed that this related to a lack of career exploration, career/industry awareness, and occupational flexibility. These concerns were evident in the phase 1 narratives. Lack of confidence in emotional literacy related to managing the emotions of others and to managing one's own emotions, particularly in relation to stressful situations. These themes were explored in Phase 3.

### **Phase 3: Classes developed from the student data**

Phase 3 featured four 90-minute lecture seminars. The classes had previously focussed on issues of generic importance to musicians' career development. The intervention enabled the classes to respond to the specific needs of the students, using the findings of Phases 1 and 2. Resources within a freely available online music career toolkit were employed to scaffold the learning; these included resources on critical reflection and career planning.

Participants articulated their strong commitment to a career in music and they recognised that this commitment demanded a learning mindset, resilience, patience, motivation, confidence, courage, industry awareness, stress management strategies, a positive attitude, and mental wellness. Three of these themes are drawn out below.

#### *Planning a career*

Participants identified multiple long- and short-term goals and they were aware of the need to create a sustainable income through multiple roles. However, they expressed inadequate understanding of small business management, career management, and work generation.

Participants emphasised that insufficient career awareness was inhibiting their ability to make informed career decisions, and they wanted more exposure to the work of experienced colleagues and the career narratives of successful musicians alongside strategies with which to develop their professional networks.

#### *Ethical behaviour*

Some participants had experienced competition and exclusionary practices from established performers, suggesting the need for early career mentorship and peer networks. Participants

requested information about musicians' rights and obligations, both in relation to these practices and also on practical matters such as what rates to charge for their work and how to manage under-prepared or difficult colleagues.

### *Scholarship*

Although participants were keen to improve the quality of their playing and their ability to learn repertoire quickly, they were initially disinterested in engaging with their repertoire in a scholarly way. Over the course of the sessions, they began to describe the adoption of reflexive behaviour: for example, reflecting on their performances to promote new learning and improvements. Participants reported immediate benefits from the critical thinking activities and in the final sessions they expressed interest in both critical thinking and scholarly practices with which to research the music they were performing.

### *Wellbeing*

Participants emphasised the importance of physical and mental wellbeing. Stress became more clearly defined over the course of the sessions and was attributed to financial insecurity and the impact of extensive work-related travel on both health and relationships. Participants requested emotional coping strategies.

## **Discussion**

We adopted a learning ecology framework in which students played an active role in the inter- and intra-psychological construction of knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). By designing the classes based on the student-derived data, students' learning and identity construction were historically and socially situated within in a community of practice (Norton & McKinney, 2011). As trust developed within the community, participants began to express doubts,

concerns, and possibilities. As a result, participants shared many stories of pre-professional and professional life, and these were combined to broaden their career thinking, career curiosity, and learner agency.

After the intervention, participants revealed a positive attitude to learning and a more inclusive view of career pathways and musical identities. Their eventual openness to discussing concerns with colleagues (the inter-psychological dimension) and the acts of recognising everyone as a learner within the situated educational space was a stark change from the Phase 1 activities.

Participants began to recognise that success as a musician demands more than performance excellence, and that identifying themselves as learners would support their ongoing professional learning (realising or avoiding possible future identities).

Finally, participants began to challenge the absence of career learning and other career-related capabilities within the curriculum, and they acknowledged that they would need to take the lead in meeting some of their career visioning and associated learning needs.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

The CEPROM theme *Transformative impacts* might conjure visions of major reforms. In contrast, we asked the extent to which a semester-long class could be transformed using student-derived data, whether such a short intervention could help students to become conscious of their learner identity, and whether the approach might be scalable without additional funding or curricular space. We took an existing, semester-long class broadly themed as career development, and used students' self-reported confidence data to inform the

content of the four lecture seminars. The study was undertaken without additional project funding and utilised a free student self-assessment tool and associated career learning resources.

The intervention had a transformative impact on student musicians' development not because of their particular learning needs but because they began to embrace both a learning mindset and the more inclusive musician identities needed for career exploration. The additional tasks included student completion of the online self-assessment tool, which was a 30-minute required task, and approximately one hour in which we discussed the results as presented in an educator report and selected resources from the online toolkit. We concluded that these tasks were far from onerous and were scalable to other classes and contexts.

The study illustrates the potential for in-curricular interventions to positively impact learner identity, career curiosity, and learner agency. Indeed, the diversity of views to which students were exposed when working collaboratively and discussing the results of their self-report developed rich discussions within the safety of a learning community. The use of established tools and resources ensured that student learning was scaffolded. These tools have the potential to support academic staff who are non-experts in career learning to understand and address these complex issues.

We acknowledge that the course into which we taught had a class dedicated to career development and that this is rarely the case. Professor Dumbledore would argue that this is no excuse for the absence of transformative learning experiences in the education of musicians. We end with his words, and with the intention of following his advice as we

identify further opportunities for students to explore their emerging musician identities and career thinking.

Often, courses were created because they reflected the teaching and/or research interests of faculty members, and these courses would align with the interests of students by chance rather than by design. Which courses should be maintained, eliminated, introduced or transformed, and which deserve enhanced funding or human resources, cannot be determined unless the connection between course outcomes and degree-level expectations is clear. (Carruthers, 2019, p. 23-24)

### **Acknowledgements**

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### **Links to the research project and the self-assessment tool**

- Research Project: <https://www.uniarts.fi/en/projects/transforming-musicianship-musicians-learner-identity/> Contact: [guadalupe.lopez.iniguez@uniarts.fi](mailto:guadalupe.lopez.iniguez@uniarts.fi)
- Website to access the self-assessment tool: <https://developingemployability.edu.au>  
Contact: [dabennett@bond.edu.au](mailto:dabennett@bond.edu.au)

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# **Artistic citizenship training through university-community partnership: Practical implications for conservatoire reform**

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## **Abstract**

The call for further career management and support skills within tertiary music education beyond technical proficiency has led to a robust discussion with many institutions acknowledging their responsibility towards graduating socially conscious artistic citizens. Accordingly, scholars suggest collaborative authentic learning within diverse communities will further enable student agency and the development of applicable transferable skills to navigate precarious careers.

This paper presents a case for a core professional practice course embedded within one Australian conservatoire Bachelor of Music programme with the aim to educate future artistic citizens via university-community partnerships. Through reflexive practitioner action research, the course's learning activities and student engagement over a period of three years (2019–2021) are discussed. Findings revealed the students incorporated and developed many transferable skills applicable to their current and future professional practice. While they and the community very much valued their roles as artistic citizens, the time needed to engage in the university-community partnership conflicted with their commitments and priorities as student musicians emerging into industry. Consequently, the successful implementation of such learning activities would require not only more curriculum space within the degree, but

a reformed conservatoire that allows exploration beyond traditional music practices. This will ensure graduate leadership of a more diverse and inclusive future, within and beyond the arts.

**Keywords:** artistic citizenship; community; professional practice; music careers.

## **Introduction and rationale**

Actioning the call for higher music education reform has revealed insight into its successes and challenges (Rumianstev et al., 2020). In describing the move away from traditional nineteenth-century training practice, Duffy (2013) offered a guiding blueprint of curricular principles including “to provide insight into and experience of what is required to succeed in a diversity of artistic fields” (p.176) and more pertinently “to enable students to make a contribution in the world as artists, educators, advocates and citizens” (p.177). Tregear et al., (2016) subscribe to this ethos of educating for the progressive musician, further suggesting “it is both timely and necessary for conservatoires to reconsider, reinvigorate and rearticulate their capacity to contribute to broader social good” (p. 276) and advocate for a collaborative, as opposed to competitive, student education that addresses deeper psychological needs “such as safety and belonging” (p.283). Carruthers (2018) likewise encouraged developing student agency via experiential learning and self-determination, further citing the provision of “transferable skills necessary to navigate the gradual transitions and precipitous shifts that characterize twenty-first century careers in music” (p.210). To do so, Tregear et al., (2016) argue conservatoire education should be proactive within the community - for example with regard to audience development: “to seek out and draw into our fold the music lovers as much as the music professionals of the future” and speculate that higher music education should be “developing music leadership *of* the community as much as *in* it” (italics provided, p.284). In doing so they justify the achievement of “active listening”, a transferable skill related to “communication and social cohesion” applicable for all audiences and students

(Tregear et al., 2016, p.285). In summary, this paradigm shift from ivory tower to public institution understandably impacts the philosophy of training the elite musician performing music *at* an audience, towards one that facilitates a socially conscious and connected broader community through their musical engagement. Kenny (2021), suggest university-community partnerships are more so relevant given the global state of flux, arguing they are an “ideal space to prepare for unknowns and connect with diverse communities” (p.30). Thus, it is evident that higher music education is evolving from educating for employment titles such as musician, performer, composer, singer towards ‘artistic citizens’ defined by Silverman and Elliot (2018) as those who “act with a deep awareness of the powers that music has to move, bond, heal, empower, and motivate people to act with an ethical commitment to communal well-being” (p.366).

During the last decade, such conservatoire reformation has seen core subjects embedded in undergraduate degrees that educate for the professional musician beyond technical proficiency (Beckman, 2007; Daniel, 2013; Myles-Beeching, 2010; Tolmie, 2017). The teaching of these career support skills have been classified a number of names: enterprise, entrepreneurship, career management, portfolio career navigation and so on. The discourse advocating their inclusion in undergraduate music training has further suggested that greater success is achieved if authentic and experiential learning is prioritised within curriculum design (Canham, 2021; Carruthers, 2018; Tolmie, 2017). Through the lens of the course designer/convenor, this paper examines one such fourth year course within a Bachelor of Music degree at an Australian conservatoire.

## **A university-community partnership: project-oriented experiential learning**



To contextualise, the Bachelor of Music programme has two exit points: end of third or fourth year. Thus those who have enrolled in fourth year have done so to focus on further developing their technical skill and largely maintain aspirations towards traditional career roles such as orchestral, opera and soloist employment and will continue with postgraduate study either within Australia or abroad (Tolmie, 2017). Jazz and composition enrolments are usually nominal (two or three students per year). The course under scrutiny is the final course of a suite of professional development core courses that engage with career management, enterprise, pedagogy, and musicians' health. Overall enrolment in this course is circa 30 students. Although not officially titled a capstone course, it was designed to draw on multiple skills accumulated throughout the degree including performance, pedagogy plus theory and aural capabilities. The learning activities and assessment are grounded in the concept of Project-Based Learning, whereby the creation of products or services are at the centre of the learning experience (Zhao, 2012). He further suggests the focus is typically a standalone outcome that is largely student-led and set between the students' institution and the community.

The project: students are required to form groups of three to five, and produce a 25-minute 'education show' for children of a selected local public primary school located 15-minutes' walk from the conservatorium. To ensure an engaged audience, students must also prepare 'teaching tasks' i.e. teaching and learning concepts and activities for the music teacher to work with her primary students to enable interactive engagement with the live shows. All shows and learning tasks are aligned with the school music curriculum, and the school core values of Creativity, Confidence, Challenge, Community and Compassion ("Department of Education," 2021) The school enrolment of over 1200 includes over 90 cultural backgrounds and more than 65 different languages spoken at home. Their developed music programme

includes choirs, string and wind ensembles, jazz band and orchestra within the extra-curricular activities.

My educational role is more so as a “designer, editor and assembler” of learning as opposed to one who transfers knowledge, thus adopting a meddler-in-the-middle approach (McWilliam, 2008, p.263). Throughout the course, scaffolded learning activities include: incursion observation where students assimilate children watching a performance by an education group from the national arts company Musica Viva in Schools programme, principal and school culture induction, weekly workshop presentations of evolving show design, sessions with an acting lecturer on communicating performance and presentation, guided script design discussion, and show presentation to an industry-feedback panel for further revision prior to the repeat performances scheduled for the primary school classes (preparatory through to grade 6). In designing their own shows, students’ creative capabilities and values are explored while introduced to new networks and professional opportunities. Students also receive peer-feedback during show workshop sessions, school music staff feedback following each reiteration of their performances (of which there were at least three repeat live performances) and school student feedback after the show in the form of post-it notes answering the active-listening questions “what did I learn?”, “what did I enjoy?” and “how did the music make me feel?” Conservatoire students’ final assessment includes an individual reflection on the course experiences.

## **Methodology**

My findings have evolved from adopting the professional development practice of reflexive action research as first introduced by Lewin (1946): plan – act – evaluate – reflect and cycle. Observations and reflective analyses of the course in action and resultant outcomes were

conducted and journaled during the yearly delivery of the course for 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Core reflective questions such as “how do I improve my practice?” further led to “what skills and knowledges do the students bring to the learning experience and/or further develop”, “what contributes to their successful learning outcomes?”, and the thesis for this study: “how do students perceive developing agency and self-determination within an authentic learning environment?”

Although action research in music education is often supported by further formal qualitative and quantitative research, for example focus groups with students, interviews, and surveys (Cain, 2008), such research tools are omitted in this case owing to the variances in course delivery. To explain, 2019 saw a completely reformed course: moving away from specific entrepreneurship studies towards enabling an alternative philosophy - artistic citizenship through the lens of teaching artistry, i.e. the practice of transformative music education through artistic praxis (Booth, 2009). Following revisions, the 2020 course was interrupted by the pandemic and shifted to an online delivery. This required students to quickly upskill and produce multi-track split-screen performance education videos for the state school students. This online version was not repeated upon returning to face-to-face delivery in 2021. Thus, while formal inquiry into the student perspective is most certainly valuable, it posed initial challenges to compare from one year to the next considering the diverse contexts of course delivery while preserving some innovations from 2020. However to retain the “student voice” the action research process includes reflexive consideration of: student conversations and emails, observation of their engagement with the learning activities, their choices of show thematic material and music, and their methods for production. These were correlated with conclusive themes from their reflective assessment to affirm/discount the action research findings and mitigate a single lens bias. To date, there is very limited

literature on the analysis of assessment in relation to student professional activity. Macleod and Chamberlain (2011) discussed the reflective journals of students enrolled in a Social Enterprise strand within a Bachelor of Arts degree at Griffith University. They noted that “while it is possible that some responses are designed to give the lecturers what they want to hear, there are distinct patterns that emerge from analysing the dozens of journals kept from the three years” (Macleod & Chamberlain, 2011, p. 11). My results, except for quantitative reporting of repertoire choice, are largely generalised to express the majority student opinion from year to year, or as a total population (N= 86 students for the years 2019–2021).

## **Findings and discussion**

Students were given creative license in designing their shows providing they complied with three foundational criteria of 1) education – align and expand the school music curriculum, 2) performance – provide high quality and skilled music and 3) entertainment – design the show to be fun and engaging. Where the 2019 cohort used broad themes to structure their shows (food, contemporary sounds, animals, travel), the 2020 students sought to consider relatable holistic themes for the school students in times of pandemic crisis such as resilience, sustainability, and empathy through storytelling. The 2021 shows continued this narrative style presenting the school’s values explicitly and implicitly via topics of climate change, mystery, fantasy and world travel. This further correlated with interesting hierarchical educational values underpinning the show design and focus. The 2019 cohort sought to prioritise music performance, then entertainment, but less so concerning educational content. The 2020 students equally valued all three and produced remarkably sophisticated recorded shows considering the short time frame (three months), technological learning curve, and experienced disruptions. Returning to face-to-face learning, the 2021 cohort prioritised education, entertainment then music performance.

In general the students enjoyed presenting the performance shows, were proud of their final product and recognised their value and potential impact on 1200 school-aged children, particularly relating to their own initial inspiration to learn music via similar school artistic incursions. The 2019 and 2021 students were thrilled by the school teachers' and students' engagement and positive response to their performances. The 2020 cohort recognised their valuable contribution to a school that was likewise struggling with lockdowns and a transfer to online-learning, but were unfortunately unable to hear of the school student response until after the course had finished. However, many suggested further sharing their work with regional/rural, socio-disadvantaged and minority communities would be worthwhile.

All years recognised how such skill development related to their own future employment pathways – be it continuing with performance-education as an independent enterprise, or applying such curation and presentation skills within potential outreach roles as part of orchestra, opera or music education. While a minority had difficulty in motivating their groups, some students clearly had synergistic experiences, with individuals further contributing or developing non-music talents (such as visual, fine arts or dance). Many students recognised improving their communication skills positively impacted their own teaching practice, personal recitals and other forms of audience engagement. For some, the experience of working with young children allayed preconceived notions of education roles, or recalibrated past negative experiences in the one-to-one teaching environment. The 2020 cohort strongly recognised their developed skills in technology understanding their relevance within a disrupted industry and ongoing need. Ironically the 2021 cohort, despite the requirement to supply video teaching tasks four weeks prior to the show, neither mentioned technical challenges nor expressed the need for further support to learn new skills. Yet some

provided high quality edited videos inclusive of graphics, animations and special effects they observed from the previous years' presentations. This is possibly owing to other prior enforced technology learning, but this was never articulated during the course activities nor the reflections.

Where the students of 2020 welcomed the music collaboration experience in an environment that was otherwise uncertain, socially isolated and digital, the 2019 and 2021 cohort voiced their frustration finding meeting and rehearsal time within busy external schedules commenting this initially affected their teamwork efficacy. All commented on the time-investment required to produce these shows, with some suggesting they considered it was beyond the standard expectation of a 10-credit point course (150 hours). Many classical students, particularly the 2020 cohort, embraced the creative opportunity, commenting such an opportunity was not available elsewhere in their degree. However, some were not as comfortable with the seemingly unstructured creative approach as identified with project based learning (Zhao, 2012) and questioned the perceived lack of delivered content. This was despite explicit discussions regarding how the course drew on multiple skills assumed learnt throughout the degree and students were anticipated to independently develop more. Bailey, van Acker and Fyffe (2012) further recognise such a potential new learning experience where "capstones often require more active input from students than other subjects. Students become active makers of meaning and creators of knowledge, rather than passive recipients of information" (2012, p. 14).

Of note, students' required involvement in performance, composition/arrangement, teaching and production represent the four most common domains of employment held by Australian portfolio musicians (Bennett, 2008; Tolmie, 2017). The classical students further mentioned

how the required memorisation and change in performance scenarios (be it in school, or video recordings) generated decreased performance anxiety and improved their self-confidence. They likewise suggested performing in front of school-aged children was much easier than in front of their peers and industry panel.

Music was largely selected from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic genres, and to a lesser extent movie themes, popular, folk and jazz music. Out of the 130 total works performed within the three years, only two works were by female composers (1.5%) – co-composed and published within the last thirty years. Students' original compositions amounted to seven (5.4%), three of those by females within the groups; and 48 works (37%) were self-arranged specifically for their group. Only one Australian work, of a popular genre, was performed. It must be mentioned that students were not restricted by copyright concerns as they were operating within educational institutions complying with paid music licence agreements. Student conversations surrounding the need for greater diversity were nominal, and more so related to representing the traditional music of countries overseas. Only five students included performing instruments not identified as their major degree focus.

This study corroborates Carruthers' (2018) perspective that much can be achieved by experiential learning. Tregear et al.'s (2016) call for conservatoires to consider their capacity for social good, can be further supported by university-community partnerships as exemplified. This is particularly relevant considering the potential to align with community core values, in this case: Creativity, Confidence, Challenge, Community and Compassion, and positively impact at scale – 1200 primary-aged students. Furthermore, the breadth of skills and capabilities developed and refined is profound: performance, education, composition/arranging, production, plus scriptwriting, technology, cross-arts engagement,

and a plethora of ‘soft skills’ (Tolmie, 2017). These students have further represented high capability in multiple skills that are adaptable in many workplace environments and, as Carruthers rightly identified, such skills will stand student musicians in good stead for their potentially precarious futures (2018). Students clearly possess a deep responsibility for their position as an artistic citizen otherwise they would not invest the time to produce high-quality learning experiences for school-aged children. However, it is also clear that time is a precious commodity which potentially creates a conflict of commitment and values towards developing agency and self-determination within an authentic learning environment. It is not ideal to cultivate this student educational mindset.

## **Conclusion and implications for future research and applications**

This action research contributes to the conversation regarding the training of the music professional, and demonstrates courses such as these have the potential to offer students insight into their lives as artistic citizens and their power to enact social good through their values-driven music making. In doing so, they have made a strong case for their ability to make “a contribution [to] the world as artists, educators, advocates, and citizens” (Duffy, 2013, p.177). While transferable skills are clearly gained, student agency and self-determination will need to be formally researched as limitations of this study include personal bias and the inclusion of student reflective assessment to assist affirming broad themes. As the course designer and convenor, I have also noticed undergraduate students are yet to fully comprehend the ‘meddler-in-the-middle’ role in facilitating creative project-based learning. This does indicate how the master-apprentice education model continues to pervade students’ approach to their emerging professional practice. A qualitative study directly involving the students prior, during and after the course is likely to reveal more nuanced understanding of how to navigate and transform this mindset. Likewise, for conservatoires to claim social



impact via a public institution - as opposed to ivory tower - ideology, longitudinal research into the legacy of such university-community partnerships is required. In this case, discerning whether the school students became active listeners thus more socially developed further adding to the discourse on the cultural and societal value of music. And, for the conservatoire students, how the skills and knowledge developed within the course impacted their lives following graduation.

This study has also identified that to realistically achieve successful learning and student satisfaction outcomes via university-community partnerships means excising further courses from the degree to accommodate the industry-active emerging musician navigating both tertiary study and a developing career. To this fourth-year students seeking more traditional employment pathways are justified to ask “what are we paying for?” However, if the conservatoire community: advocate change; create highly valued community partnerships which link to graduate employment outcomes; and, as Tregear et al. (2016) have advised, demonstrate a significant track record of social dividends, the question may never need to be answered let alone raised.

In summary, the successful legacy of courses embracing university-community partnerships is dependent on a degree curriculum design underpinned by a consistent set of values that align with the community they interact. The nominal musical diversity in genre and gender, plus lack of Australian music present in the students’ shows is concerning and is antithetic to the course purpose. Yet, these cannot be perceived as the students’ values but rather evidence for the broader argument for the reform of conservative undergraduate training. Doing so will minimise the risk of perpetuating a narrow range of cultural traditions, conversely ensuring leadership of a more diverse and inclusive future, within and beyond the arts.

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# **Creation and re-creation in university music performance teaching**

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## **Abstract**

In the final chapter of a book on the *Teaching and Evaluating Music Performance at University* (2020), Canadian music educator, Glen Carruthers, discussing “provocations for change in higher education” (p. 239) introduced the idea of the democratization of music teaching and learning through consideration of “a shift in emphasis from re-creation to creation...” (p. 244), and here he was talking about teaching music performance. Carruthers notes that in the teaching of visual arts, “a student learns to create visual artworks; to become a musician, a student learns to create musical artworks, not only, and certainly not exclusively, to interpret artworks created by others” (2020, p. 243).

This paper investigates the different approaches discussed by music educators from several Australian universities in the volume’s chapters and asks: what performing skills are being addressed through these new approaches, and how these performing skills are about re-creation and creation. Teaching music performance at university has broadened beyond the one-to-one studio model with performing skills arising from use of group teaching, improvisation, reflection, the integration of theatricality, visual media, and sound technology, and play as a medium in vocal teaching, among others. In the context of music performance teaching, the term creation can apply to repertoire choice, a spectrum of scored to non-scored transmission of musical ideas, the teacher-student relationship, student reflection, the

embedding of career-thinking, and the philosophies underpinning each approach. There are also issues of teaching the teachers to be creative rather than re-creative in their performance teaching. It was found that the line between creation and re-creation is often blurred, score-based learning can be creative and non-score-based learning can be re-creative, each at times valuable and less valuable, and with the teacher, the student, repertoire choice and the performing environment all playing key roles in the outcome.

## **Introduction**

Compiling and editing a volume of chapters on teaching and evaluating university music performance in the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century required an introduction which drew together key threads of the book. In the introductory first chapter for the recent volume *Teaching and Evaluating Music Performance at University* (2020), the co-editors, John Encarnacao and Diana Blom, noted how the teacher/researchers addressed “learning scenarios that require students to consider what music is...; teaching approaches which draw on behaviourist and constructivist principles” (p. 3); different contexts for teaching singers and singing; “performing with and through digital and analogue interfaces” (p. 4); and evaluating music performance. But it was Canadian music educator, Glen Carruthers, in the final chapter on “provocations for change in higher music education” (p. 239) who introduced the idea of the democratization of music teaching and learning through consideration of “a shift in emphasis from re-creation to creation...” (p. 244), and here he was talking about teaching music performance.

This paper, therefore, examines the wealth of university music performance teaching experiences in several Australian universities, discussed in the book, through the lens of Carruthers’ idea of creation and re-creation in university music performance teaching. It

focuses on performing skills and asks: what performing skills are being addressed through these new approaches? And how are these performing skills about re-creation and creation?

While a review of relevant literature is the bedrock for original research, this study uses the book itself as the data source. Published in 2020, the 17 chapters engage with recent if not current practices in a range of Australian higher education music performance institutions.

## **Performing skills and their contexts**

Choosing repertoire suitable for university music performance groups requires an understanding of each group's skills level but also planning what the group is being asked to learn – familiar or unfamiliar repertoire, scored or unscored, improvisatory or existing sound world. Introducing first year students to 1960s improvisatory scores was a deliberate choice by Blom, Smyly and Encarnacao (2020) to complement a module of tonal improvisation. The music of George Self, John Paynter, Peter Aston, Brian Dennis, Bernard Rands and others, composed for children to perform, came from a recognition of “the difference between students creating in the visual arts, and recreating in music, and introduced composing activities for teachers to use in the classroom” (p. 86). These improvisation scores were “deeply embedded in the history of the musical changes of the late 1960s and early 1970s” (p. 88) and for Roger Johnson (1981) were “scores”...that require no prior musical training at all [for adults or children] in order to be performed” (p. x). Choosing David Bedford's *Whitefield Music 2* (1968), Terry Riley's *In C* (1964) and Kirk Nurock's *War and Night – a natural sound piece* (1973) for the first year performance groups, students identified learning the familiar performing skills of ensemble playing with different rhythms and instruments, playing while focusing on one part, listening, thinking about interpreting the scores, honing sight-reading skills and a focus on dynamics. And there were new performing skills identified

- open-mindedness to the scores, staying in the moment, being able to relax, new playing techniques, the role of the performer and the composer in these pieces. There were also the soft behavioural skills (Blom and Encarnacao, 2012) of confidence, and collaboration with people. The improvisation score also raised questions about composing - how these ways of notating are musically meaningful and successful, and how working with the scores can change one's views of music composition.

Performing Annea Lockwood's *Piano Burning* (1968), a piece which requires preparation of the piano but no performer once the performance has started (the fire has been lit) offered students an opportunity to engage with new performing skills – to reassess what a musical work is, the role of the performer, the performing environment, the audience's role, plus issues of authenticity in a text-based score with photographic images. These are new in relation to Blom and Encarnacao's (2012) wide-ranging summary of group performing skills noted as criteria for assessment in classical and popular-music studies published from 1979-2009. Grouped into soft and hard skills (and soft/hard, hard/soft combinations), there is no evidence of considering the roles of performer, audience, performing environment and whether the piece is actually music, all issues emerging from performing the Lockwood work.

This widening of performing skills increases when introducing first year music performance students to free improvisation. As a musical form and style which “avails itself of philosophical meditations” (Encarnacao, Smyly, Brooks, 2020, p. 145), free improvisation, like the Lockwood piece, also invites thinking on what music actually is. In introducing an understanding of collaboration and ensemble, often with no leader, free improvisation and the term itself integrates “musical and other concerns, including the political and the



philosophical” (p. 146), “the possibility of egalitarian models of music-making” (p. 147), a “multitude of histories” (p. 149), while reimagining instruments, accepting silence as musical gesture, accepting all sound, accepting mistakes and promoting “a kind of problem solving that goes beyond the known and into the unknown” (p. 152). These are the performing skills identified by teachers of free improvisation, but the views on the 1960s improvisation scores, and on *Piano Burning*, discussed above, cover similar skills and these were singled out by students.

The repertoire in the three studies discussed above all involve a range of improvisatory scores of different styles, text only, notation, symbols and instructions, no score at all, and show improvisation as a window into rethinking music-making and performing skills. Introducing second year music performance students to more traditional scored music, McPhee (2020) found that while most ensembles began the rehearsal with a read-through of the score itself, one group working with silent movie scores “spent 15 minutes or so at the beginning of each rehearsal just jamming or ‘fiddling around’” (p. 44). She found this firstly, “allowed the ensemble to create improvised material which became the middle section of the final performance; secondly it developed into a non-verbal and communicative tool” (p. 44). Because, as teacher, McPhee had other ensembles to attend to in the same two-hour time period, she identified her teaching as semi-autonomous with her role as meddler-in-the middle, McWilliam’s (2008) term which “positions the teacher and student as mutually involved in assembling and disassembling cultural products” (p. 263). Performing skills identified by students and teacher included finding ways “to draw connections between the students’ improvisational prior learning experiences and their approaches to notated music” (p. 47), recognising the communicative skills utilised for the rehearsal process, and understanding the planning and organisational skills needed to learn ensemble repertoire.

Some of these are soft skills, interpersonal, organisational, which become crucial to enable the creative skills used to build a performance that is unique to the performers. And here improvisation plays the role of trigger into a rehearsal of scored film music, a warm up, perhaps, but also shaped into a discrete section of the final performance.

Also adopting a semi-autonomous teaching approach but for three iPad ensembles of 3-4 students each, Stevenson and Blom (2020) noted that students identified an enabling positive attitude as a key performing skill for this newer sound environment. Students deliberately adopted, at times, the strategy of building on existing knowledge, a re-creative approach, taking musical inspiration from a known musical source or looking at how others have made it work, with this reproductive knowledge and learning often “a stepping stone” (p. 77) to more expansive approaches and experimentation. Thus, if all else fails, students made a pragmatic fall-back to the familiar that resulted in more satisfactory outcomes. Students were also aware of “impediments to learning” (p. 76) such as software crashing, lack of time, no useful information, connecting other devices to the iPad, developing stage presence with iPads, all performing skills, both hard technical skills and soft interpersonal skills with technology which needed to be recognised and overcome. Discussing performing skills with electronic music performance, Stevenson (2020) found that “each compositional or performance strategy might be situated somewhere along a continuum of performativity” (p. 159) with a number of models of interactivity ranging from press to start, to advanced and expressive performance systems. And this range of technological performative interactivity will reveal more new performing skills. Similarly, when expanding music performance practice by facilitating the integration of visual media, theatricality and sound technology into music performance, Stevenson, Encarnacao and McPhee (2020) identified the industry relevance students were learning through this collaboration.

Industry relevance and skills for lifelong enjoyment, plus skills for a portfolio career, were some of the long-term performing skills identified by Cooper (2020) when introducing first year music students to the community choir experience. Wrapped up in these long-term skills were also more familiar ones such as listening to other parts, understanding the role of one's own part within the whole, using non-Western repertoire, improvisation for the choir, conducting experiences (warm-ups, volunteers to lead), vocal technique, vocal health and care, fostering confidence in singing, and activities and games to introduce and lead students to these performing skills. Similarly, for Latukefu and Verenikina (2020), using play as a medium for active learning in vocal education at university saw games with rules and role-play enabling the learning of generic work-related and life skills.

Do all teachers choose to adopt group teaching? Designing a professional development program to facilitate group music performance teaching, Mitchell (2020a) noted that the performance teaching skills and strategies of limiting the number of concepts, breaking the task into segments, addressing emerging issues as they arise, using technology, noting which parts of the curriculum suit group teaching, accommodating diverse learning styles, and realising that some performing skills may be more suited to one-to-one teaching, needed to be understood. She found that some staff do not like group teaching (Mitchell, 2002b) but when a student's musical education has included group teaching, they are more likely to include this delivery in their own teaching.

Creative teaching approaches through group learning and teaching can lead to transformational insights for the singing student. Hughes (2020) facilitated reflexivity which can precipitate perceptual change and resultant transformative learning. Drawing on several

types and strategies of reflection in her teaching, Hughes found students could come to a time or defining moment “that led to their self-realisation as a singer or musician” (p. 60) and recognise “the significance of creativity and creative process in relation to being an artist” (p. 60). And when asking music performance students to write a practice-led essay, McPhee and Blom (2020) also drew on the performing skills of guided reflection, and analysis of video or recording of a student’s own performing and that of others. These are broad, lifelong performing skills which prepare a student for a professional music career.

The early part of the lifelong journey from student to professional performer was charted by Barr and Blom (2020) as Barr moved from school rock guitarist to university student, post-graduate to semi-professional transcendent improviser, and casual teacher of university performance. Performance teaching skills learnt along the way included curriculum design, pedagogical teaching and learning strategies including formal and informal teaching, making career choices and writing autoethnographically.

## **Conclusions and discussion**

The performing skills discussed in the chapters move beyond those in Blom and Encarnacao’s 2012 list, a list already influenced by the introduction of popular music performance into the university music curriculum. Performance is never just about technique and interpretation. Carruthers encourages the rethinking of which performing skills are re-creative and creative and what the roles are for each. In the context of music performance teaching, the term creation can apply to repertoire choice, a range of scored to non-scored transmission of musical ideas ranging from different improvisation styles, different types of notation or no score, plus music where the performer isn’t performing. Creation can apply to performing with sound technology, performing with theatricality, written tasks requiring

student reflection, and the embedding of career-thinking. All introduce students to performing thinking ranging from consideration of political and philosophical concerns, egalitarianism in music, the role of the performer, consideration of what music is, the role of the audience, to handling technological impediments. There is also the teacher-student relationship, and the philosophies underpinning each approach, which requires performance teaching skills such as being the meddler-in-middle in semi-autonomous ensembles, teaching the teachers to be creative rather than re-creative in their group performance teaching, encouraging student creative approaches to their own learning and the regular re-evaluation of all of these approaches. These are all a form of improvisation, reacting to the teaching moment, and offering industry-relevance, a career-ready student and lifelong learning.

Re-creative can be a beginning or an endpoint in the performance process and the same for creative. There is no right or wrong, good or bad about re-creation and creation in music performing. Re-creation can be a useful start to creation of new ideas and approaches, whether performing with music technology or capturing a popular music style and idiom. If score-based performance is re-creative in principle, it can also be creative depending on the teacher and the students. And interpretation for all music can be re-creative, following the shapes and designs of a recording whether folk authenticity, popular music covers, or playing Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* as Jeeyoon Kim plays it, or creative drawing on historically informed and/or stylistic knowledge as a starting point for creative exploration.

Carruthers's comment regarding a shift in emphasis from re-creation to creation offers a fresh look at how we are teaching music performance. Both re-creation and creation have their roles to play in moving student performance thinking forward. The terms themselves raise the possibility of using the words re-creating and creating to convey this movement more

accurately because they evoke the idea of “bringing a result into existence” (Fritz, 1991, p. 6). This represents democratization at play in the teaching and learning of music performance and in what are considered performing and teaching skills, recognising performance’s role in society and democratization’s role in performance itself. Carruthers’ thinking reminds us that what is required is creative thinking from creative teachers, creative students within creative learning environments. Without these four, re-creation stagnates and becomes a copy rather than a trigger and impetus for fresh creative musical ideas. And without fresh creative musical ideas there’s no new knowledge being created in the arts practice, and this is at the heart of the increasingly recognised paradigm of practice-led research.

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# **Socio-educational practices of a group of students in an Arts and Design College in Argentina**

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## **Abstract**

In the context of state universities in Argentina, education is conceived as a free public good, with substantial functions of inclusion, belonging and excellence. Within a political model that understands higher education as a right for all, there is a permanent commitment to find ways to strengthen the productive links between the university and the community. From this perspective Socio-Educational Practices (SEP) are implemented to address relevant social problems while deepening specific learning goals in each field of knowledge. In order to carry out this initiative, alliances are made with social organizations to create joint actions along with students and teachers. We describe three experiences of SEP by the College of Arts and Design of the National University of Cuyo, in Mendoza, Argentina, between 2019 and 2021. They involve ceramics, theater and music students and teachers, along with different social organizations. The opinions of students involved for the first time in SEP, indicate that they produce significant changes in their worldview that affect the way they conceive their role in society and even their job prospects. The next challenge is the inclusion of SEP in the curricula, which would imply the effective recognition of the type of knowledge they produce within the set of professional skills expected in each career. Beyond the concept of volunteering or assistance, the SEP contribute to a more comprehensive

university education, where knowledge can be built through an open dialogue with the community in its own territory.

### **Keywords**

Socio-educational practice, higher education, arts education

### **Contextualization of the topic**

The Argentine Republic has 56 national, public and free universities, distributed in 24 jurisdictions. University fees were abolished in 1949, a political decision that gave the university system the character of a public good and social right that it maintains to this day and that shapes its features. Beyond interpreting this achievement as the possibility of citizens to fulfill their aspirations for individual advancement, which it certainly is, it commits us to work towards expanding social justice. Higher education, then, assumes substantive functions of inclusion, belonging and excellence, within a political model that is committed to finding ways to strengthen productive bonds with the community.

From this perspective, the Ministry of Education promotes the establishment of Socio-Educational Practices (SEP) in order to address relevant social problems while deepening specific learning goals in each field of knowledge. It is understood that these social experiences, in which students “navigate and engage with real world ethical challenges” (Westerlund et al., 2021, p. 2) have a direct impact on the educational trajectories of students, which is the reason why they are expected to be reflected in the curriculum of all the careers of the universities under its jurisdiction.

In line with this mandate, the National University of Cuyo issued an ordinance in 2016 with guidelines to update undergraduate careers (Bauzá et al., 2017; García, 2010). Taking advantage of previous experiences in university social work, such as the Program for Education in Confinement Contexts, it establishes the conceptual framework for the incorporation of SEP in curricula. As Herdoíza (2017, p. 58) puts it, in relation to a similar approach in Ecuador, we need to put together “sets of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches and student practices and applications within a curriculum strongly connected with the community”. From there on, each faculty would have to find its own path of progressive implementation of the SEP. The College of Arts and Design, to which the authors belong, initiated discussions about how to implement the SEP in its five academic units (Music, Theater, Ceramics, Design and Visual Arts), invited representatives from other universities to enrich the dialogue and finally created the SEP Coordination Area. Graduate students were summoned to facilitate the alliance with social organizations in their territory. In order to train teachers on the subject, workshops were held to deepen the conceptual frameworks of the SEP. Next follows a detail of this conceptualization, according to one of the documents entitled "SEP: 7 questions-7 preliminary answers" (Gutiérrez et al., 2019).

## **Characteristics of SEP**

The SEP is an educational innovation strategy to achieve comprehensive university training, which consists of incorporating theoretical-practical educational actions in a territorial environment into the academic path, in coordination with social organizations, promoting university commitment. The SEP cannot be achieved without a broad dialogue with society which implies creating new forms of relationship that allow the territory not simply to serve as a stage of action for university initiatives but to challenge and build the University itself. It is a paradigm that holds “a critical service learning orientation, which means that we focus on

authentic relationships, social change and power redistribution” (Bartleet et al., 201, p. 9).

Some of the characteristics of SEP are:

#### *Dialogue between academic knowledge and popular knowledge*

Contact with social organizations, unions, cooperatives, human rights organizations, etc., is prioritized. The starting point is the elaboration of a diagnosis together with the social actors in order to identify a common path for the resolution of a problem identified as relevant (Escalada, 2004; Rozas Pagaza, 2002).

#### *Community learning*

A reorganization of the roles in educational relationships is proposed, beyond the traditional educator-educated formula. A new educational actor is added: the community actor, bearer of popular knowledge, capable of learning and teaching from experience.

#### *Learning located in the territory*

Central importance is given to locating the work in the same place where the identified problem is housed, from the first stage of outlining objectives and goals. These are not established in advance by the academy, but are agreed in horizontal dialogue with the social actors in their territory.

#### *Interdisciplinarity*

It is assumed that the complex reality of the territory needs to be approached by different disciplinary perspectives. Consequently, diverse complementary competencies are put into play so as to better cover the spectrum of situations that the problem poses. Students are introduced to the value of interdisciplinary teamwork, which in turn promotes a more integrated university culture.

#### *Dialectical relationship between theory and practice*

The inclusion of non-university actors generates environments, processes and indicators that are different from the ones of traditional educational spaces. Redefinitions and mutual

adjustments are needed. Topics rarely addressed in an academic environment emerge, such as the presence of emotions, socio-affective bonds and their dynamics, recovery of memories and collective identities.

## **Convergences and divergences with other university areas**

SEP focus on issues that other areas also address, but from a different standpoint. It is important to establish the aspects of convergence with them and also, the divergent ones that make SEP special tools within the battery of university social proposals.

College outreach: This area has a long history within the social actions of the university and it is the one that has linked the products of academic knowledge and the community. One conceptual difference with SEP is that extension projects are not part of the curriculum of a subject, but are voluntary work. Solidarity practices do not necessarily imply putting into play specific disciplinary knowledge.

Pre professional practices: Both activities are based on doing, but their objectives are different. Pre-professional practices aim at the individual development of specific disciplinary capabilities in real work environments. SEP, on the other hand, add the social and critical dimension, promoting students awareness of the problems in their communities and getting them involved in the search for possible solutions.

Investigation: SEP share with action-research the general outline of steps to follow, such as diagnosis - planning - teamwork, etc. One of the differences lies in the obligation of SEP to work in the territory, defining the objectives in dialogue with the social actors, and not in advance by the research team. The logic of "investigating subject - investigated object" is replaced by a horizontal dialogue where those involved collaboratively define the goals to be

achieved. Another difference is the need for the project to be part of the curricular contents of a subject, in dialogue with subjects from other careers.

## **Stages in the implementation of the SEP: three examples from the College of Arts and Design**

I will illustrate the stages of implementation of the SEP by presenting three experiences that were carried out in the College of Arts and Design between 2019 and 2021. The first one (SEP 1) took place in 2019 and came to an end due to the pandemic. During the second semester of 2021 SEP 2 and SEP 3 were put together and are still in progress.

### **SEP 1**

Creation of a Ceramic Workshop in a community of artisan brickmaker women in El Algarrobal, a rural area of Mendoza Province. Actors involved: Territorial Health Unit of the local Hospital, School of Ceramics students and professors, women brickmakers of El Algarrobal.

### **SEP 2**

Creation of audio content for community radio stations in rural areas of Lavalle Desert (North of Mendoza Province). Actors involved: Theater and Music students and professors, Community Radios Collective of Cuyo.

### **SEP 3**

Manufacture and placement of ceramic tiles that bear the name of citizens abducted and murdered during the 1976-1983 military dictatorship, with music / theater intervention. Actors involved: Ceramics, Visual Arts, Theater and Music students and professors, Association of Relatives of Detained-Disappeared People.

### *Stage I: Collaborative Diagnosis*



The identification of a relevant problem, in the case of SEP 1, was carried out by the Territorial Health Unit of the local Hospital, which frequently visits the surrounding rural population to detect problems and perform preventive medicine. El Algarrobal is a rural area where a group of families have self-organized to build and sell hand-made bricks using the soil of the place. Their houses are constructed around the oven that cooks the bricks and they have a community room where they make and serve food for the children. The women of the community told the health team they wanted to carry out a creative activity that would take them out of the hard daily work for a moment. The team contacted the College of Arts and Design and a group of teachers and students of the School of Ceramics visited the community to jointly develop a proposal. This is how the Ceramic Workshop came about, which was originally designed for adult women but ended up generating a parallel workshop for the children that these women take care of.

In the case of SEP 2, the Community Radio Collective of Cuyo, especially people in charge of Radio Campesina (Peasant Radio), located in a desert area north of Mendoza, expressed its desire to have audio materials that would give a more varied artistic profile to their programs, usually related to social issues of their coverage area. Theater and Music students and professors visited the radio stations in their rural territory and learned about the history of these communication ventures and the impact they have on the local population, mostly made up of indigenous *Huarpe* communities and their descendents. A work meeting was held under the *algarrobos* (carob trees) to exchange ideas about possible products and it was agreed to privilege the voices of the social and artistic members of this particular territory, for the creation of audio content artistically intervened by theater and music.

SEP 3 came about as a result of the dialogue between human rights organizations in Mendoza, specifically the Memory Space run by relatives of detainees-disappeared persons and several careers of the College of Arts and Design. The need for young people to know the recent history of the country and for the city to have places of remembrance of the people who disappeared during the dictatorship is combined with the possibility of providing an artistic framework for the installation of commemorative tiles with the names of the missing persons. At first, the relatives organized visits to the clandestine place of detention of their relatives and there they provided informative documents and dialogued with the students and professors. From that starting point, the guidelines for artistic intervention were drawn in collaboration.

### *Stage II: Joint Work Plan*

The design and execution of a joint work plan implies denaturing our ideological matrix, which usually hierarchizes concepts and theories, to pay attention to practices and relationships, with the social history that runs through them.

In SEP 1, the pottery work brought childhood memories to the participating women (some of them Bolivian natives) and put into dialogue their popular knowledge and the techniques provided by the workshop students. The students eventually detected the possibilities of the soil of the area and took samples to the Ceramic School, where after several experiments they managed to create a material suitable for pottery modeling and resistant to fire.

In SEP 2, after analyzing Radio Campesina's programming, Theater and Music students chose a poetic text that they considered appropriate and worked on it with the voice and the instruments, using group improvisation techniques, to create original radio contents.

SEP 3 participants read and reflected together over documents provided by human rights organizations. From there on they generated collective creations between musicians and actors, with the aim of arranging artistic interventions to be performed at the placement of the commemorative tiles. For example, the flutists chose the work of the Mexican composer Mario Lavista "Game", which due to its open structure is suitable to articulate with the staging of the actors.

*Stage III: evaluation and systematization:*

The process of evaluating and systematizing the results of the PSE produces significant learning that makes it possible to “critically appropriate the undergone experiences (their knowledge and feelings), understand them theoretically and guide them towards the future with a transforming perspective” (Jara, O. 2012, p. 78 ). It is important to highlight that not only cognitive dimensions are systematized, but also affective, ethical and political knowledge. The moment of evaluation of the SEP 1, produced in the territory and in dialogue with the participants, showed that while the brick-making women had taken the workshop as a recreational activity, necessary to make a cut in their hard daily work, the students had oriented the workshop towards the production of useful household items, assuming that this was their primary need. These moments of horizontal reflections are essential to bring positions together and adjust future actions. The brickmaker women were invited to present their knowledge in the Ceramics Week 2019, at the University.

In SEP 2, which is in progress during 2022, through the evaluation of all parts involved it was decided to create audio material centered in oral stories, instead of literary texts. A local *Robin Hoodesque* hero of the XIX century, Martina Chapanay, was chosen for a creative experience involving voice and music in a radio drama format.

The evaluation process of SEP 3 showed that the relatives of detainee-missing people did not feel related enough to the contemporary music chosen for the first stage, and suggested to work with popular music of the '70s instead, since that was the music their beloved ones used to hear before they were abducted. Right now arrangements of selected pop music are being made and rehearsed, to be incorporated to the creative process with theater majors that will eventually lead to the performances that accompany the tile placements.

## **Results, in the words of the students**

"We thought that the Workshop was an improvement to the work they had, but they put it in another place, in the place of a game, because they work all day".

"As a student, it is leaving the classroom, getting out of that position and place yourself in another dimension".

"We brought to the work table the idea of producing a text by Eduardo Galeano<sup>1</sup>, but when we sat there we found out that what the people at the Community Radios Collective really wanted was to transmit their local stories in their radio programs".

"...to see how various artistic disciplines can converge for the good of one or more communities..."

"Working with colleagues from other careers is not frequent".

"She showed us how projects can be carried out even if you don't have all the resources and there are so many obstacles. This seems to me very valuable for art people: getting to know projects that started from the very bottom and that are actually fulfilling the purpose that at some point they imagined, and even have the perspective of growing... for us it is a great example".

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<sup>1</sup>Uruguayan Journalist and writer (1940-2015).

“This trip left very nice impressions on me... I didn't know what I was going to find. When I see how people put together a project that is so important to them, I find it very inspiring. It led me to think: if I want to do something, I have to put work on it, start from below and every day make it grow. They blew me away”.

"Coming to know the history of these radios, the way in which these people have been looking so hard for the resources to carry out their project is a true example for us ... so much commitment and respect ..."

## **Final reflections**

The recognition of others, who are often silenced beings, as owners of knowledge, leads to the recognition of all people as active agents of human culture. It is a concept of culture as polyphony, which collects a multiplicity of voices and puts them in value. The SEP in the University promote the development of a critical view at those social dynamics that have historically deprived certain groups of their recognition as subjects with their own voice. University students, in this case Art students, find in the SEP a possibility to put their knowledge and skills into play in contexts that function with different logics from those of the academy and that have much to teach them. Their future insertion into the working society will bear, we hope, the stamp of these experiences in the territory.

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# **Contrasting approaches to jazz education in regional communities:**

## **Findings from a study on Cairns and Mackay, North Queensland**

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### **Abstract**

Regional music communities are dependent on a variety of educational influences to be sustainable and successful. This article presents a subset of findings from a wider doctoral study on the development and sustainability of two jazz communities—Cairns and Mackay in North Queensland, Australia. This article discusses how these two regional jazz communities developed their own individual approaches to providing jazz education for their community members. The research project involved conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with 24 participants drawn from both jazz communities and analysing that data using the grounded theory methodology. The research findings suggest that these two communities differed quite markedly in their educational approaches, infrastructure and educators. This article compares and contrasts the Mackay jazz community's influence from the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music to Cairns' own unique approach, which lacked the presence of a conservatorium.

### **Keywords**

Regional, jazz, community, education, Cairns, Mackay



## **Introduction**

While major cities have historically been the central hubs of development and education for jazz in Australia, it has been increasingly recognised that regional centres also provide avenues for jazz performance and sites for development and innovation (Curtis, 2010). Regional music communities are dependent on a variety of educational influences to be sustainable and successful. This article identifies and discusses educational influences in regional music communities, which have been drawn from a wider doctoral study on the development and sustainability of two jazz communities—Cairns and Mackay in North Queensland, Australia.

Jazz education comes in many forms including tertiary courses, secondary school programs, private tuition and through performing itself. Students of jazz in metropolitan cities such as Melbourne and Sydney have access to a wealth of experienced teachers, musicians, and performance opportunities. In regional areas, similar opportunities exist, but on a much smaller scale. Each individual music community is shaped by its own cultural, geographic, economic, and social influences; however, few studies have explored regional education influences, particularly in jazz. Waitt and Gibson (2013, p. 76) observe, “From the perspective of rural Australian creative life, the persistent urban bias in creativity research appears decidedly strange.”

## **Background of the Study**

This study, which was completed in 2020, explored the question: What factors influence the development and sustainability of a jazz community in regional Australia? The study

focussed on Cairns and Mackay in North Queensland, Australia, and applied grounded theory methodology to data from semi-structured interviews with community members in both regions. These two sites provided differing environments with differing histories, which have shaped the development of their two regional jazz communities. Long (2014, p. 54) believes, there is a “need to reflect on the local specificity of place history, economy and cultures in devising local music (and tourism) plans and strategies, while recognizing the relevance of comparisons with other places.” This study investigated topics associated with performance, sociological, governmental, and educational factors in both communities, and through the grounded theory process it uncovered three major influences: venues, regionality and education.

### **Mackay**

Mackay is a sub-tropical city, situated in the most northern part of Central Queensland. In relation to music education, Mackay is home to the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music (CQCM), a division of Central Queensland University that has offered degree courses in music and theatre since 1989. Current students and graduates from the Bachelor of Music degree perform throughout Australia and internationally while contributing to the musical fabric of Central and Northern Queensland. The Mackay region is also home to a range of music festivals that incorporate live jazz performance.

### **Cairns**

Cairns is a world-famous tourist destination situated in Far North Queensland on the doorstep of the Great Barrier Reef (Thorp, 2007). Tertiary education in Cairns has historically included creative arts courses and TAFE-level music courses, however there is no conservatorium within the region, and no jazz-specific courses are available. Cairns is home

to the Cairns Jazz Club—the only jazz association in the region. Many highly talented musicians reside in Cairns including Wilma Reading, a vocalist who performed with Duke Ellington; Mike Price, guitarist and former Australian National University Head of Music; and Mike Rivett, saxophonist and Australian jazz awards winner.

## **Research Methodology**

The research method employed in this study was grounded theory—an inductive investigative process that involves using iterative strategies to collect and analyse qualitative data in order to construct a theory (Charmaz, 2014). One of the primary reasons this methodology was chosen was because the research problem involved investigating and understanding two jazz communities with different social, economic and geographical contexts. Discovering theories and new insights from the community members through social inquiry proved to be an appropriate form of investigation. The data for this study came from conducting semi-structured interviews with 24 jazz community members in both regions. One of the advantages of using semi-structured interviews was the ability to conduct individual in-depth inquiry, delving deeply into social and personal matters (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The participants in this study consisted of community members who had insights into their respective communities as either performers, audience members or educators. The data collection and analysis phases occurred simultaneously, which is common in qualitative research. A process known as *theoretical sampling* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was employed to refine and direct the inquiry to areas that had already been established or discovered during the data analysis. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed to ensure accurate analysis.

The data analysis phase used several traditional grounded theory processes devised by Glaser and Strauss (1967). These included open coding, theoretical sensitivity, memo-writing, theoretical coding, theoretical sampling, selective coding, memo-sorting and theory-writing. As the theory developed, core concepts emerged from the data through constant comparison of incidents in the data, theoretical saturation and theoretical sampling. This focussed approach resulted in the emergence of three core concepts that impacted the development of the two jazz communities in Cairns and Mackay: venues, regionality and education. This article focuses on just one of those three influential factors: education.

### **Mackay's Conservatorium of Music**

One of the major differences between the jazz communities of Cairns and Mackay was the presence of the CQCM in Mackay and the tertiary-level jazz training it offers. The CQCM Bachelor of Music is a three-year degree that is available to students on the Mackay campus as well as online. The CQCM has offered jazz training in Mackay since 1989, and according to the participants in this study, it has had a major impact on the local jazz community including school-aged students, community musicians, undergraduate jazz students and alumni who have stayed in the Mackay region. The presence of a conservatorium in a regional city like Mackay has enabled the community to access educational opportunities that would normally only be available in larger cities. One participant stated that the reason he started playing jazz was because the CQCM was in his hometown. He added, "I knew I liked music, but seeing the jazz guys play in town opened up an entire new world for me to access". Other Mackay participants travelled from Rockhampton to Mackay to access the jazz education offered there. One participant stated, "I made a conscious decision to attend the Con in Mackay because of the proximity from Rocky [Rockhampton]". These findings are consistent with a study by Klopper and Power (2012) which found that regional

conservatoria had the potential to provide a vital educational service for communities that are geographically isolated or far from large cities.

### **The ‘Con’nection with Schools**

Several participants commented on the educational services that the CQCM offers to school-aged students in Mackay, and how those services enhance the profile of jazz within the community. For example, one participant said, “High school students here in Mackay have the added benefit of jazz educators delivering workshops for their stage bands as well as providing extra-curricular activities like the CQUniversity Schools Jazz Festival”.

The benefit of the CQCM’s national and international networks also appear to have an impact on the high school students participating in the CQCM’s programs. As one participant noted, “It’s always good to get fresh ears, fresh ideas. That’s why it’s great when the Con brings in people to work with the school students”. The educational service that staff and students from the CQCM extend to school students appeared to play a pivotal role in the development of new members of the local jazz community. Many of the Mackay participants in this study came into contact with the CQCM during their time at high school. Music workshops with CQCM staff marked the beginning of an educational relationship that articulated into these participants studying a Bachelor of Music course through the CQCM.

### **Graduates Become the Teachers**

The results of the study revealed a nexus between the CQCM staff, the CQCM students, school students and graduates of the CQCM. These relationships appear to have had a significant influence on the Mackay jazz community. The relationship that the CQCM staff have had with local schools over time has not only assisted in the development of school jazz

education, but it has also provided an opportunity to recruit future students for the Bachelor of Music degree. Several participants in the study mentioned graduates who stayed in Mackay and found teaching jobs after completing their degree. These graduates brought a specialised jazz educational skillset back into the high school system. One participant explained, “You often find teachers that have come from the Con tend to stick to their strengths in jazz, which makes for a stronger stage band than the concert band”. Another participant also commented on the impact that the CQCM graduates have had on local high school music departments: “It all filters from the Con. If it’s not being taught at the Con in Mackay, its being taught by its graduates. There are not many outside guys coming in teaching jazz”. One participant also commented on the impact that graduates have on the local jazz community by linking the CQCM with their school groups:

...once students started to be employed in instrumental and classroom music in schools, there was another level of connection with schools in the region which seemed to strengthen the partnership, whereby schools were involved in events of the Con and vice versa.

The nexus between the CQCM, high schools, teachers and graduates form a mutually beneficial support system that is unique to this regional music community.

### **Community Musicians and Collaboration with the CQCM**

In addition to its activities with local schools, the CQCM has had positive collaborative projects with community musicians. The CQCM Jazz Orchestra (CQCMJO) played an important role for the jazz community of Mackay, bringing together CQCM staff, students and community players. One participant explained the benefits:

...the group had a combination of staff, students and community players, and that had a really positive influence on the local music teachers that participated in that group because it meant that they had an exposure to a level of jazz instruction that they wouldn't have had the opportunity to have.

The study revealed some of the opportunities that were gained by community members involved in this ensemble. Jazz instruction from lecturers in the course provided a professional development opportunity for music teachers in the community. Figure 1 illustrates how the CQCMJO has benefited community music teachers.

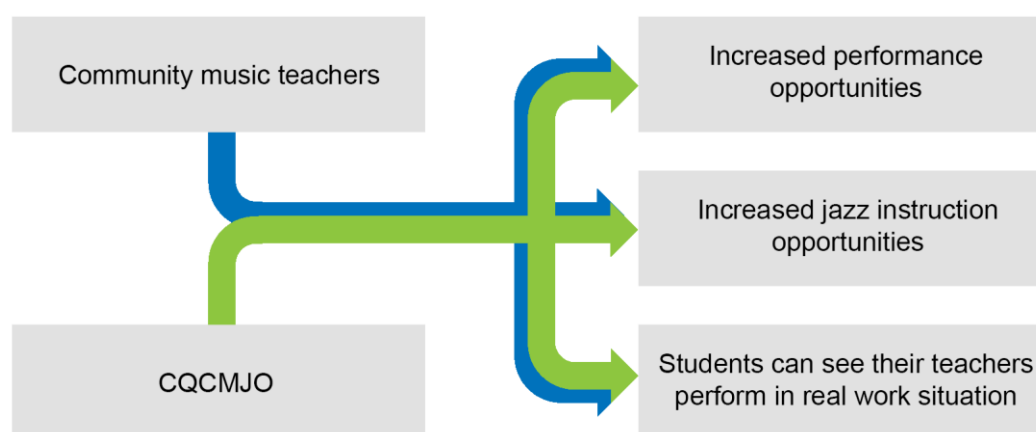


Figure 1. The CQCMJO/Community music teacher relationship

### **Cairns and its Jazz Education Influences**

The Cairns region does not have a conservatorium of music, and no local tertiary jazz courses are available there. Study participants in Cairns were questioned about the impact this situation had on their jazz community and if there were other educational opportunities that compared to the influence the CQCM had on the Mackay jazz community. The study

revealed a series of interlocking influences from key individuals and groups in the community that contributed to performance and educational opportunities in Cairns.

### **The Cairns Jazz Club Community Impact**

One of the most educationally influential groups in the Cairns jazz community was the Cairns Jazz Club (CJC). This community group made up of musicians and local patrons demonstrated a passion for jazz in their region and took an active role in its preservation and future. From actively seeking gigs for musicians, to developing connections to school music programs, this community group was found to be a key mechanism in bringing the smaller factions of the local jazz community together.

One of their major collaborations was with jazz students from the Jazz Academy at Smithfield State High School (SHS). The CJC provided opportunities to perform at Sunday afternoon events. One jazz club member believed this was critical in securing the future of the local jazz community by stating, “And the kids that come down on a Sunday simply love it. Like I keep saying, we need them”! One participant also commented, “What you have now is a group of students working on songs at school to be gig-ready. That’s awesome for the town”. In the eyes of many CJC members, these students were the next generation of Cairns jazz musicians. Another participant stated, “They are our future, and we must do everything we can to nurture them”. For the Smithfield SHS students, collaboration with the CJC was important for several reasons. Firstly, the students needed an outlet outside of school to perform, and the CJC offered this possibility. Secondly, the CJC has assisted with the delivery of jazz workshops at the school. One participant explained, “The school regularly invites guys from the community in to do group lessons and workshops for instrument groups”. According to the staff of Smithfield SHS, this input from the jazz community has



helped to lift the musical standard of their program and has encouraged students to learn how to improvise.

### **Lifestyle and Tourism – Members of the Jazz Community**

The Cairns region is home to many high-quality jazz musicians who provide private jazz tuition in a range of instruments. One participant noted, “Mackay might have the Con, but the staff numbers on the ground there are relatively low compared to the great musicians living across the Cairns region”. The North Queensland lifestyle and tourism industry has attracted many quality jazz musicians to Cairns over the years. While some musicians moved to the region looking for gigs, many came looking for other job opportunities or to live in the tropics.

Studies in both Perth and Darwin (Bennett, 2010; Gibson et al., 2010) have found that attracting interstate or international artists to regional areas is often cost-prohibitive. In Mackay, the CQCM has been chiefly responsible for funding visits by high-level national and international musicians to that region. In Cairns, no local organisation has provided similar opportunities, but quality artists and educators continue to travel to the region attracted by the local lifestyle, employment and educational opportunities. One study participant commented, “Cairns is that sort of town where it can attract anyone for a variety of interests”. The study revealed that musicians from Canada and the United States of America were frequent visitors to the region for work and play. For example, two musicians were in the region to study dentistry at James Cook University at the time of data collection. These musicians were stationed in Cairns for their four-year degree and performed with local musicians in the community. The participants revealed this was a common occurrence. The study also suggested that walk-in tourists often turned up to jazz gigs to perform. One participant

explained, “We found that our place was a hang for musicians on holidays, and they would come and sit in on a few sets. We’ve pulled some big names including Paul Panichi and Don Burrows”. These visiting musicians often interacted with CJC members, and by extension, positively influenced the school musicians who performed with the CJC. These findings are consistent with the literature, which suggests that learning and performing jazz relies heavily on modelling and benchmarking against more experienced performers (Christian, 1986; Georgoulas & Southcott, 2015; Hodges & Kerr, 2004).

### **Jazz Musician Attrition**

One of the biggest challenges to the sustainability of the Cairns jazz community has been the attrition or loss of young jazz musicians. With no options in the local region to study jazz beyond a high school level, graduating year 12 students are forced to relocate. One Cairns participant added, “School leavers see that there is nowhere to study jazz in Cairns ... the next closest big city is Brisbane, so they can’t wait to get out of here”. The loss of young Cairns jazz musicians has contributed to an ageing jazz community. Cairns did not enjoy the positive influence of a local tertiary degree that attracted students and supported their transition to graduates, teachers and performers. This situation suggested that Mackay’s jazz community had greater potential for nurturing a sustainable community of upcoming jazz musicians.

### **Conclusion**

One of the major points of difference between the jazz communities in Cairns and Mackay was the absence of a conservatorium of music and its associated benefits in Cairns. A conservatorium can provide jazz education at multiple levels (school through to postgraduate), operate beyond the constraints of regular venues and their owners, engage with

a range of different stakeholders, and attract visiting artists to the region. Surprisingly, the Cairns jazz community found other ways to effectively fill this void. For example, Cairns benefited from the presence of a jazz club with dedicated musicians who were active in connecting the club with community musicians and school students. The longevity of the Cairns Jazz Club highlighted the passion and commitment of its members, and the resilience of the broader Cairns jazz community. Other distinctive educational influences in Cairns included the availability of high-level private music teachers in the region, and the presence of jazz tourists who were attracted to the area for a variety of reasons, including lifestyle, employment and non-music-related study. Understanding the unique educational attributes of a region can unlock the different ways a music community can function, and these findings may be useful for other regional and non-regional communities in the development of their own community music education.

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# **Performing transdisciplinary creativities differently: Voicing distinct and diverse re-mixings of professional musicians educational futures**

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## **Abstract**

Transdisciplinary creativities (relating to new authorings from more than one branch of knowledge/skill) result in innovations in practice and career plasticity. By ‘performing differently’ I mean performing themselves, performing musical materialisms, performing new

knowledge/skill configurations, and, most importantly, performing new creativities. In this address I will introduce why and how we need to plan with/ for transdisciplinary creativities given the diversification, hybridity, boundary crossing and digital advance of new visual, aural and embodied contemporary practices in music. Understanding how transdisciplinarity catalyses the emergence of both new creativities and new ‘lines of flight’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) in careers, is an imperative for music education generally and higher music education specifically. In this presentation I will provide a research assemblage of evidence on how transdisciplinarity can be a mechanism through which new creativities are authored, in the material production of themselves, such as the material, affective and discursive practices of touch, that are embodied in body/place/object/assemblages that form the background upon which innovation and sustainable careers materialize. I will feature a sample of musicians whose career plasticity arises from transdisciplinary creativities and how they are materialised musically. The cases are drawn from two larger ongoing funded research projects (one on careers, funded by Nuffield and the other on contemporary urban

musics and musical becomings, funded by AHRC). Using a lens of contemporary musical materialisms and posthumanism, I pose these questions: What might transdisciplinary creativities be doing that we have never considered in terms of (re)mixing innovation into our own practice as (higher) music educators? What are these contemporary musical materialisms doing to catalyse new creativities and shape new futures for professional musicians?

## **Introduction**

Transdisciplinary creativities produce particular performative intensities which set in motion musical materialisms that connect and materialise in engagements with places, people, histories and practices. Using diffractive analyses allow pasts to fold back into presents in unexpected ways, bodies to become other than who they have been, and corporeal forms that change physically and emotionally. And so, this paper explores a type of career plasticity, and plasticity of transdisciplinary form, involving the reshaping, remoulding and resetting of materials, ideas and self (as expressed through and with sounding bodies). The questions posthumanism raises about professional musicians in the momentum of boundaryless careers are profound. The social is materialised through music. The contingencies of transdisciplinarity acts through various planes of activity. These enactments are mobilised through/around new creativities, around material objects such as musical instruments, technology and the ‘thing’ power they possess (Bates, 2012, p. 388).

This paper innovatively features diffractive analysis of the practices, careers, musical materialities and transdisciplinary creativities of Kate Stone, founder and CEO of an award winning lab Novalia where sonic objects such as interactive printed media are developed (<https://youtu.be/FC4zXgALaW4> and <https://youtu.be/zlCGGODWtVE> ); Mira Calix, a composer, DJ, sound experimentalist, sonic artist (<https://youtu.be/IWvAdVkBIZA> ); Joanna

MacGregor, concert pianist, composer, educator, music festival manager, record producer (<https://youtu.be/SJ6fD36jTq4> ); and Heather Phillipson recently featured at Tate Britain's grand central galleries with colour, sound and motion, and the propensity for non-human things to act as quasi-agents in making-with music ([www.tate.org.uk/what-on/tate-britain/exhibition/heather-phillipson](http://www.tate.org.uk/what-on/tate-britain/exhibition/heather-phillipson)). I will also include a sample of contemporary urban musicians (i.e. hip-hop, grim, contemporary R&B, house, techno and electronic musicians); all of whom provoke and manage change with humanity, grace and vision.

## **Conclusion**

The paper concludes with questions concerning how should/can we unsettle (and even dismantle) the portfolio career outmoded assumptions and promote boundaryless careers? What do current practices in contemporary musicians' professional career pathways tell us about what matters and the choice of what matter 'matters' in significant debates and interest in what constitutes sustainable careers for professional musicians? How do we create spaces to (i) perform more transdisciplinary practices within Higher Music Education, (ii) to trouble existing, methodologically 'fixed' forms, and (iii) come to see the actualisation of stories from the frontline of future-making as a meeting-point of new and multiple creativities? Implications include the need for educating professional musicians for plurality of skills, educated dispositions, career plasticity, and identity particularities that sustain a career lifespan. There are, of course, many striking and influential studies to which this extended abstract cannot give due credit here, but will in the presentation. What is remarkable, even in this partial account is that when musicians reflect on what matters through their professional life, they more often focus on the ontological supposition of 'becoming' (Braidotti, 2018) and the transformative impact that other professionals have on musicians working, particularly with/in transdisciplinary practices, to address the diverse terrain of what is often, a



boundaryless career.

Transdisciplinary creativities, more often, produce particular material performances that incorporate embodied movements and produce particular intensities of ‘making-with’ (Haraway, 2016, p. 58). Using diffractive analyses allow pasts to fold back into presents in unexpected ways, bodies to become other than who they have been, and corporeal forms that change physically and emotionally. By exploring both the roles and intersection of career plasticity, and emotional capital, in the reshaping, remoulding and resetting of materials, ideas and self (as expressed through and with the body), we make visible the ‘becomings’ of professional musicians. These ‘becomings’, with the moments and momentum in the physicality of performance and/or making-with the materiality of music, involves an openness to what is forming. This view of posthuman ‘forms’ – not as a container made by pre-existing, pre-determined constraints abstracted from self – of human-nonhuman - is significantly different from many other forms (as structures, material organisers and ontological ways of being a musician). This posthuman encounter is situational, emergent and unique, located in capacity for innovation and excellence in leadership practices that are a positive affirmation of boundaryless careers by professional musicians. What all of this means for sounding oneself as a technology of self-knowing, and the possibility (or not) of demonstrating the plurality at work in transdisciplinary creativities, underlines both the contemporary urgency for radical reform in the education of the professional musician and recovery for the music profession in a global pandemic. Using diffraction as a de-territorialising process which deliberately creates spontaneous ‘meetings’ across and between forms, I conclude with a rhizomatic form which illustrates what diffractive re-readings can reveal about manifesting technological and sonic extensions of the body, the contemporary specificities of posthumanism and for attending to the body as a generative source of diverse

creativities, and the materiality of becoming a professional musician and sustaining a boundaryless career.

## **Discussion**

Another central claim made in this paper is that professional musicians focus on the ontological supposition of ‘becomings’ enacted within the fabric of their authorial voicings and particular intensities of ‘making-with’ (Haraway, 2016, p. 58, further theorised in Murris & Bozalek, 2019). Making-with is a term coined by Haraway which recognises that nothing makes itself but is in a constant state of ‘becoming’ with materials, environments, bodies and constructs. Professional musicians develop ‘making-with’ practices that constitute and are constituted by a diffractive creation process. What materialises is that which allows pasts to fold back into presents in unexpected ways and corporeal forms [to change] physically and emotionally. It is this plasticity of form and plasticity of career that creates the momentum of developing a voice. So, how do we create spaces to develop transdisciplinary creativities within Higher Music Education, troubling existing, methodologically ‘fixed’ practices? How do we come to see and what can we learn from the actualisation of the plasticity of careers in music? I develop these ideas in detail throughout; these points are implicit in how the assemblage of diverse professional performing artists and their musical examples are discussed and theorised.

Like transdisciplinary research, these creativities offer a combination of past and future in the present moment, along with new understandings of how, when and where we are ‘making-with’ disciplines, each other and the world rather than merely creating representations of ‘reality’ (Barad, 2007, p. 139). By featuring diffractive analyses, I seek to de-couple the specific language of a discipline from its original context to open up new possibilities for

making-with collaboratively, many disciplines. Transdisciplinarity de-territorialises musical practices, producing new types of transdisciplinary creativities that generate new ways of developing successful and sustained careers in/through/with music.

The data theorised in this research assemblage navigates the postqualitative, new materialist, posthumanist theoretical terrain of posthumanising transdisciplinary creativity/ies for new educational futures (see Chappell, 2020 who first coined ‘posthumanising creativity’). The conceptualisation of these professional musicians’ accounts culminate in questions for reflections (see list that ends this short paper) that sprout out from the emergence, vitality, trajectory, messiness of surprises, uncertainties, and new possibilities in professional musicians careers.

Transdisciplinary creativities offer a different relationship with materials, objects, humans, non-humans and environments all of which generate a new conceptualisation of what constitutes a ‘professional musician’. The composer is no longer seen as alone, arising from seemingly nowhere, with a brilliant mind/ear, and a toolkit of techniques at the ready, but instead is reconceptualised as a maker, making-with materials, bodies, sounds in collaborations that give form to transdisciplinary practices that are continually changing. Theorising changing notions of what constitutes sustainable plasticity in career futures for professional musicians, teaching for transdisciplinary creativities, together with the mutual dependence of learning and teaching, are all imperatives of great urgency.

## **Questions for Reflections at CEPROM meeting**

1. How/should/can we unsettle (and even dismantle) the portfolio career outmoded assumptions and promote boundaryless careers as new ways of navigating

uncertainty?

2. What do current and emerging practices in contemporary musicians' professional career pathways tell us about navigating sustainable careers as professional musicians?
3. How do/should we create spaces to: (i) perform more transdisciplinary practices within our institutions, (ii) to trouble existing/fixed programmes, and (iii) come to see the actualisation of frontline professional musicians' future-making as a catalyst for change?
4. What are your recommendations for the education of professional musicians that sustain a career lifespan in the twenty-first century and in a global pandemic?

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# **Teaching free improvisation in European higher music education**

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## **Abstract**

In music education contexts, improvisation is currently a rapidly evolving field across musical genres. In Higher Music Education (HME), improvisation has traditionally been taught as part of Western jazz curricula. It is increasingly introduced as part of Western classical music and in cross-genre courses. However, debates on improvisation pedagogy seem to be tension-loaded, perhaps stemming from socio-historical battles of power, status and artistic identity. In the context of HME, there are no research studies exploring such issues and the musical backgrounds which inform the many different practices in Europe.

Our study addresses this gap in current research by mainly utilising qualitative interviews, with the purpose of investigating micro-practices within the teaching of free improvisation in European HME institutions. Research questions were: What conceptual tools do teachers in free improvisation use HME institutions in Europe, and how may these relate to different cultural and genre-related educational values? Results provide insight into both the institutional and personal educational aims which inform approaches to teaching improvisation. The term free improvisation was often associated with freedom, creativity, self-expression, and spontaneity, and thus positively loaded. Further, some teachers seemed to refer to a canon of free improvised, experimental or classical contemporary music. These aspects may be seen as a need among the teachers to position and legitimise a potentially marginalised subject within institutions.

Teachers in our study emphasise how free improvisation could serve to develop students' general musical awareness and ability to interact and listen. Focusing on musical parameters, limitations of choices, or language metaphors were often used as tools for acquiring such aims. In summary, our study is beginning to map contradictions and complexities of this new and evolving area of pedagogy

## **Introduction**

Musicians across genres are increasingly expected to be able to improvise, and in music education contexts, improvisation teaching is rapidly evolving to address this. In Higher Music Education (HME), improvisation has traditionally been taught as part of Western jazz curricula. More and more, it is becoming part of Western classical music training (Heble & Laver, 2015), consequently, a variety of improvisational teaching concepts are emerging. Examining teachers' experiences of teaching improvisation is particularly useful in understanding diverse approaches. Old hegemonies, hierarchies and the tradition versus liberation dichotomy may be highlighted when decisions about teaching content and learning objectives have to be made, whether they draw on jazz, classical or free improvisational artistic practices. There is scarce research exploring such issues in HME.

Our study has two overarching aims: 1. investigate micro-practices within free improvisation teaching in European HME institutions through gathering teacher's accounts of their teaching practices; 2. contribute to developing reflective, inclusive and culturally responsive practices in teaching free improvisation across genres in HME.

Our research questions are:

1. *What conceptual tools do teachers in free improvisation use in different HME institutions in Europe?*

## 2. *How may these tools relate to different cultural and educational values?*

### **Background**

Conceptual tools can be language, ideas, frameworks and exercises, which are used by teachers to mediate students' learning in improvisation classes. Tools carry specific functions and meanings within a certain activity. Acquiring and using cultural tools means to engage and interact with that culture: "...the tools of thought ... embody a culture's intellectual history. Tools have theories built into them" (Resnick, 1999, pp. 476-7). Utilising tools enables us to act, reflect and interact directly or indirectly with or within a culture. By investigating tools for teaching improvisation and their intended purposes, we may learn about historical development within such teaching practices. When identifying what aspects are prioritised, or which aspects participants actively distance themselves from, social and cultural meaning within the activity is elicited.

### **Methods**

We have undertaken twelve interviews with teachers involved in teaching improvisation in HME.

Location	Name of participant
The Balticum	Elias
Finland	Matias Elina



Germany	Robert
Italy	Lucas
Norway	Tom
	Fredrik
Sweden	Malin
Switzerland	John
UK	Sam
	David
	Christina

Interviews have undergone thematic analysis, with five main themes identified. These will be presented after a brief summary of courses and students.

### *Courses and students*

Courses were mostly mandatory and at the beginning of Bachelor programs, however, three were optional. A common feature was that courses were offered to students across study programs and genre backgrounds. Groups were mainly mixed-genre, teachers reporting that students' genre backgrounds impacted their participation, and thus, the teacher's choice of

goals and activities. For example, John said classical students had: “no experience [in improvising]. They can only play music if they have a score. Fredrik stated that “for [classical students], just producing a sound based on their own listening and their own imagination is extremely hard”. In contrast, John proposed that jazz students had substantial confidence, especially in solistic improvisation. However, they had to learn to be more open “to new horizons, and new types of sounds”. This seemed to resonate with what other teachers stated, both Tom and Fredrik said that even if jazz students were used to playing something without being instructed, “they still need guidance of how to listen better, they have to become better listeners”, as Fredrik put it.

Elina and Robert’s classes included music education and community music students. Students from folk and electronic music backgrounds also attended improvisation classes. While teachers outlined the challenges in accommodating a wide range of technical abilities in students, they framed this positively. Tom said “I (...) find that for that course to work properly, like now when there is ...diverse backgrounds, is when it does work best”.

### *The canon of free improvisation*

Across the 12 interviews, teachers referred to diverse fields of improvisation practice as influencing the activities and approaches that they used. All of the teachers gave their operational definition of free improvisation and discussed some of the contentious issues in free improvisation performance and research, relating them to their own teaching. For example, Tom said that defining free improvisation for students may not be the most useful thing for them:

that's not the goal, in trying to identify how free improvisation can be, but the ability to improvise freely, and getting the right tools to do so, and being able to use them in other ways of music making, as well.

Many teachers referred to Bailey's (1992) binary of idiomatic versus non-idiomatic improvisation, and challenged it. For example, John said: "non-idiomatic improvisation was the goal of free improvisation. But that doesn't exist! It is not possible!"

Robert described how the professional playing scene powerfully influenced what creative expression was acceptable:

you have [a] hierarchy in Germany, the free improvisation scene ...there was this ... you're not allowed to play tonal, ...[or] in a metric system... even though all of the theorists writing about improvisation at that time ...were talking about free improvisation. That's just such a paradox.

Later in the interview Robert expressed that, although he finds the term 'free improvisation' problematic, it is still needed: "because there's such a dominance of this genre specific improvisation and this understanding of how to teach improvisation, that I don't want to get rid of the term itself".

Concepts from experimental classical composers were referred to, for example; Stockhausen, as mentioned before, but also Pauline Oliveros, Christian Wolff, and John Cage. Tom used John Stevens' book "Search and reflect", where he combined exercises from the book with historical contextualisation of Stevens' performance and workshop practices. He proposed "it's ... important to have this historical aspect of things and knowing how this music came

about, and how they... I guess the canon, ....And historically informed practice, as well”. For Tom, including the historical perspective helped students feel that they were part of a continuing practice of experimental music.

Fredrik provided a counter perspective, describing his reasons for moving away from historical perspectives and using recordings. “In the beginning, I presented music, but I also discovered quite soon that the students tried to play in the same manner. And since I don't want this to be genre specific, it's better not presenting anything”.

However, Fredrik did reference existing classical music, as a means to help classical students transfer ideas from a familiar place to group improvisation.

#### *Open beginnings versus warming-up*

While there were similarities in the activities that teachers used to facilitate improvisation, contrasting approaches were also found. For example, both Lucas and Fredrik began classes without set exercises. Both teachers started by asking the students to play freely, basing subsequent activities on their assessment of the student's playing. For Lucas, it was important to get to know student's ways of expressing themselves while Fredrik wanted to evaluate their confidence and listening skills.

Robert found the open start of a free improvised session, a ‘just play’ approach, frustrating. Instead, he highlighted the importance of starting from set limitations, such as strategies from improvisation theatre. Such exercises prioritised interaction using different modes of communication (e.g., movement) in addition to music, providing a space for students to practise concentration and responsiveness in a low-stakes activity. Elina and Sam also used

movement as warming-up. For Elina, movement exercises led to a relaxation of the body, and through this preparation, she observed that it was easier for students to express their creativity, especially beginners.

### *Limitations and frameworks*

Even if teachers' ways of beginning classes varied from open parameters to fixed exercises, all teachers described using limitations and frameworks in their teaching. Limitations gave students' less choice, making improvising feel less overwhelming, according to John. Fredrik tailored activities to accommodate student's genre backgrounds. For classes comprised of jazz students, he used John Zorn's piece *Cobra*, as he saw it creating possibilities suitable for students with jazz experience. He described key features as: 1. the game-like quality of the piece; 2. that it could be split up into small sections to explore ideas in depth; 3. it utilised conduction, and 4. it stimulated awareness of following or interrupting the impulse to play. All of these features could be recontextualised back into the larger piece. For classical students he presented a Webern *Passicaglia* to demonstrate collectivity and how musical material such as a single-line melody can travel through an ensemble, in order to create a transfer to group improvisation. He explains his choice: "Because it helps them to see that it's... I want it to be a more collective kind of playing situation".

One particular method for setting up limitations, was to use musical parameters as structuring elements. John took concepts from contemporary classical music to provide options students could experiment with. John used Stockhausen's concepts of *hard* and *soft* parameters in music, where hard parameters refer to pitch and rhythm, and the soft parameters are sound, dynamic, and articulation.

As mentioned, Tom based his course on the book *Search and Reflect* by John Stevens.

According to Tom, the exercises are made in such a way that they limit the amount of things one can think about, and make the improviser focus on immediate responses:

I mean, in most of [the exercises] you have to react intuitively, so ... you're not listening and thinking about how to respond and what to play, because then the moment's lost in a way, so you have to react without thinking.

Tom also views these as providing an opportunity for the ensemble to “find a creative way to solve whatever problem... a musical problem that appears”.

### *Combining skills*

Commonly expressed aims were to develop generic improvisation skills and ways of understanding and processing musical information. Improving *listening* and *interacting* were common teaching goals. Tom said, “the aim of the course isn't to play a specific form of free improvisation...[it] is to discover ways of listening and interacting, so that they can spontaneously create music.” Matias spoke about the importance of students developing “the speed of thinking... how you can spread your attention, beyond what I'm actually doing”. Or put another way, bettering students' ability to appreciate and process what others play, at the same time as playing.

Elias described the ability to hear and process another's playing and make decisions based on this musical information very quickly as a necessary skill for expert improvisers: “this is like my secret that you need to [make] faster decisions than they [the other players]”. This *secret* of his was mentioned in context with a performance experience that was perceived as

competitive by Elias. Based on this experience, he presented the *faster* and competitive mind-set as a goal in his teaching as well.

Matias described an important process as follows: “You need to remember what ...happened 5 or 10 minutes ago, and then be able to come back to things.... in the infrastructure, musical structure”. This ability to respond in the moment but also to bear in mind the overarching musical structure demands that students are creative on two levels, firstly ideas to play themselves, and secondly, to have awareness of how this may work with or against a framework. It is interesting to note how Matias employed the metaphor of an *infrastructure*. This can be understood to be the basic facilities required for an activity or a system to function.

#### *Process versus product orientation, and who decides what's good*

Process was emphasised over creating an aesthetically pleasing product by most. For example, Fredrik expressed: “Because it's not about creating fantastic music... but it's more about listening, and how we work together and not about the quality of the music we produce”. John linked this with a more general trend in education: “In the last 70-80 years, [it has] shifted from goal [orientation] to process [orientation]”, most likely referring to the development of a humanist philosophy in education, as opposed to behaviourism or rationalist pedagogy.

Despite the orientation towards process, the construct of *quality* was viewed in contrasting ways. For example, Elias quoted a colleague who proposed that the music that beginner improvisers create is ‘shit’ and improvisation teachers have to be able to ‘put up with it’.

Elias proposed that this view may be due to students' inexperience, saying that "no one can immediately create a high quality of ideas". He did not say if he shared his colleague's assertion that a lesser quality in students' improvising was something a teacher had to endure; his statement revealed that this is an attitude some teachers have. Nevertheless, Elias' view may be understood as that students should have time to develop their creativity and also that teachers should not expect *high quality*.

Elina represented a contrasting teacher position, when she said that "I can notice beautiful moments with how the other people (...) in the classroom – how.. they give space to each other..... from those moments I can learn a lot of new things also". This construction implies that she appreciates an aesthetic quality from students' interactions and consideration to each other. This may indicate that Elina's criteria for what may constitute quality or *beauty* may be different or wider from that of Elias, in the sense that she seems to find it in the process, not only in the sounding product. Further, when Elina highlighted that she could learn from observing students' playing, she positioned herself in a teacher role more like a peer to students such as when she referred to students as "the other people in the classroom". This may connect with a view John expressed when he said: "it's not only me who has to judge what's good music, what's not". By this, he referred to the importance for him of enculturing an environment where students develop their own critical skills.

David brought up a dilemma regarding appreciating and assessing quality, connecting it to demands of grading students in the course he taught.



Within education... we say ‘this work is an 85% and this work is an 82%’. I do not think it exists as much in the Scandinavian model, but in the British model we are still very much grading people’s creative work at this level and I think it is making a false illusion of meritocracy and a false illusion of teacher objectivity.... I have to give everything a mark so there is a bit of a paradox here.

Meritocracy refers to the belief that people are rewarded or have success based on their merits, a view that David finds problematic, especially within music education. From this quote, it seems as David’s ideal teacher position resembles that of John and Elina, but the institutional system forces him to go against it and “[grade] people’s creative work”.

## **Discussion**

Our first research question: What conceptual tools do teachers in free improvisation use across geographical regions in HME institutions in Europe? revealed a variety of approaches. For example, language/metaphors (word lottery described by Matias, and John’s use of Stockhausen’s hard and soft parameters); theatre exercises; limiting choice strategies (Tom using John Stevens); open instructions (Fredrik & John: to ‘play free’ with no prior agreement); large composed frameworks (Zorn’s *Cobra* piece).

Tools had distinct purposes tailored to developing broad and complex skills. These skills had several constituent parts or processes, such as *interacting* which can involve listening, interpreting, creating a response, executing this response and evaluating it in the context of the whole group improvisation (MacDonald & Wilson, 2020)). Developing listening was

emphasised by many and can also be understood as a multistage process in improvisation, for example: hearing, perceiving many constituent parts of a sound or a group and analysing it quickly. Theatre and movement exercises were used to create a safe space and provided a way to create a transferrable embodied understanding of processes such as imitation and interaction.

The second question: How may these tools relate to different cultural educational values? also showed distinct approaches. Some teachers seemed to want the students to be encultured into a practice. Others avoided this so students would develop their own voice, not attempting to replicate experts. The term ‘free improvisation’ was contested by all, but its use was acknowledged as pragmatic. In our study, teachers seem to have had freedom in defining improvisation in their contexts. To the degree that free improvisation is a marginalised subject in European conservatoires, the ways they delineate and ground their teaching practice may be seen as an expression of a need to legitimise their practice within institutions.

As we have seen, teachers described different ways of appreciating quality, where both product and process were emphasised. However, there seemed to be a discrepancy in the way teachers positioned themselves regarding evaluation and views on what counts as *good*. Some emphasized process and students’ own ability to critically assess the quality of their playing, and even critiquing the myth of meritocracy. One teacher in particular (Elias) seems to represent a more hierarchical view, where students are seen as not able to produce high quality, and the teacher seems to be the best judge of this. Our material is too sparse to interpret this egalitarian-versus-hierarchical teacher position as connected to location and culture, but the “socio-musical location” (Lewis, 2004), to borrow Lewis’ term, was

highlighted as significant for understanding development of different musical traditions within free improvisation.

## Implications

We found disparate practices with many and diverse conceptual tools in our study. Drawing overarching conclusions has the danger of reducing a complex area. We hope to contribute to a shared and broadened repertoire in teaching improvisation as well as providing ways of thinking about the educational rationales that inform these tools. It is crucial to better understand categories and functions of the tools that have been created and refined over the last 30 years. With this, we aim to build a multidimensional perspective of distinct yet interlinked practices in HE improvisation teaching in Europe.

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# **Intensive chamber music immersion experiences as student centred situated learning and leadership: Eminence perspectives**

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## **Abstract**

Chamber music education plays a role in many Conservatoire curricula reflecting a view that chamber music experience and skills are important in musician education. Nevertheless, the degree to which students encounter chamber music in their education is varied, ranging from single elective units in an undergraduate program through to specialised degrees at graduate level. The pre-professional sector of intensive music camps and festivals offers another pathway to encounter chamber music education. Emerging research into chamber music practices in tertiary education has focused on teaching and learning strategies, assessment techniques and learning outcomes. Less is known of the environmental affordances and constraints and life and learning outcomes of participation in pre-professional sector chamber music experiences. This paper reports the findings of an interview study of the perceptions of two successive directors of a long-standing Chamber Music Festival intensive school, concerning the outcomes for students of participation in their Festival. Findings suggest that the intensive situated learning environment of a Festival intensive school provides students with opportunity to learn repertoire, and develop the collaborative skills of effective

rehearsal, of deeply layered listening, and situational awareness. Implications of these findings include consideration of the ways in which authentic assessment opportunities in a real-world performance as presented in the Festival might be incorporated into tertiary education.

### **Keywords**

Chamber music pedagogy, situated learning, intensive learning environments, collaboration, pre-professional learning environments.

### **Introduction**

Whilst chamber music has been recognised by some as a “core value” in tertiary music education (ECMA 2018, p. 12), the approaches to teaching and learning chamber music in tertiary music settings are many and varied. These range from degree length specialised programs to single elective units offered as a component of a degree program. In a recent report on a partnership with the European Union’s Erasmus+ programme, the European Chamber Music Academy (ECMA) outlines the “next step” in its mission to promote chamber music practice and pedagogy. Specifically, the partnership aims to strengthen “...chamber music’s position on regular training programmes...(to)...ensure the utmost quality of chamber music training and proactively meet the challenges and opportunities that the increasing demand for chamber music entails” (2018, p. 5). Despite this reference to an increasing demand for chamber music, there has been relatively little research investigating chamber music training (Burt-Perkins & Mills, 2008). Post compulsory schooling, chamber music training tends to take place in two arenas of activity: the tertiary music sector of Conservatoires and Schools of Music; and the pre-professional sector of intensive music camps, festivals, and professional organisations such as the European Chamber Music

Association. Existing research has focused primarily on the former investigating teaching and learning strategies (Sætre & Zhukov, 2021; Zhukov & Sætre, 2021), assessment techniques, and learning outcomes (Ginsborg, 2009; Reid & Duke, 2015). More recent research has investigated the pedagogical possibilities of virtual ensemble music-making in Higher Education settings (Krivenski, 2022) and the contributions of chamber music to the development of the portfolio musician (Kjar, Montanari & Thomas, 2022). This paper explores the environmental affordances and constraints and the life and learning outcomes of the pre-professional sector through an interview study with successive directors of a long-standing Chamber Music Festival intensive school.

## **Theoretical framework**

The diversity of models for chamber music training in tertiary settings reflects in part the relative standing of chamber music experiences in musician education. Ranging from specialised degree length programs at Masters level through to single elective units (generally at undergraduate level), it would appear that chamber music has been viewed primarily as an advanced specialised skill rather than foundational in musician education. A parallel chamber music education environment is evident in the non-award intensive programs offered at Festivals such as Tanglewood and Aspen, and the music programs of the Banff Centre. These longstanding experiential professional learning contexts offer alternative pathways to chamber music education. Where chamber music training has been offered in tertiary music settings, an emerging body of research has demonstrated the affordances and constraints of chamber music experience in musical and extra-musical learning.

A three-year longitudinal investigation into the “rise and fall” of an undergraduate wind quintet at a UK conservatoire demonstrated that whilst chamber music provides spaces for

challenge, deep learning, and developing transferable skills, the constraints of assessment can lead to a loss of group coherence (Burt-Perkins & Mills, 2008). These researchers conclude that the quintet “ceased to be a safe environment” as “the emphasis moved from exploring music together to fulfilling assessment criteria” (2008, p. 33). An Australian study of Conservatoire pianists and saxophonists engaged in peer learning in chamber music settings reported “the important role that chamber music plays in their musical development” (Reid & Duke, 2015, p. 230). For example, they learnt “to let the music ‘breathe’ from working with vocalists and wind players” and were able “to discuss concepts of musical expression, extended techniques, and the technical elements of performing” (p. 230). Ginsborg’s (2009) investigation of the rehearsal strategies of three undergraduate chamber groups (two string quartets, one newly-formed, and one established, and a newly-formed wind quintet) focused on the distinctions between successful and “failed” student ensembles. She found that, “the members of the successful string quartet both practiced and rehearsed considerably more than their younger colleagues. They also identified more sophisticated practice and rehearsal strategies, rating their own practice strategies higher than did the less advanced students” (Ginsborg, 2009, p. 485). The findings of these studies demonstrate the potentiality of chamber music experience in musical development, but also point to factors that might inhibit learning including the nature and extent of assessment and rehearsal strategy education.

A recent pilot study into collaborative chamber instruction undertaken in Australia and Norway embedded teachers as playing members of student chamber groups. This practice addressed the issue of poor or ineffective practice strategies evidenced in other studies, demonstrating that “working with professionals in a community of practice in a real-life setting intensifies and broadens learning of musical, social and general skills relevant for chamber music performance” (Sætre & Zhukov, 2021, p. 1). Participating students reported



“being inspired by working with experienced staff in a professional setting, learning the skills of ensemble playing such as effective rehearsal techniques, understanding of stylistic conventions, specific technical, musical and co-ordination skills, greater experimentation, positive impact of group discussions, and a more collaborative atmosphere” (Zhukov & Sætre, 2021, p. 1). The learning outcomes from students playing alongside professional musicians has also been researched in popular music and jazz workshop settings (de Bruin et al., 2020; Virkkula, 2016). Findings from these studies indicate that this practice deepens student understanding of professional practice, enhances specific music skills and increases student engagement in deep learning (de Bruin et al., 2020; Virkkula, 2016).

Beyond higher education, music camps provide opportunities for extra-curricular situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) experiences for aspiring musicians. In a history of music camps (orchestral) in Australia post World War II, Pear (2007) highlighted “the musical challenges of geographical remoteness and the urban concentration of cultural resources” for Australian musicians (p. 58). In the Australian context, “for young musicians, attendance at National Music Camp is often the initial stage in the realisation of a dream, giving them their first significant orchestral experience” (p. 59). Alongside orchestral experiences, chamber music programs have also flourished in Australia. For example, Kartomi (2008) evaluated a chamber music development program instigated by the Australian Youth Orchestra that included “intensive, tutored ensemble learning in a tight time framework in a manner that resembles what they may expect in real professional life” (p. 153). The findings showed that “tutored rehearsals and chamber concert performances have resulted in improved personal playing techniques, interpretative ability and ensemble interaction skills” for students (p. 152).

Beyond the Australian environment, a multiple-case study of 212 young musicians who attended national youth choir and orchestra camps in the UK showed that the three top highlights of the courses were “socialising with like-minded peers, making music with others of a very high standard, and getting to know wonderful repertoire” (Creech & Long, 2012, p. 25). For participants, effective learning was largely self-directed and consisted of “three complementary strands of practical, conceptual and experiential learning” (p. 21). Researchers concluded that music camp experiences result in “deep and transformative learning” (p. 28). Similarly, a survey of 87 young musicians attending a two-week summer instrumental music camp in the USA reported that large-ensemble rehearsals and electives were the highest ranked flow-inducing activities (Diaz & Silveira, 2012): specifically, that “musical activities were more conducive to flow than social activities” (p. 310).

In addition to music camps, many music festivals offer intensive chamber courses for advanced students. For example, Ray and Hendricks (2019) surveyed 70 string musicians, comparing higher education chamber ensembles and chamber groups participating in intensive summer music festival programs in the USA. The researchers found that collective efficacy belief and performance quality correlated significantly for festival-based ensembles but not for the higher education groups. These results suggest that the situated learning provided in intensive settings is more efficacious in motivating students in comparison to degree awarding higher education programs with an assessment component.

In order to understand the environmental affordances and constraints and life and learning outcomes of participation in an intensive festival environment, this study focused on the perspectives offered by experienced Chamber Music Festival Artistic Directors. Interviewing artistic directors of a chamber music festival provides insights into the festival’s aims and the

value attributed to the intensive music training courses. This focus on eminence settings also provides “a means to tap the knowledge and expertise of leaders and professionals in a specific field” (Barrett, Creech & Zhukov, 2021, p. 3). In this paper we present findings from interviews with two past Artistic Directors of a single music festival, focusing on the following research questions:

What are the intended life and learning outcomes for students of participation in intensive chamber music experiences to the career development of emerging musicians?

What are the Artistic Directors’ perceptions of the environmental affordances and constraints that support these outcomes?

## **Method**

An Australian chamber music festival with an intensive course for pre-professional emerging musicians was the case study for this research (Yin, 2012). Ethical clearance was obtained from an Australian university prior to undertaking the research. The phenomena of interest (artistic directors’ perceptions of the intended life and learning outcomes, and environmental affordances and constraints) were investigated through two life-history interviews with past artistic directors. Each Director had multi-year experience of directing the Festival. The interviews were conducted via Zoom by two different researchers, audio recorded, transcribed by a professional transcription company and member-checked prior to the analysis. Initial thematic analysis was undertaken by a third researcher independently and refined through iterative online discussions amongst all three researchers, as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2012). Themes were articulated using an inductive logic approach (Creswell, 2014) based on data and extant literature. Direct quotes from the interviews are

provided to demonstrate the validity, credibility and trustworthiness of the findings (Given & Saumure, 2008).

## **Findings and discussion**

### **Situated learning**

The situated learning made possible through intensive pre-professional chamber music festivals is perhaps one of the defining features of these settings. The firm belief of the centrality of chamber music to musician education was affirmed by both directors who stated:

I think chamber music really should be an absolutely integral part of somebody's tuition and development as a musician.

Chamber music is the most practical way for a musician to learn about the architecture, the technical problems and demands of a work, but also the process of interaction between the colleagues in chamber music usually creates an optimal environment.

Speaking of the characteristic features of the intensive environment they noted:

You're surrounded by other musicians who have a similar level means that ultimately we're all inspired by our colleagues, and when we're surrounded by good colleagues, it makes us play better than we normally do.

A quartet comes, and so you have your group lesson, you have your session with (school director) at some point during the day, you would also have a session with a festival musician, maybe another one, maybe two. But then you've got to practice, and then we ask that you come always to the evening concert.

Implicit in the descriptions of situated learning was the role of collaboration, of partnership, respect and mutuality in student centred learning and leadership:

When you're playing chamber music, there's an equal partnership whether you're playing the fourth violin, or the second viola, or the first cello, and from that comes the respect between colleagues.

What I saw were young musicians really blossoming, they're just immersed in this culture of music, they're immersed in collaborations. And then they finally get there, a showcase concert at the end of it.

### **Intensive immersion chamber experiences**

Key elements associated with the success of such situated learning included the focus on a single activity over a concentrated period of time, and the opportunity to hear key messages delivered in multiple ways, from different people. The Directors spoke of the "peculiar chemistry" of the intensive experience in contrast to standard academic environments.

Festivals quite often can accomplish in a two or three-week period much more than the 40 weeks of going to school. You go to a festival where somebody who you may only see for one or two weeks tells you exactly the same things you hear from your teachers, but you hear with different ears and you interpret it differently.

There's something about the Tanglewood summer environment or Marlborough environment that a lot of these experiences when they're presented to you in these concentrated shorter periods, they somehow live longer in one's memory or some of their effect is more long-lasting. A lot of the summer environments have chemistries that you could never get in the standard academic environment.

### **Exposure to international standards**

For Australian musicians, the "tyranny of distance" has been a long-standing challenge with many seeking to further their studies through international study, primarily in Europe and

North America. For those who cannot afford the costs of travel and living abroad, the intensive school was viewed as an invaluable opportunity to provide exposure to international standards and teachers.

The Winter School became such an institution and now the single chance that many young Australians come to have an exposure to the greatest masters of our profession.

The most respected conservatory president in Australia thinks that the festival is the greatest thing to happen to expose young Australians to without having to send them to the northern hemisphere.

It's a big selling point for the course for them when they think a lot of international artists are also coming in, and they get the opportunity to play to those people.

### **Proximal professional role models**

The Festival teaching and performing Faculty are drawn from across the globe providing professional proximal models of music practice. These models were thought to have positive benefits for the students in exposing them to international standards and providing them with input from world leaders; additionally they also were thought to provide benefits for local teachers and musicians:

The people that we invite to this festival will not only service performers, they'll service teachers, and it was always clear from the beginning of establishing [the Festival] that ...the School aspect of it would be equally important.

Students work and live with these professional proximal models in a range of settings providing opportunity for both formal and informal exchanges:

During the rehearsal periods, the kids eat with us, they're in the same room. There's usually an evening where we all had a barbecue together.

## **Professional environments for higher education students to develop real-world skills**

Both Directors spoke of the importance of using the intensive situated learning environment as a space for extending students' skills through introducing practices not necessarily addressed in a Conservatoire education:

[The School director] wanted to free people up a little bit doing improvising, that kind of activity as a group when you might be feeling a little bit self-conscious or things that you have never done before. He also wrote a few arrangements where some of them played with him, and there were a couple of small performing opportunities where some of them accompanied him.

These practices were perceived to contribute to the development of essential chamber music skills, such as deeply layered listening skills, and situational awareness.

To develop your listening skills to this level requires you do not play alone. When you're working in chamber music, you just develop so many layers of your listening and sensitivity in your whole senses.

It's about being sensitive to what's going on around you, while fiercely concentrating on what you might be doing.

If you want to learn about breathing on the piano, you work with singers, and you work with wind people.

Both Directors spoke of the ways in which the intensive situated learning environment builds skills in collaboration, trust, and opportunities for new collaborations:

Chamber music is not chamber music without collaboration, and collaboration is more than one person working towards a common goal, and that's what chamber music is.

I wanted to just up those opportunities for new friendships, for new collaborations a little bit further within the model of what goes on in the festival.

[Chamber music] is also about trust because it's not just you on your own, you're basically all setting up platforms for other people to have their musical say without backing anybody into any corners.

## **Conclusions and implications**

This study sought to identify Festival Artistic Directors' perceptions of the life and learning outcomes of participation in intensive chamber music education experiences for emerging musicians, and the environmental affordances and constraints that support these outcomes. Intensive schools located in Chamber Music Festivals provide a unique situated learning opportunity for emerging musicians. Participants are surrounded by musicians "at a similar level", mentored by international Faculty with international standards who provide proximal professional models of practice, and are placed in an environment where real world assessment occurs through a "showcase concert at the end" rather than the assignation of a mark (Burt-Perkins & Mills, 2008; Ray & Hendricks, 2019). The intensive environment, working alongside professionals (Sætre, & Zhukov, 2021; Zhukov & Sætre, 2021) provides students with opportunity to learn not only the repertoire, but also the collaborative skills of effective rehearsal, of deeply layered listening, and situational awareness. Importantly, these settings lay the groundwork for future collaborations. The removal from the everyday and the multiple demands of the work/study environment, coupled with the focused time, intensity of experience and attention to a single activity are characteristic features of this eminence setting. Implications for education include consideration of the ways in which these issues of focussed time, intensity of experience and attention might be used productively in other education settings. Importantly, these intensive, situated and experiential learning



opportunities in music performance education provide authentic assessment opportunities in a real-work performance context.

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# **New approaches to student-centred collaborative chamber music instruction**

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## **Abstract**

This paper reports on a new approach to student-centred chamber music instruction where teachers were embedded as playing and singing members of the student group. This resulted in a teaching-through-playing rather than a coaching-from-outside approach that is typical in chamber music instruction. Socio-cultural theory suggests that working together in ways like this creates communities of practice, and that participatory learning can challenge the often top-down master-apprentice model that still dominates higher music education. To explore the viability of this new approach empirically, a multiple case study was set up in two institutions in Australia and Norway. Four chamber music groups consisting of a total of six teachers and 14 students were recruited, two in each country. They rehearsed and performed a repertoire of Western classical music over a period ranging from one intensive week to six weeks. Teachers and students were interviewed separately after performance in focus group or individual interviews to explore their attitudes to the approach, teaching and learning strategies employed during rehearsals, and the perceived pros and cons of this mode of instruction. Analyses of the teacher and student interviews suggest that the approach was quicker and more intense than the coaching-from-outside approach, and that more skills were learned through a greater variety of teaching strategies. The approach was seen as more

professional and gave students an important experience of the action culture of professional chamber music performance. Adjusting to new collaborative roles was challenging for both students and teachers, underlining the need for higher music education staff and institutions to work systematically with pedagogies of learner-centred teaching.

### **Keywords**

Higher education, chamber music, teaching-through-playing, learner-centred teaching.

### **Introduction**

Student-centred learning has been an important focus in education for decades, but practical applications to higher music education have only recently been considered. Nerland (2019) suggests that in the area of music performance “teacher collaboration [may be conceived] as a means of supporting student engagement and learning” (p. 53). However, many higher education instrumental teachers across the world report having no formal training in pedagogy and are not aware of the concepts of learner-centred teaching (Daniel & Parkes, 2019).

Instrumental and vocal training in higher education typically consists of regular one-to-one lessons with the same expert musician, performance classes where students perform in front of their peers and are evaluated by other teachers who specialise in their instrument, master classes with visiting artists and participation in large and small ensembles (orchestras, bands, choirs, chamber music). These different learning settings play an important role in developing a wide range of music skills. Individual lessons tend to focus on mastering technique and overcoming problems in specific repertoire (Gaunt, 2008, 2010); performance classes provide

an opportunity to gain performance experience in settings that are more exposed than individual lessons but less stressful than practical examinations; master classes combine performance with mini-lessons in front of an audience (Rumiantsev et al., 2017); and ensemble participation develops general musicianship, broad knowledge of musical styles and collaborative skills (Kokotsaki & Hallam, 2007).

Chamber music is a small-ensemble activity that plays a key part in undergraduate music degrees. While approaches to when and how chamber music instruction is offered varies between different countries and institutions, typically students of similar playing level are organised into small groups that are coached by a teacher (or several teachers) to learn specific repertoire that is examined in a performance at the end of semester. Students are expected to learn their individual parts and rehearse as a group in their own time. In addition to mastering repertoire, chamber music develops unique skills such as teamwork and collaboration.

Collaborative learning has been a focus in higher music education globally since the turn of the century as evident from a book illustrating this in a variety of musical settings and teaching applications (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013). These include peer learning, group learning and co-learning activities that enhance students' musical learning as well as develop their social skills, motivation, creativity, leadership, team skills and prepare them for the profession.

Viewing collaborative learning through the lens of socio-cultural theory, Wenger (1998) suggest that working together generates communities of practice. Rogoff's (1995) concept of apprenticeship emphasises participatory learning with guidance from teachers and challenges the top-down master-apprentice model of instrumental and vocal teaching that still dominates higher music education.

One-to-one teaching in higher music education has been widely criticised in the literature (e.g., Burwell, 2019; Zhukov, 2012), and classical chamber music instruction has received little scrutiny from research. Popular music and jazz have offered some innovations in assessment and teaching approaches but these are yet to be embraced by classical musicians. For example, workshops where students played *with* professional musicians were trialled in Finland (Virkkula, 2016) and Australia (Forbes, 2016). The Finnish study reported positive impact on students' problem-solving and collaborative skills, and the Australian study described pros and cons of this new pedagogical model for the teachers.

We report on a new approach to student-centred chamber music instruction where teachers were embedded as playing/singing members of the student group. This resulted in teaching-through-playing rather than coaching-from-outside approach that is typical in chamber music instruction.

## **Methodology**

A multiple case study was adopted for evaluating a teaching and learning project conducted in two institutions, one in Australia and one in Norway (Yin, 2012). Researchers in each institution recruited staff and students after obtaining institutional ethical clearances (see Table 1 for demographics).



**Table 1.** Participant demographics

Group ID	Students	Age	Sex	Year of degree	Teachers
A1	4 voice, 1 piano	21–31	3 F, 2 M	2–4	2 voice, 1 piano
A2	4 strings	17–18	4 F	1–2	1 string
N1	3 strings	22–25	1 F, 2 M	3–Masters	1 piano
N2	1 wind, 1 piano	19–23	1F, 1M	1–5	1 string

Implementation varied from an intensive mode (one week of daily rehearsals) to 3–4 rehearsals over 3–6 weeks of the semester. All groups performed the repertoire studied at the end of the project. The pieces were chosen by teachers and students and represented standard Western Classical music repertoire.

The researchers interviewed teachers and students separately, using a semi-structured interview guide and prompting for clarifications as needed. The same questions were addressed to teachers and students exploring their attitudes to this new approach, teaching and learning strategies employed during rehearsals, and the perceived pros and cons of this mode of instruction. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by a professional transcription company. Norwegian interviews were translated into English by a professional interpreter. The transcripts were member-checked prior to analyses.

Thematic analysis was undertaken by the two researchers separately, searching for themes and categories (Braun & Clarke, 2012) and refined through iterative Skype discussions until consensus was reached. Student and teacher quotes from both sites were utilised to validate the results and establish the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings (Given & Saumure, 2008).

## **Results**

The findings from student perspectives have been published in Zhukov and Sætre (2021) and from teacher perspectives in Sætre and Zhukov (2021). In this paper we analyse across the themes reported in these two papers to compare the student and teacher findings (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Comparison of student and teacher perspectives

	Students	Examples	Teachers	Examples
Reasons for participating	Opportunity to play with experienced staff	<i>To get an opportunity to play with somebody who is really professional is impressive (N2)</i>	Opportunity to approach chamber instruction in a new way	<i>There might have been some overlapping situations where I've played alongside them in practice, but nothing like this. (N1)</i>
	Experience working in a professional setting	<i>It's interesting seeing how professionals rehearse and how we interact with them while they're doing a professional rehearsal (A1)</i>	Give students experience of working with professionals	<i>It's taking them to that next level and it's also great to teach them how musicians interact (A1)</i>
	Develop chamber skills	<i>I was hoping to pick up new tools that I can use when performing chamber music (N1)</i>	Intensify chamber learning	<i>Rehearsal is the most important thing in chamber music, so hopefully for them the most valuable is how you put together a piece in the short amount of time (A1)</i>
Teaching & learning strategies	Playing/singing together	<i>Musicality and expression become much clearer when you hear the person play (N2)</i>	Playing/singing with students	<i>When we were singing the part with the student, it gives them a lot closer idea of what they can do with text or colours (A1)</i>

Demonstration/imitation	<i>When the teacher was singing with me, I started to pick up on what he was doing musically, and I copied that simultaneously (A1)</i>	Demonstration	<i>I'll join the group to demonstrate how much they can do just with the cello, especially the baseline (N2)</i>
Explanation	<i>The teacher would always explain and tell us exactly what it was and how to fix the problem (A 2)</i>	Explanation	<i>I explained to them how the third needs to become lower to fit within a G-major chord (A2)</i>
Group discussions	<i>I think discussion was the best, when you are playing with the teacher, he is not a teacher in this moment, but he is a colleague (N 1)</i>	Communication, dialogue, asking questions	<i>Communication is a really big thing because you want to show them that you're listening to what they're singing or playing, you're watching them as performers (A1)</i>
Experimentation	<i>A big part was trying out all the different ideas we had, some of which might be the complete opposite of the teacher's (N 1)</i>	Be more open to students' ideas	<i>I listened to their views, and I was very keen for there to be communication both ways (N1)</i>

Skills developed	Rehearsing skills	<i>I learnt a lot about what to focus on when you have as few rehearsals in such a short period as we did, how to begin the rehearsal process (N1)</i>	Professional rehearsal	<i>They're watching how we, as professionals, are interacting, but interacting with them as well and teaching them (A1)</i>
	Technical issues	<i>The teacher put us through some thorough intonation practice during rehearsals that was really good (A2)</i>	Technique	<i>I talked about some issues of intonation that they might not have come across before, like the difference between playing a harmonically in-tune note to a melodically in-tune note (A2)</i>
	Interpretation	<i>In particular, we learnt about the style of the piece we performed, about how to play Mozart (N1)</i>	Interpretation	<i>In chamber music you have to work on certain fundamental things in order to create a uniform interpretation in the end (N1)</i>
	Impact on practising	<i>It was such an intense rehearsal time that we wrote down so many notes on</i>	Intensified student practice	<i>It was clear to everyone what each of them had to invest in terms of practice in order to</i>

		<i>our parts, so when I went into my own practice, I was thinking about how to execute it in terms of the end goal (A2)</i>		<i>take their performance to a level where we could work effectively on the musical aspects (N1)</i>
Perceived power roles	Adjusting to new roles	<i>From my perspective as a student to say, "Okay, I'll be on this equal footing" or for the teachers to step down is incredibly difficult (A1)</i>	Adjusting to new roles	<i>Students really were reluctant to question and to come up with their own ideas or to be seen in any way to be putting themselves on the level of the teacher (A2)</i>
	Greater collaboration	<i>You have to cooperate with the teacher, and he has to cooperate with you in a musical way. That is what a colleague mean. (N1)</i>	Collaborative teaching	<i>A lot of that shooting ideas and exchange and working off each other (A1)</i>

Perceived benefit	Greater clarity	<i>You quickly understand what the teacher means when they just play compared with asking people to do as you say (N2)</i>	Fuller understanding	<i>[X] improved a lot breath-wise when [Y] sang with her because they've got someone with them and then she breathed better (A1)</i>
	Time-saving	<i>What we've done in the 10 hours this week would usually be done in a semester (A1)</i>	Faster	<i>The pace is just quicker, you're more switched-on (A1)</i>
	Engaging/inspiring	<i>This was more motivating, you feel more like a musician when the teacher is playing with you (N1)</i>	More intense	<i>The situation is inherently more intense because I'm joining in as a musician and you have less time. That makes everything more intensive (N1)</i>
	Greater insight into chamber performance	<i>It was a good lesson to experience this first-hand (N1)</i>	More professional	<i>Experience what it's like in the real world (N2)</i>

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## Discussion

Student and teacher responses aligned across most categories. Student responses showed a positive attitude towards teaching-through-playing chamber music instruction, in particular as an opportunity to work with professionals and develop advanced chamber music skills. This sentiment was echoed by teachers' desire to introduce students to the action culture of professional rehearsal settings and intensify their chamber music learning. Previous research in popular music and jazz contexts supports this finding (Forbes, 2016; Virkulla, 2016).

Participants have identified playing/singing together as a new way of learning (Virkulla, 2016), in addition to the standard teaching and learning strategies of demonstration and explanation (Zhukov, 2012). Teachers and students had also highlighted more experimentation. Experimentation has been flagged as a positive factor in “meddler-in-the-middle” teaching approach proposed by McWilliam (2008). More dialogue and group discussion had also occurred in this pilot (Zanner & Stabb, 2013).

Students and teachers agreed that new skills of professional rehearsal were taught (Ginsborg & King, 2012), musical and professional as well as social. However, technique (Karlsson & Juslin, 2008) and interpretation (Zhukov, 2008) remained the main focus as expected. Pleasingly, the new approach to teaching resulted in more effective practising that is often lacking even among higher education students (Zhukov, 2009).



Both groups acknowledged some difficulties in adjusting to the new roles, despite teachers encouraging students to contribute more to discussions and take leadership. Teachers and students were learning how to collaborate with each other. Renshaw (2013) emphasised that collaborative learning challenges typical master-apprentice roles still dominating in higher music education.

Staff and students reported that the pilot produced greater understanding of issues (Nerland, 2019) and a more efficient, faster way of learning (Zhukov & Sætre, 2021). The process was inspiring to students and more intense (Zhukov & Sætre, 2021). The new approach introduced students to professional realities of being chamber musicians (Forbes, 2016; Virkulla, 2016).

## **Conclusions and implications**

Student-centred learning and teaching have recently become a focus in higher music education (Nerland, 2019). While additional pedagogical training is likely to be met with resistance from expert instrumental and vocal teachers (Daniel & Parkes, 2019), this paper provides a practical alternative that can achieve the desired results with an update of the existing programs. By actively participating in chamber music groups as players instead of coaches standing apart from students, instrumental and vocal teachers can enhance chamber music instruction and enculturate students into the professional chamber music setting. Such an alternative mode of delivering chamber music training is likely to be cost-neutral since staff are already employed to coach groups on a weekly basis. Student-centred collaborative chamber music instruction similar to the one reported in this paper is likely to have long-term positive impact on both students and teachers.

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# **Exploring student practice spaces: Magnifying inequities and opportunities for mentorship**

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## **Abstract**

Successful professional musicians demonstrate high levels of self-regulation when learning music. Secondary music students rarely display self-regulation during practice, presumably because they lack adequate musical context to make informed decisions. Likewise, they may not avail of many practice strategies, whether because they cannot identify the problem, they lack an appropriate practice strategy or they do not know which tactics work to solve specific problems. There are few reports of activities during secondary music classes or rehearsals leading to increased self-regulation or use of specific strategies during personal practice prior to college. It is presumed that students learn to practice effectively during their undergraduate performance studies. To date, exploration of how precollege inequities might impact future self-regulation have not been published.

This study of first- and second-year tertiary music students at a comprehensive music school in the United States explored self-regulation during personal practice through a survey and follow-up focus groups. The survey asked students about their precollege and college-level formal music experiences. Findings revealed that students with less than three years or no private lesson experience before university employed few, if any, practice strategies or self-regulation actions during daily practice. They were less likely to earn competitive performance scholarships, more likely to work outside of school and that work was not music related. Conversely, students who lived in communities with access to quality teachers and

whose families supported at least three years of private lessons before college, did attempt to use practice strategies during personal practice, though these strategies were limited. There was a statistically significant reporting that university instructors taught and demonstrated practice strategies during lessons. Practice was discussed, to a lesser extent, during studio classes and among peers. Possibilities for facilitating peer learning and mentoring opportunities to teach self-regulation and increase practice effectiveness are explored in the paper, with the hope of bridging the gap caused by less-stimulating musical backgrounds and enabling all first- and second-year music students to become autonomous musicians earlier in their undergraduate degree programs.

### **Keywords**

Autonomy, mentorship, peer learning, practice, self-regulation

### **Introduction**

To increase culturally inclusive teaching practices, some 21<sup>st</sup>-century music educators have scrutinized typical contemporary classroom conditions and explored educational reforms. In various countries, precollege music educators are creating spaces where student-centered learning is prioritized and students are guided to explore music-making in personally meaningful ways (i.e., Campbell, 2010; Green, 2008). Yet, old ways of educating young people persist. While cultural diversity, equity and inclusion are popular topics of discussion, many primary and secondary music education programs continue to be evaluated and valued based on standardized tests and traditional classical ensemble performances (Froehlich & Smith, 2017).

In universities, curricular reform has been slow to take root. Some innovative conservatories have implemented forward-thinking curriculum changes that recognize the value of developing entrepreneurship, technological and interpersonal skills for musicians engaged in all stages of portfolio careers (e.g., Bennett, 2018; Carey & Coutts, 2018), though curricular change appears to depend on the country and context. Equally important is the need to ensure that precollege students are developing musical skills necessary for success in university music programs. This paper explores the reported secondary and tertiary practice experiences of a relatively diverse group of first- and second-year students at a comprehensive music school in the United States.

## **Assumptions and Approach**

A hallmark of success during undergraduate music study is performance, resulting from skill development undertaken in concert with the teacher and through personal study in the practice room. Precollege musicians may not have the broad musical context required to make informed musical decisions during personal practice (Hallam, 2001; Hallam et al., 2012). Secondary music students demonstrate few self-regulation strategies (Leon-Guerrero, 2008; Miksza, 2007) and even amongst those who report using strategies, few have been observed by researchers (Pike, 2017b). Although applied instructors report teaching undergraduates how to practice (Gaunt, 2008), their students disagree, stating that they need help with diagnosing and fixing problems, self-regulation and practicing independently (Gaunt, 2010; Pike, 2014, 2016). Alas, it is during the undergraduate years that many students discover how to practice effectively in order to complete required coursework and graduate.

Models for guiding undergraduate students in the applied studio have been explored (Gaunt, 2011; Gaunt et al., 2012) and semantic differences between tutoring, instructing, facilitating,



coaching and mentoring (Renshaw, 2009) have been noted. Gaunt (2011) notes that some applied tertiary music teachers appear to instruct, using the didactic transmittal of knowledge, or coach, where they quickly improve a specific problem or performance issue. Each of these can stunt development of autonomy among music students (Gaunt, 2011; Pike, 2017a). Rather, facilitation, where individuals are empowered to take control of their learning, and mentorship, long-term “creative, personal and professional development” (Renshaw, 2009, p. 96), are models that are more effective with adult learners (Burwell, 2005; Daloz, 2012; Pike, 2022).

Discussed less, is the possibility that successful tertiary performance students come from backgrounds that privilege classical music, where they engage in structured educational experiences (i.e. private music lessons) that promote skill development, including personal practice and self-regulation (Froehlich & Smith, 2017). Although precollege students exhibit few self-regulation strategies when learning music independently, few researchers have published findings on how formal music lessons may promote effective self-regulation during the first years of tertiary music study or how students lacking formal musical backgrounds may benefit from mentoring and coaching during the initial years of their degree programs.

### **Study participants**

This paper reports on one set of data drawn from a larger, Institutional Review Board approved study of undergraduate music students’ practice and self-regulation. The participants were first-year ( $n=26$ ) and second-year ( $n=19$ ) music students in an American university housing a comprehensive music program. Data were drawn from self-reported surveys and focus-group interviews. Part of the investigation invited students to describe their

precollege music experiences, including private lessons, and to share information about their family's cultural and socio-economic status.

## **Findings and themes**

### *Goal setting*

Initial positive findings about goal setting, volitional control and self-assessment, important components of the self-regulation process and necessary for effective practice (Zimmermann & Schunk, 2011), included student reports of “general ideas” about what to practice, “often” accomplishing what they set out to do and having an “idea” about what to work on at the next practice session. However, when pressed, few were able to provide precise goals or lists of what they would work on during upcoming practice sessions or specific practice strategies to solve problems. Seventy-three percent reported “playing things over until problems work[ed] themselves out” at least half of the time, even while acknowledging that this was not an effective practice tactic. Most students stated that they did not practice effectively even though they believed that their practicing had improved from precollege.

### *Limited practice strategies in the toolkit*

Even though they reported knowing what to work on, students wanted to learn more about specific practice strategies, time management and how to increase motivation to practice. Tools employed by students were limited to slow practice, rhythms and chunking, similar to findings of other researchers (i.e., Burwell & Shipton, 2011; Gaunt, 2008; Pike, 2014, 2016). Particularly noteworthy is that only students with more than three years of private lesson experience before university reported using these practice tools.

### *Role of the applied instructor: Technician-in-chief*

The students reported that their teachers set goals for the next lesson, provided specific practice strategies for the identified technical problems and demonstrated practice strategies during lessons. Focus group discussions revealed that despite reporting “knowing what to work on” before a practice session, they relied on the teacher to identify specific problem areas and broad goals. Few first- or second-year students created their own practice goals or understood how to set daily practice objectives leading to the weeklong goal(s) identified by the teacher. Some teachers discussed practice and self-regulation during studio classes and a few students shared tips with peers, though this was uncommon.

A statistically significant number of students reported that their instructor provided specific practice advice or strategies “most of the time” or “always” during lessons ( $\alpha = 0.01$ ;  $\chi^2 = 55.6$ ;  $df = 4$ ). Although teachers demonstrated practice strategies a little less, it was a significant occurrence ( $\alpha = 0.01$ ;  $\chi^2 = 69.59$ ;  $df = 4$ ). However, the thrust of work during lessons was on warm-ups and technical exercises. Students reported that they were neither learning about self-regulation nor discovering how to match appropriate practice strategies with specific problems. While most reported that their teacher expected them to set their own goals and determine practice strategies, students lacked the autonomy or skills to transfer practice techniques beyond specific spots identified by their teachers.

#### *Precollege instruction and economic realities*

Sixty-four percent of the participants reported taking private instrumental or voice lessons prior to college. The mean number of years for freshmen was 3.12 and 4.79 years for sophomores. Most of these students procured music scholarships and financial aid. From this group, those who worked reported that it was music related (i.e. gigging or teaching). Of the

22% of students who had not experienced private lessons before college, few earned competitive scholarships, necessitating work that was not music related.

### *Time management and the undergraduate schedule*

The majority of the respondents wanted to improve time management; a glance at the weekly schedule reveals why. First-year students reported spending a mean of 15.7 hours working, taking 17.8 credit hours and practicing 9.8 hours per week. Small changes were noted between the first and second years, with sophomores practicing a mean of two hours less per week, working about 1.5 hours less per week and taking one credit less of coursework per semester. Given the outside-of-class expectation (about 3 hours per credit), in addition to in-class time, practicing and working, there were few hours left in the day for eating, sleeping, exercising or other healthful activities. More students lived and practiced off-campus during the second year. The additional responsibilities of living off campus could result in less time for practice.

## **Discussion and Concluding Thoughts about Possibilities for Music**

### **Education**

This study highlights some thought-provoking findings with respect to disadvantages experienced by students from less-privileged backgrounds. Students who had fewer economic resources, community resources and/or family support for private lessons prior to entering music school began their degrees with a time disadvantage due to not obtaining scholarships and needing to work. Fewer musical contacts and insufficient musical preparation led to outside work that was not music related. Peers with scholarships or who worked part-time in music had more time available for music study, used practice strategies and developed practical skills in music-related work environments. If less privileged students can be

mentored, beyond the lesson where technical skills are expanded, they may recoup from the initial deficit. Educators should consider their own institution and students' backgrounds (understand the demographic data) to identify potential at-risk students and create opportunities to help them develop technical, musical and practice skills.

Creating time management and self-regulation or practice boot camps, where incoming freshmen quickly learn about basic principles of learning and self-regulation, could boost autonomy, efficacy and efficiency in (and outside of) the practice room. Systems of practice tutors, ranging from less formal to formal, could be organized. For example: within studios, practice buddies could check-in throughout the week; advanced undergraduate/graduate students serving as practice facilitators, could guide freshmen and sophomores during practice between lessons; and/or faculty mentors (who may specialize in another instrument) could regularly meet with individuals or groups of students to observe and reflect on recorded practice sessions and help students construct a more robust toolkit of practice strategies.

During the first years of tertiary music study, students may confuse warm-ups and technical exercises with actual practice strategies that can solve problems encountered when learning new music. While developing technique is critical, learning to self-regulate during practice includes the following steps: setting goals based on the previous rehearsal, identifying a problem (and prioritizing problems when multiple issues are present), trying a suitable solution and evaluating the solution's success. Evaluation leads to trying another appropriate strategy if success was not achieved or moving on to the next problem once the issue has been solved. Finding space in the curriculum (preferably within existing courses) where groups of students can gather to develop self-regulation skills by listening to/watching practicing videos, pinpointing issues, labelling the problems and brainstorming potential solutions could

be an effective way to develop requisite skills and enculturate music students into the world of autonomous, self-regulated practice through facilitated peer learning.

In the long term, if precollege music educators can create opportunities for students to develop autonomous practice and self-regulation strategies, less didactic teaching may be required during the first years of college. However, if students enter university with few self-regulatory, practice or time management skills, creating opportunities for facilitated learning, coaching and mentoring outside of individual lessons may be an effective way to set up all students for success in their degree programs.

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# **Feedback in instrumental music practice: The missing link**

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## **Abstract**

Feedback is an important yet often overlooked mechanism within instrumental music practice. It is found in all stages of the practice cycle (Charness et al., 2014; Ericsson, 1997; Jørgensen, 1997) and is considered a key factor in the success or failure of the music learner (Hallam, 1997b). Much of the early research on feedback in music practice was based on practical aspects of playing such as correcting technique (Salzberg & Salzberg, 2016), or providing an enhanced feedback mechanism using technological interventions (Schwaegler, 1984; Tucker et al., 1977). Key research since this time has focused on three main settings within the music learning environment: teacher behaviour in the classroom or applied studio setting, peer and student feedback in assessments, and sensory feedback in the performance of music (Parkes, 2018). A recurring theme in the literature is the issue of engagement and motivation during practice (McPherson, 2000). However, there has been little research on what constitutes effective feedback from teachers during lessons, how young, novice and high school students acquire and receive feedback during their individual practice sessions outside of lessons, how novice musicians utilise sensory feedback, and how feedback can impact the engagement and motivation of students during practice.

To help bridge this research gap, we can look towards existing literature on feedback in the education and psychology domains. In recent years, there has been a shift from feedback as something given to students towards feedback as a process in which students are actively

involved (Dawson et al., 2019). Feedback is a learning tool that helps novices with difficulties in understanding the performance goal and in evaluating how their own performance matches to the goal, by correcting these discrepancies and changing their behaviour. For many novice instrumental music learners, a reference point in the form of external feedback is needed so that they can develop the accuracy in their own self-evaluation to better judge the quality of their performance. In time, learners will develop the ability to self-evaluate their own performance and monitor their own engagement in tasks. The notion that students are actors in the feedback process is largely absent in the music education literature.

This paper aims to explore the existing literature on music practice, feedback, and feedback technologies with a focus on how technology can provide effective feedback to instrumental music learners to aid them in practicing effectively as well as enhancing their motivation to learn.

### **Keywords**

Music practice, feedback, self-regulated learning, music technology, music practice tools, music learning applications.

### **Music Practice**

Instrumental music practice is a widely researched topic in the field of music education. In a recent article by How et al. (2021), there has been a strong growth of research in this area in the last decade, in particular in the United States, the United Kingdom and in Australia. The focus of the research has been on the psychology in music practice, with a focus on deliberate practice, self-regulated learning, and motivation, across three main settings within the music learning environment: teacher behaviour in the classroom or applied studio setting, peer and

student feedback in assessments, and sensory feedback in the performance of music (Parkes, 2018).

Music practice habits have been researched widely (Barry & McArthur, 2016; Hallam, 1997a; Hatfield, 2017; McPherson et al., 2017; Miksza, 2006, 2007; P. Miksza, 2011; Miksza, 2016a, 2016b; O'Neill, 1997; Pike, 2017; Sandgren, 2018) (Zhukov, 2005) as has music and self-regulated learning (Boucher et al., 2017; dos Santos, 2018; Dos Santos & Gerling, 2011; Hatfield, 2016; Hatfield et al., 2016; Kim, 2010; McPherson et al., 2017; Mieder & Bugos, 2017; Miksza, 2011; P. Miksza, 2011; Miksza, Blackwell, et al., 2018; Miksza, McPherson, et al., 2018; Nielsen, 2001, 2004, 2011, 2015; Osborne et al., 2020; Özmentes, 2008; Rita Mangione & Andrea Ludovico, 2014; Ritchie & Williamon, 2012).

Effective music practice is not so much based on talent but rather on time and effort invested into the process which is founded on clear goals, self-monitoring, repetition, error correction, and feedback (Varela et al., 2014). Music practice is an intricate process commencing in the music lesson where repertoire and musical skills are taught by the teacher, as well as modelling of how music practice should be done occurs. From here, the student will practice in between lessons, usually at home. Success with home practice will depend on whether the student has understood and remembered what was taught in the lesson, the types of practice strategies they use according to their level of ability (Hallam, 1997b), and factors affecting their practice environment such as where they physically practice but also the level of parental support (Creech, 2006, 2010, 2016; Davidson et al., 1995; Ericsson, 1997; Evans & McPherson, 2014; Hallam, 1997a, 1997b; Hallam et al., 2012; Huber, 2019; McPherson, 2008; McPherson et al., 2015; Pitts et al., 2000; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Uptis et al., 2016; Youm, 2013; Zdzinski, 1996). Self-regulated learning is fundamental in how well students

practice outside of their lessons, with a substantial amount of research in this area showing a strong correlation between high academic and music performance, motivation and the use of self-regulation strategies (Varela et al., 2014).

Whilst most of the research over the last twenty to thirty years has investigated practice habits, strategies, and self-regulated learning to better understand and conceptualise effective music practice, the research still is yet to find a prescriptive model for effective practice. One important dimension of music practice is feedback; however, there is very little research on what constitutes effective feedback in the field of instrumental music practice.

Finally, technology can assist with effective music practice. However, existing applications have not been studied to see whether they can assist with effective music practice nor with helping students develop good practice habits, strategies and becoming self-regulated learners.

## **Feedback**

There are many different definitions of feedback. In the context of education, feedback is an interactive process of communication whereby a learner is given information on the accuracy of, or insight into a performance (Clynes & Raftery, 2008; Molloy & Boud, 2014; Mory, 2004). Feedback involves practice of a task, where an actual performance is compared with a some standard of performance (Johnson & Johnson, 1993). Feedback can be in the form of both qualitative information, information regarding accuracy of the performance and the degree of discrepancy between the person's performance and the correct performance, and quantitative information, the size of the discrepancy (Johnson & Johnson, 1993). Qualitative

feedback helps individuals improve their performance, whereas quantitative feedback promotes achievement more effectively (Anderson et al., 1979).

Feedback “can come from almost anywhere” (Duke, 2005, p. 124), which is definitely true in music learning, where three key sources of feedback occur in the learning process: feedback from oneself, feedback from others including the teacher or parent, and technology-assisted feedback (Johnson & Johnson, 1993). Here, feedback is defined as a system used to make adjustments to reach a goal. Feedback is a learning tool that helps novices with difficulties in understanding the performance goal and in evaluating how their own performance matches the goal.

Traditionally, feedback is viewed as individual episodes where teachers tell learners about their performance (Molloy & Boud, 2014). This is true in the context of instrumental music, where feedback is often given only during lessons or after performances and music examinations (Parkes, 2018). In this research, it will be suggested that a constructivist view of feedback should be considered in developing a comprehensive feedback system that enhances instrumental music learning and the motivation to learn an instrument. The current literature suggests that feedback needs to be student-centric and learner-focused and should be viewed as a system of learning where learners can engage in feedback episodes, alter behaviour based on the provided feedback and evaluate their performance in relation to their learning goals (Molloy & Boud, 2014; Mory, 2004).

Following a constructivist viewpoint, feedback helps the learner to correct these discrepancies and change their behaviour. For learners who have a clear grasp of the goal, self-evaluation of the performance is fairly accurate. However, for many others, in particular, novice

instrumental music learners, a reference point in the form of external feedback is needed so that they can develop the accuracy in their own self-evaluation to better judge the quality of their performance (Molloy & Boud, 2014). In time, learners will develop the ability to self-evaluate their own performance and monitor their own engagement in tasks. The notion that students are actors in the feedback process through practices such as feedback-seeking are relatively scarce in the feedback literature and largely absent in the music education literature.

In music education, feedback is not formally defined, but has been studied in terms of teacher behaviour in instructional settings predominantly the music classroom (Parkes, 2018). This definition presents somewhat of a behaviourist view of feedback, where feedback is an external transmission of information (Molloy & Boud, 2014). This view focuses on enhancing the teacher's capacity to deliver feedback through high quality information, which is what most of the existing literature is focused on. However, the literature is limited at exploring the role of the student in feedback in music practice beyond peer and self-assessment, or as part of sensory feedback as musicians actively listen to themselves during their own musical performance (Parkes, 2018). What other sources of feedback impact the student's learning in music tuition and practice is largely unexplored.

## **Technology**

### **Technology in Music Practice**

In considering technological applications in music practice and education feedback, there are a broad range of music learning applications for classroom teaching (Kim, 2013), however, there are a limited number of specific music practice applications (Wan & Gregory, 2018), none of which have been studied to determine whether they promote effective feedback in music practice nor whether they improve student motivation. Previous research categorises

existing digital music practice tools into five categories: practice log tools, note feedback tools, music practice tools, sheet music tools and accompaniment tools (Wan & Gregory, 2018).

### *Practice Log Tools*

These tools enable students to track their music practice by entering goals and logging their practice against those goals. Applications include *PracticeBuddy*, *MusicPractice*, *MusicJournal*, *PracticeMusic*, *Instrumentive*, *Music Practice Log*, *Sessions: Music Practice Log*, *Music Practice App* and *MyTractice*.

### *Note Feedback Tools*

These tools detect and indicate whether the notes of a piece have been played at the correct pitch and rhythm. Existing applications include *Interactive Pyware Assessment System (iPAS)*, *SmartMusic*, *MatchMySound*, *PlayPerfect* and *Music Prodigy*.

### *Music Practice Tools*

*iScore*, now called *Cadenza Practice App*, is the only tool available for music practice. It aims to scaffold SRL during music practice through goal setting and reflection functionality. The application also provides teachers to annotate student's video recordings.

### *Sheet Music Tools*

These are applications that allow students to interact digitally with sheet music. Applications include *Chromatik*, *AvidScorch*, *MusicReader* to create their personal sheet music library, listen to recordings, and annotate the music.



### *Accompaniment Tools*

These applications allow students to play other parts whilst the student plays their individual part. Applications include *Meloflow*, *BandPad* and *iRealPro* to accompany students by simulating band sounds. *Meloflow* and *BandPad* use note-detection technology to follow the student on the score.

### *Other Music Learning Applications*

In addition to these applications, digital metronomes, tuners and a wide range of note reading apps are also utilised by students in music practice. There are also various existing applications such as *Auralia* and *AuralBook* that are used for ear-training. In a research context, motion capturing technology has also been used to capture and provide feedback on player's movements and posture. These include *i-Maestro*, *Elbow Piano* and *Digital Violin Tutor*, however, none of these applications took off commercially (Cheng, 2018).

One of the key shortcomings of the research in this area is that none of the commercial applications listed above have been studied in the music practice environment to see whether they are capable of enhancing instrumental music learning and promoting effective music practice. This is an area for further research.

## **Technology and Feedback**

An important question is whether technology can assist in the effective delivery of feedback, and if so, how. As identified above, technology can assist in processing data from feedback provided to students such as in error identification. In a study by Carless et al. (2011), participants identified the benefits of technology in facilitating the feedback process as technology can allow the student to better engage with the feedback than with conventional

verbal and written feedback, helping them engage in their own learning. This fits in the constructivist view where “the most effective feedback revolves around the students’ need” (Carless et al., 2011, p. 402).

Deeva et al. (2021) suggest that an effective automated feedback system must comprise of four key aspects: architecture, feedback, the educational context, and evaluation. Architecture includes the algorithms and programming language used to house the system. This includes considering how the feedback will be deduced, what feedback needs to be provided, how and to whom does this feedback need to be provided and when does it need to be given? Data can be collected from domain knowledge which addresses what type of feedback is to be given, from expert knowledge which is information or data provided by teachers or frameworks that give guidance on rules that help map domain knowledge with student inputs, and from student data including learning analytics and identifying indicators to trigger the feedback. The types of data collected and used will depend on the type of student, the task, and the architecture of the system.

Technology can assist with the delivery of feedback. Technology can create conditions for innovative feedback practices (Dawson et al., 2019) and provide richer feedback through different types of media such as audio and video recordings which can better assist students in understanding the feedback (Henderson et al., 2019). Learning analytics (LA) can also provide us with insight into how students learn and the experiences they encounter with their learning (Dawson et al., 2014), enabling software designers to understand optimised learning processes (Pardo et al., 2019). LA can be collected through various types of technologies including computer assisted teaching (CATs) and intelligent tutoring systems (ITSs) (Karlsson et al., 2009; Pardo et al., 2019). This data can assist with student learning by

providing personalised feedback to students, whether this is done by the teacher accessing the data or provided by the system itself. In research conducted by Pardo et al. (2019), feedback resulting from LAs had a positive correlation with student satisfaction and academic performance. Furthermore, the research also highlights how teachers can use the data collected to tailor comments in providing high quality feedback.

Finally, as identified in Carless et al. (2011), technology can promote student autonomy and self-reflection. This can be done by creating a system in which the student can engage in active dialogue about their learning to raise awareness of the quality of their performance, assist them in monitoring and evaluating their own learning, and enhancing lifelong learning through the development of goal setting and planning of their learning (p. 405). Furthermore, technology can help overcome barriers students face to self-regulate their own learning without limiting the effectiveness of the feedback given.

Technology can really help effectively deliver feedback in instrumental music practice. In developing such a feedback system, a focus on ensuring that the feedback is rich and easy-to-understand is needed. This can be done through various sophisticated algorithms that can provide feedback on pitch, rhythm and general performance accuracy which can also be combined with other technological feedback such as goal setting and attainment, self-assessment or reflection, and the use of annotating video or audio performances. A second priority would be to focus on personalisation so that the feedback system is student orientated. This can be driven by data collected by the student as the student practices and then analysing the behaviours so that the system can adapt to their needs, goals, personality and learning characteristics (Deeva et al., 2021).

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# **Bouncing voices in rehearsal - The transformative power of circular mentoring in music theatre touring projects**

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## **Abstract**

Pre-professional musicians seek ensemble learning environments that mimic professional conditions. A Conservatorium-led work-integrated-learning (WIL) project provided an opportunity to build these skills through a uniquely designed rehearsal environment. This Circular Mentoring project is shown to build professional and personal efficacy by creating heterarchical structures with high-stakes professional outcomes. Linking conservatoire students with community musicians and seasoned professionals in a single production was key, leading to a professional production in the Strut and Fret *Speigeltent* in 2019. Rehearsals were structured around a unique Circular Mentoring framework which challenges standard hierarchies found in musical ensemble rehearsals. All the participants in this rehearsal and performance process were challenged by both the intensive nature of touring, the broad range of skills and experience of the ensemble, and the time dependent need to create a show for performance in a professional context. A series of safe-to-fail experiments created a complex adaptive system of rehearsal and performance, a heterarchy with defined parameters, as prescribed by the Circular Mentoring model. Like a series of rubber bands stretched and bound into a rubber band ball, Circular Mentoring eventually creates a sphere of interactive engagements between participants, positively impacting the connectivity and cohesion of the ensemble, while providing opportunities for experiential learning under performance conditions. The study results, reported in ePortfolio reflections, show exceptional personal growth and professional self-efficacy for both professional and pre-professional musicians.



## Introduction

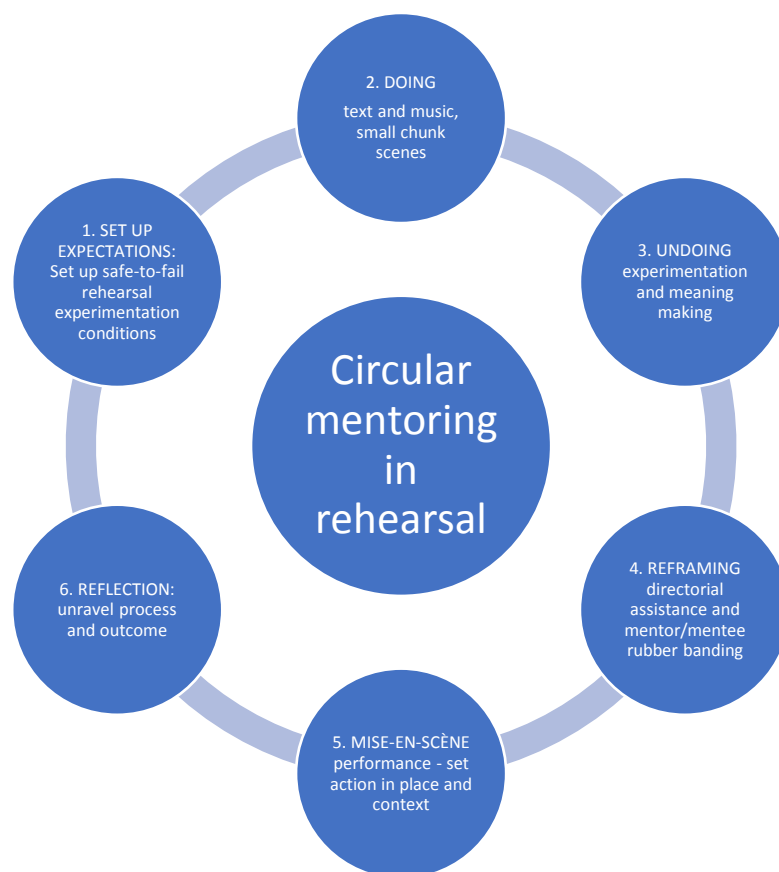
A ball made out of rubber bands serves many purposes: a functionary place to keep together all the individual bands; a ball to play, create and experiment with, to bounce, throw, catch; a stress reliever. Rehearsing for performance requires a collaborative spirit, a sphere where each component part feeds into the collective whole creative process. Berlow (2010) describes a sphere of influence, which in conservatoire settings can serve to entrench power in maestros who impart knowledge from a great height, following their own long apprenticeship in the atelier method of learning one-to-one, eventually acquiring proficiency on one's instrument<sup>2</sup>. The ball is first held by the expert conductor/director/maestro due to their acknowledged expertise. This method is effective for learning an instrument but ill-equipped to teach the skills and complexities of ensemble performance that are the primary source of the professional musician's work.

This research turns that model on its head, using prior research (Yeo, 2016 and Yeo and Rowley, 2020) to create a heterarchical sphere of influence, sending a constantly evolving ball around the circle. Applying Circular Mentoring in a context where students prepare for a professional engagement teaches participants how to work effectively in ensemble, to bounce, throw and catch between collaborators; to perform professionally and efficiently; to recognise one's own skills and talents, and those of others in the ensemble. Circular Mentoring eventually creates a sphere of interactive engagements between participants, positively impacting the connectivity and cohesion of the ensemble, while providing opportunities for experiential learning under performance conditions. Each band in this sphere interacts and is interdependent on the others to create shape and functionality.

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<sup>2</sup> Bennett (2009) describes the range of competencies required by professional musicians in practice.

Circular Mentoring challenges traditional conservatoire concepts of maestro/student dynamics. Simply described, it asserts that all participants in a rehearsal room have something to teach and something to learn. Equalizing value does not mean minimising experience or individual strengths, but rather, identifying and canvassing diverse skills and talents of all participants, then providing opportunities for mentors and mentees to flip roles judiciously throughout the rehearsal process. This happens across the cohort, upending the expected power structures of a rehearsal room.



*Figure 1. Circular Mentoring Model, after Kolb (1984)*

Figure 1 describes a six-point Circular Mentoring Model, designed after Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984). Kolb expounds a four-stage cycle of learning and recognised four unique learning styles. To make this fit for purpose in upskilling performers, this model dissects his four pillars as follows:

1. Doing (concrete experience)
2. Undoing (reflective observation)
3. Reframing (abstract conceptualisation)
4. *Mise-en-scène* (active experimentation and performance in-situ).

In addition, prior to rehearsal, permission was sought from participants to create an unfamiliar heterarchy. Innovative conditions are created for rehearsal, allowing for play and experimentation, intervention moulds the *mise-en-scène* as performance-ready. Finally, and most importantly, there is space for group and individual reflection. Participants reflect on who they are as performers and who they are becoming. Patterns of future goals and aspirations become evident (Blom & Hitchcock 2017, p. 169).

### **Project description – Gathering elastic raw materials**

In April 2019, 52 participants signed up for a conservatorium-led partnership between a city and regional conservatorium, a collaborative inclusion project, which led to a professional performance of David Reeves' *Seven Little Australians* in the Speigeltent. The cast included 15 regional students from the ages of 8-26; 31 conservatorium students completing their studies in performance, along with 6 professional performers. This unique project is the subject of continuing research into the benefits of Circular Mentoring for pre-professional and professional musicians. There have been five successful iterations

of this Circular Mentoring framework to date. The model of circular mentoring began with a consideration of Kolb's (1984) model of experiential learning and applied principles of effective ensemble behaviours and rehearsal technique to the process. By setting up the conditions for acceptance of a heterarchy in rehearsal, professional and pre-professional performers envisage another way of interacting, devising, developing and creating art. Obtaining agency in the rehearsal room allows for both increased creativity and collective ownership of social dynamics and group artistic practice.

The Inclusion Project produced a professional musical with working professionals, conservatoire and community musicians within a rural setting. The director creates an intensive rehearsal process with a difference: Conservatoire students and professionals are placed out of their comfort zone in an intensive touring environment and all participants are placed in the role of mentor and mentee through various role-reversal exercises during production. The goal is both the creation of a high-level performance outcome and the building of creative self-efficacy in all participants, achieved within the Circular Mentoring Model; a rubber band ball with many purposes, prime among them being creation and heterarchical play.

Each iteration of this model in practice has necessarily been different, based on prior research into complex adaptive systems. Complex systems develop through an adaptive process from imparted fragments of information, knowledge base of the participants, and interpersonal dynamics at play. Perony (2013) sees collaboration as a human example of a complex system where simple individual rules influence social engagement in the service of a goal: *"Simplicity leads to complexity which leads to resilience"* (1'03"). Collaboration is not generally taught in the one-on-one skills lesson, so pre-professional performers are passive

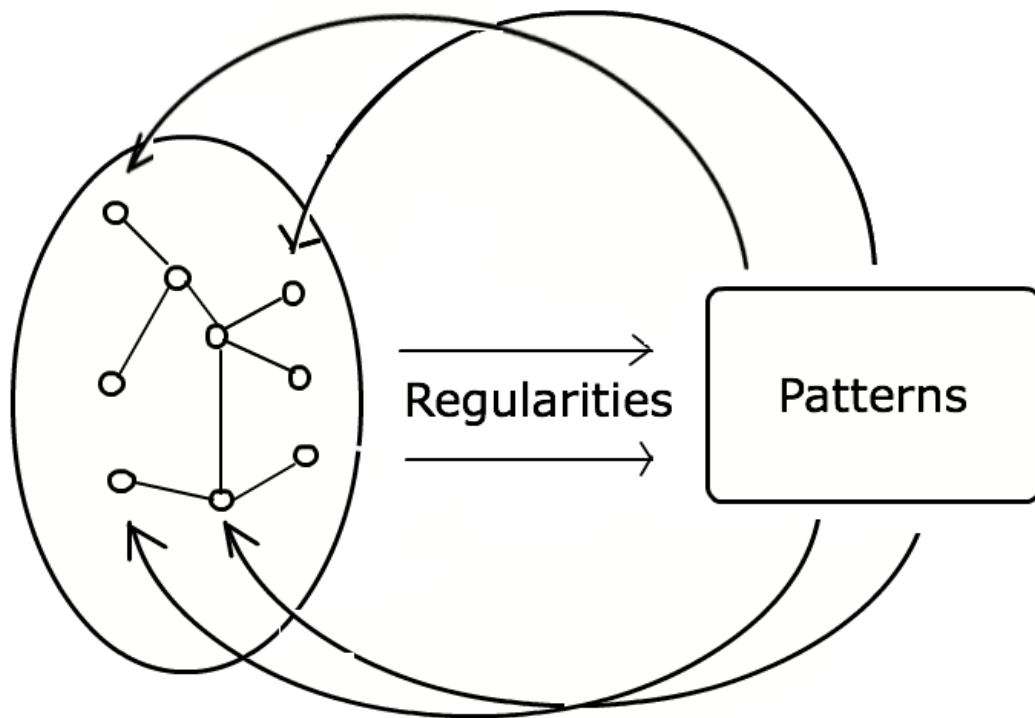
learners of the hows of artistic practice by merely watching their maestro engage and perform. Circular Mentoring places all participants in a high-bounce professional environment where they have some strengths and some challenges. Resilience is a central skill required for musicians to survive and thrive in a tough industry.

### **Aims – Adaptive play with purpose**

This research sought to identify elements of complex adaptive systems that could be applied to building resilient, self-efficacious lifelong musicians. Complex adaptive systems are made up of myriad interacting elements originally observed in nature, such as swarms of bees, or the migratory V formation of birds in flight. Complexity theory focuses on identifying patterns of interactions between individual parts, and the internal rules that guide their behaviour, which eventually become systemic behaviours (Glattfelder, 2012). Human systems contain stated hierarchies and unstated or shadow systems of power which are dependent on the sphere of influence (Berlow, 2010) occurring at important nodes. The links between nodes and the manner in which they occur are social interactions. These repeated interactions result in emergent properties that repeat, thereby defining the system itself; “In other words, we find simplicity from the architecture of complexity itself” (Berlow, 2010, 3’13”).

The many interactions are not complicated, but complex. A musical rehearsal is an excellent example of a complex adaptive system, yet it is one that has traditionally relied on hierarchical structures to impart knowledge. This research questions whether it is possible to give participants in a musical rehearsal increased agency in the process, but still create a professional outcome?

Figure 2 Rehearsal patterns made through repetition of particular nodes in a complex adaptive system



Never so prescriptive as to be stagnant, complex systems are in states of continuous change, mostly but not always incremental, highlighted by moments of radical movement. Complex systems can also be destabilized, chaotic and self-destructive. Personnel in musical rehearsals, particularly at the front of the room, can have a devastating effect on the self-image and self-efficacy of performers. As in Figure 2, nodes are small actions that when repeated produce regularities, hence patterns emerge. This research wanted to question and flip the balance on how these nodes create regularities for professional musicians. The rehearsal room created

agency to decide on these nodes by leaning into strengths of individual participants and incorporating these into group repetitions.

Circular Mentoring creates a series of safe-to-fail experiments into collaborative creativity that upend the maestro model of teaching and learning traditionally found in the conservatoire setting. Circular Mentoring counters this traditional hierarchy of production rehearsals (challenging the all-powerful production table providing the majority of creative capital) and the tendency for less experienced performers to lean into their lower status in this context.

## **Method**

The intense rehearsal process was recorded in surveys and ePortfolio personal reflective journals. These journals formed part of the research, which was conducted as ethnographic enquiry along with rehearsal and performance observations. The beginning of rehearsal is devoted to removing a sense that experience/higher skill level creates a necessarily higher status in the rehearsal room. This planned heterarchy is unfamiliar territory for some participants, who expect strong leadership from the production table, yet the trust necessary to change the expected power dynamic is easily achieved through a number of short acting and singing exercises in building ensemble. Early rehearsals trade in discomfort for natural leaders and maestros in the room, including the production table personnel. The key element here is the fostering of unexpected participants in mentor roles (such as young or inexperienced performers).

## **Results**

The most common response post-performance related to flexibility, adaptability and self-efficacy (n=15); “I learnt the value of being flexible and adaptive in challenging situations”. Participants understood the challenges and diversity of a musical career: “It’s tough, multi-faceted and incredibly rewarding. It requires a multitude of skills you never would have thought you needed, and I’m grateful to have had this opportunity to discover that”. Respondents gave an insight into their experiences of some of the mentoring exercises in the project:

We were told to talk about a best and a worst moment of things that had happened on stage. It was really interesting to hear her stories...I also shared my best and worst moments which were interesting to think about actually. (Participant)

Student responses showed how they had assimilated professional and personal self-efficacy as important outcomes. This also influenced how I developed more complex thinking around my own teaching practice, freeing up to the creative possibilities of each ensemble group. As the researcher scaffolding experiences, the following goals were important factors to support a Circular Mentoring framework:

1. *Professional performance outcome is goal*, achieved within a short space of time with a performance of high quality. All performers and production team prepare as if they were already a trained professional:  
“It’s so exciting to work with people who are legitimately doing what I want to do as a career. Their presence, the way they committed to their characters and stayed focused throughout was stunning to watch” (Participant).



2. *Positive ensemble underpins the experience.* Intense shared experience is created through experimentation exercises that foster mutual respect, from the production table to the youngest performer:

At the end of the day we all got in a circle and they asked us to walk into the middle of the circle and point out something great that we had noticed another person doing at some point during the day. It was a very confronting thing to ask a bunch of people who only just met...It was a very challenging and almost embarrassing thing to do but it was also lovely. It fostered such a kind and encouraging environment to work in. (Participant).

3. *All company members become mentees* in some facet of the rehearsal process, making it possible to learn something from each participant:

During the rehearsals we worked vigorously on creating authentic characters and making sure that each character was different in their own way. [The director] set several activities per day...which allowed all cast members to...create a more comfortable and accepting environment.

4. *Circular mentoring was clearly explained*, defined within the parameters of a complex adaptive system applied to creative practice. It became the central defining goal of the process, illuminating the concept that the *rehearsal is the thing*:  
“ [At the] first combined singing rehearsal, the sound was lifted and strong- this was an eye-opening moment for many...realizing that this production is more than just a performance, but a cross-generation mentoring experience”.

## Discussion

Creating a sense of self for the professional musician is multi-factorial (Reid et al, 2019). Professional musicians are aware of the form and purpose of rehearsals, both private and public (individual motivations and group iterations). This research involved overt public rehearsals, stimuli-based (there was a score and staging to learn). As psychologists understand rehearsing, it involves repeated actions propelled by the performer or an external agent (Watkins & Peynircioğlu, 1982). The success of experiential learning in ensemble contexts revolves around relative power and agency of all participants. This particular rehearsal structure involved internalizing of agency to each performer, functioning as a node in a complex adaptive system. Each performer drove activity at various points of the rehearsal process. This is rare in an intensive preparation of a musical for performance: There is generally neither the time nor inclination on the part of the director to share space and agency with performers, so roles are defined and executed using a hierarchical structure. Yet this process was delivered during an intense rehearsal period with a known public performance outcome and pressure to create a professional product.

Creative rehearsal structures were built on doing, experimenting, undoing and redoing, then repeating successful outcomes; in essence producing a creative iteration of concrete experience. The circumstances under which an element is repeated relies on a set of complex adaptive systems unique to each new rehearsal process. Reframing the experience (abstract conceptualization) is unique to this model and leads to positive self-efficacy.

Participant responses universally reflected that this was a positive experience which would inform future practice. This research shows how a time and outcome dependent complex adaptive process can upskill musicians from pre-professional to professional in a range of

competencies, as well as delivering creative and professional musical experiences of value and import to performer and audience.

The director, conductor and performers all demonstrated fluidity of roles at the beginning of the process, beginning with rehearsal room set-up, to reinforce the heterarchy. If the ensemble is well framed, participants move through the intense experience, and the *mise-en-scène* of both the rehearsal process and the performance will reflect the creative collaboration achieved with each member functioning as both mentor and mentee. The personal and professional efficacy obtained in this collaborative ensemble is well understood (Sawyer, 2006). A high stakes performance outcome is vital to this project, as it reflects the reality of life as a musician. Playing, moulding and bouncing ideas and creative practice nodes into the air in rehearsal resulted in transformative experiences for participants that can be carried into professional performance practice.

## **Concluding Thoughts**

Mentoring of musicians in all areas of performance can be quickly and efficiently achieved through circular mentoring in an inclusion project. Using Kolb's (1984) experiential learning frame, adjusted for purpose, circular mentoring can inform performance projects which demonstrate value for individual participants as both mentor and mentee. This has shown to improve self-efficacy and build complementary skill sets, challenging the fixed mindset of hierarchical musical learning models. Evidence from student ePortfolio reflections shows increased self-efficacy and teaches faculty how to pass the ball in an intergenerational, multi-factorial rehearsal process, aimed at skilling musicians for work-ready collaborative environments. Expanding the sphere and passing the ball allows pre-

professional musicians to add their unique band to an ever-growing and changing sphere of musical influence.

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# **The Pragmatic Philosopher:**

## **The Servant Leadership of Professor Glen Carruthers**

**Janis Weller, Ed.D, U.S.A.**

### **Abstract**

*Glen Carruthers, “a provocateur of university music education”. (American Musicological Association, 2020).*

The 2022 seminar of the Commission for the Education of the Professional Musician (CEPROM) is dedicated to the memory of Professor Glen Carruthers. The loss of our dear friend and colleague leaves a significant gap in the CEPROM commission. Glen’s contributions to CEPROM as commission chair, commissioner, presenter, and yes, educational provocateur over more than a decade of service, were both substantial and eloquent. This brief tribute recognizes some of Glen’s unique gifts combining scholarship, exceptional leadership, a deep love of music with his genuine, kind persona, including ways his work has impacted CEPROM and the work of its members. True to CEPROM’s purpose, Glen inspired innovation in the ways we prepare young musicians for professional work in a rapidly evolving and often chaotic world. Through the lens of servant leadership theory, this paper describes Glen’s student-centric and visionary leadership approach paired with the practical application of these big picture concepts using insights from his colleagues and with examples from Glen’s own writings.

### **Keywords**

Servant Leadership, student-centered, leadership in higher education, mentoring

## Introduction

*“Emphasis needs to continue to shift in our schools of music from developing better musicians to the exclusion of all else, to building better communities in which musicians are poised to play a major role.” (Carruthers, 2009)*

The 2022 seminar of the Commission for the Education of the Professional Musician (CEPROM) is dedicated to the memory of Professor Glen Carruthers. The loss of our dear friend and colleague leaves a significant gap in the CEPROM commission. Glen’s contributions to CEPROM as commission chair, commissioner, presenter, and yes, educational provocateur over more than a decade of service, were both substantial and eloquent. This brief tribute recognizes some of Glen’s unique gifts combining scholarship, exceptional leadership, a deep love of music with his genuine, kind persona, including ways his work has impacted the CEPROM and the work of its members. True to CEPROM’s purpose, Glen inspired innovation in the ways we prepare young musicians for professional work in a rapidly evolving and often chaotic world. Through the lens of servant leadership theory, this paper describes Glen’s student-centric and visionary leadership approach paired with the practical application of these big picture concepts using insights from his colleagues and with examples from Glen’s own writings.

Stephen Pressfield, in his potent little book, *The War of Art*, describes two types of leaders, Fundamentalists and Artists. Fundamentalists seek to return to the glories of the past while Artists eagerly embrace possibilities of the future (Pressfield, 2002; Petty, 2020). Never a binary thinker, Glen artfully connected his broad and diverse understandings of history, philosophy, and literature with social realities, humor, and popular culture when proposing

unique ideas and new program directions. Curious and well-read, deeply grounded in research with a philosopher's penchant for continued growth and wisdom, he stayed focused on visions for the future, known or unknown.

A deeply empathetic listener and mentor, Glen made genuine personal connections with students, colleagues, fellow leaders, community members, in short, with whomever he met. At the same time, Glen was simultaneously a big picture visionary focused on future possibilities, a brilliant and creative synthesizer of innovative ideas and practices. Glen didn't merely philosophize about the future, he operationalized it in the context of the institutions he led, creating new programs in jazz, community music, music therapy, and envisioning dramatic improvements to the Laurier music building.

This paper begins with a brief biography followed by a section on Servant Leadership theory. The next section examines some of Glen's work as a servant leader using examples from his career, both with individuals and across the institutions he led. The conclusion summarizes Glen's legacy and implications for CEPROM's future work.

## **Brief Bio**

*"Glen realized he had an intuitive flair for administration (many would say he was genius at it)". WLU Obituary, Dec. 2020*

Musician, scholar, teacher, and leader, Glen began his academic career as a pianist and musicologist and quickly discovered this 'intuitive flair' for administration, serving first as the founding chair of the Department of Music at Lakehead College, then ten years as Dean at Brandon University and nearly ten years as Dean of the Faculty of Music at Wilfrid Laurier



University. He published hundreds of academic papers, chapters, and books, and presented at institutions and conferences around the world. Glen served on the board of ISME and as chair of CEPROM as well as a commissioner. Described in tributes from those who knew and worked with him as ‘adored’ and ‘beloved’, Glen clearly left a powerful legacy academically, musically, and personally.

*“We necessarily restrict ourselves to the imaginable, when it is the unimaginable for which students and the institutions that serve them must be prepared”. GC (Carruthers, Ecclectica, 2009)*

### **Servant Leaders: Relational and pragmatic**

*The servant-leader is servant first, it begins with a natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then, conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test is: do those served grow? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely to become servants themselves?” (Greenleaf, 1970).*

Leadership theories abound, some focused on the personal traits of leaders and others on the processes of leadership, still others focus on skills or style, culture or team-based approaches (Northouse, 2000). The term Servant Leadership was coined by Robert Greenleaf in the 1970s, a seemingly paradoxical description of leadership. How can someone be both a servant and a leader? While not presuming to bestow any divinity on Glen (though some might argue for that notion), servant leadership is a much older concept, with roots in many faith traditions (Petty, 2020; Sendjaya & Saros, 2002). Thoughtful and wise author/philosophers from Margaret Wheatley to Parker Palmer to Brené Brown write and speak frequently about servant leaders (Brown, 2018; Palmer, 2000; Wheatley, 1999). Although servant leadership

has become more prominent in research and practice over time, Northouse (2007) mentions servant leadership only briefly, tucked under the important umbrella of ethics in leadership.

The ten basic characteristics of service leadership as outlined by Greenleaf include empathy, listening, community building, foresight, healing, conceptualization, awareness, persuasion, stewardship and growth of people (Greenleaf, 1978; Petty, 2020; Spears, 2010). Some of these characteristics focus on one-to-one interactions, others at the organizational level, some serve to connect the individual and the organization. Servant leadership effectively blends individualized interpersonal attributes with institutionally focused characteristics, a balance Glen negotiated naturally, effectively, and with love.

### **Glen Carruthers as a Servant Leader**

*“Servant leadership is not only about ‘doing’ the acts of service but also ‘being’ a servant”.*

(Sendjaya & Saros, 2002)

I never had an opportunity to ask Glen whether he would consider his style of leadership ‘servant leadership’, but the elements of servant leadership fit Glen remarkably well, providing a framework for viewing his uniquely natural and effective style. When reading through scores of tributes and remembrances from Glen’s students, former students, colleagues, bosses, and friends, great consistencies with the traits and processes of servant leadership emerged along with many moving stories of the impact he had on the individuals he served and the music faculties he led throughout his career.

The next section views Glen’s work using a servant leadership model, first addressing his student-centric approach and then his impact on the institutions he led.

## Servant Leadership—Student-centered

*“Glen was adored by students, faculty and staff alike in part because he made time and showed genuine care for everyone he met”. (WLU, 2020)*

Many recurring themes run through Glen’s work as a researcher, musician, and dean, but student-centered is the one mentioned most frequently by colleagues and students alike. Glen projected genuine empathy with individuals and an innate ability to listen deeply. Helping individuals grow and develop were bedrocks of Glen’s leadership style, whether mentoring prospective students with a non-traditional background or faculty colleagues. He connected with and profoundly impacted the lives of prospective and current students, alumni, faculty and staff, and community.

In this brief remembrance, the passionate and eloquent voices of Glen’s colleagues share in their own words some of the ways his student-first servant leadership style manifested moment to moment, day to day, and will continue extending his legacy into the future (The following quotes are excerpted from “Remembering Glen Carruthers”, *Laurier News*, 24/12/2020)

*“Although I know that Glen so much valued the work of our faculty, it was always what would serve students best that propelled Glen”. —Kimberly Barber, Associate Dean: External Wilfrid Laurier University and Professor of Voice, WLU.*

*“I’ll remain forever grateful for all he has taught me about navigating challenges with a level head and with optimism and compassion, but most of all for always aiming to keep our*

*students' best interests at the heart of every decision".—Renee Ellis, Senior Administrative Officer, WLU.*

*"He listened to us intently and enlightened us with his stories, his humour and his insights".*  
—Tamara Menon (BMus '20), alumnae, B.M. in Community Music, WLU.

*"I always associate Glen with the biggest, most spirited round of applause and cheering from the students at the annual Orientation gatherings in the Faculty of Music".* Joseph Ferretti, piano instructor, WLU.

*"Every day, he modelled for us the meaning of student-centred leadership, and the wisdom of caring genuinely for people in every community to which he belonged".* —Anna Ferenc, Associate Dean: Internal, Associate Professor Music Theory, WLU.

*He is a role model, a mentor and a guiding light. His legacy will live on in all of us — this would be the greatest gift that he has given us, his example of wholehearted, student-centred leadership".* —Kimberly Barber, Associate Dean.

*"An outstanding Dean, Dr. Carruthers led a deeply student-focused School of Music, geared towards genuine relationships and strong, shared community".* (Brandon University News, December 2020).

*"Intending musicians, practising professional musicians, and the institutions that bring them together must travel ahead of the curve and not along with it. Our schools of music must become increasingly proactive".* (Carruthers, 2009)

Tributes to Glen included countless stories of Glen's ability to see potential in talented, hard-working students otherwise unprepared for university music study. He advocated for them, set a high bar, explained how difficult it would be, and supported them throughout their journey.

Two of these stories stand out, demonstrating Glen's intuition and empathy as well as willingness to override precedents. Amanda Brunk, voice instructor says,

When I was hired to teach Contemporary Voice at Laurier, it was under unconventional circumstances. There was a student who had auditioned for the program in hopes of pursuing Music Therapy...and she had no previous training in classical voice or technique...Glen, however, saw her talent and drive...and went out of his way to make a way for her...by seeking out a teacher (me) who could guide her voice to achieve her goals at Laurier. It was unprecedented". (*Laurier News*, 2020)

At another institution, a young student showed up full of passion and raw talent but lacking even a high school diploma. In her words, "He saw me, and many others in our infancy as artists; and with the wisdom of a seer saw us for who we could grow to be". (*ConductorGirl Blog*, 2021) Both of these students went on to successful academic and professional careers thanks to Glen's foresight and willingness to set high standards and nurture young people.

*"Agency, acquired and honed as students, empowers professional musicians to make effective choices that will buffer and ease inevitable career transitions". (Carruthers, 2018)*

## **Institutional Servant Leadership**

*“Servant leadership is a belief that organizational goals will be achieved on a long-term basis only by first facilitating the growth, development, and general well-being of the individuals who comprise the organization”.* (Patterson, Russell & Stone, 2004, p. 355)

Glen’s student-centric leadership built strong community and trust within the schools of music he led, resulting in dramatic growth, revitalization, and new programs, in addition to student and faculty successes. Tributes from leaders at Lakehead College, Brandon University, and Wilfrid Laurier University noted his strong relational style and also the impact of his leadership on the institution itself.

Building trust and strong relationships and numerous collaborations led to many new degree programs and partnerships. At Laurier, Glen’s strong affinity for community music resulted in new Bachelor and Master’s degrees in community music and the acquisition of an existing community music school. Recently, he led a fundraising campaign to expand and renovate the music building facilities to make the spaces more welcoming and communal. Ground-breaking is projected for Spring 2022 and the new practice studios will be named in his honor. *“He brilliantly led the School of Music through a decade that saw dynamic renewal in all parts of the Music faculty, leading to exciting program changes and substantial student achievement”.* (Brandon, 2020)

## **Conclusion—Building on a Legacy**

At CEPROM seminars over the years, Glen frequently addressed broad and often detailed leadership issues of international relevance using his long experience as a university dean and profound thinker. At CEPROM, he addressed ways leaders could influence needed reforms focused on improving outcomes for future professional musicians who would connect and

lead new directions in the field. As a pragmatic philosopher, Glen's contributions often sparked spirited conversations enriching our meetings (and social hours too).

Glen's legacy lives on in all of us who have learned and been inspired by him. To revisit Greenleaf's (1970) description: "The best test is: do those served grow? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely to become servants themselves"? This growth is certainly evident in Glen's colleagues and former students. How can we learn from and adapt Glen's examples in our own work to continue his insightful leadership model? How might Glen's work connect and provide guidance to CEPROM? What can we continue to learn and apply from Glen's rich legacy? Glen Carruthers embodied Brené Brown's leadership model as a leader who not only finds potential in people and processes, but also courageously develops that potential (Brown, 2018). To summarize, Robert Greenleaf says servant leaders lead from a place of love. That description fits Glen Carruthers to a tee.

*Glen had a transformative impact on the Faculty of Music and on the university. He was also a beloved and valued colleague to whom the deans and other university leaders looked for wisdom and counsel. Most importantly, for those who were fortunate to know Glen, he showed us how to make our journey through life a joyous one.* —Anthony Vannelli, Provost and Vice President: Academic (WLU News Hub 2, 2020).

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# **Student musicians practising leadership**

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## **Theoretical/pedagogical background of paper**

The word ‘leadership’ often gets viewed as a contested term. Globally, both as a research area and as a practical skill, it encompasses the ability of an individual, group or organisation to lead, influence or guide others and is recognised as the art of motivating people toward achieving a common goal. Recently, the development of student leadership is topical as a result of the tertiary sector’s advancement of embedding graduate qualities (such as leadership) into their strategic plans (Rowley, Bennett & Reid, 2016). In music higher education (HME), we have seen a growth of the skills employers want (including but not limited to communication, problem-solving, leadership, ethical practices, and teamwork) which are reported in non-discipline specific employability literature (Rowley & Dunbar-Hall, 2015).

With a focus on career, curriculum and pedagogical approaches, this paper considers how and in what contexts student musicians develop the leadership capabilities required inside the complex work of a musician. Much of a student musician’s journey towards professional practice requires authentic leadership opportunities embedded into curriculum and assessment that help individuals to navigate the various challenges and affordances of beginning a career in the creative and performing arts as a musician. Informed by their school-based and community music making experiences, music students in higher education are usually not

aware of the broader possible career outcomes available to them (Rowley, Bennett & Reid, 2021). This paper presents the stories of five final year tertiary music students who undertook an internship placement to experience leadership opportunities outside of their typical tertiary music studies to expand opportunities for their future music careers.

### **Aim/focus of the research**

As a large expansive landmass, Australia sees most of its population living in coastal areas and often inland regions suffer economic, cultural, artistic and social hardship. Tertiary music students in a large urban university in Sydney, Australia are encouraged to choose an elective internship subject with an intention of them engaging in real world experiences of work prior to graduation. The aim of the professional practice internship is to challenge urban based pre-professional musicians' experiences and encourage critical thinking and leadership in an opportunity to transfer learnt musical skills into another context. Many students choose to undertake a placement in a remote and/or regional conservatorium where they are faced with a range of challenges centred on equity and diversity.

Through an ethnography of five final year tertiary music students, who chose to undertake a week-long internship placement in a regional town, the co-negotiated objective was to work with the regional conservatorium's students aged 8-15 years old in an instrumental band camp context. The five tertiary students acted as tutors and mentors to the younger musicians. The research question was: *How does a student musician develop leadership qualities inside a week long mentoring role with younger musicians?*

## **Method and approach**

Prior to taking the practical placement experience, the students attended a series of workshops. As part of the elective internship, students were presented with a series of three, two-hour long workshops that provided an introduction to writing a reflective practice journal (within Schon's 1991 model of the reflective practitioner); engagement with an employability skills/website where they completed a student profile to identify current and future employability skills; and a problem solving activity where students redesigned a performance space to allow both contemporary and classical musicians to perform. This final workshop asked students to assume a leadership role within the group to explore architectural and audience viewpoints, budgetary constraints and local council development restrictions.

In addition to the scaffolded series of workshops, access to quality online resources on careers and the building of a student reflective ePortfolio journal were all embedded into the internship subject designed to assist the student make the transition from expert learners to novice professionals. Over a period of one week, the five undergraduate music students went on placement to a NSW regional conservatorium to help young musicians prepare for a performance event at The Northern Rivers Band Camp, Lismore, NSW. The less experienced musicians living and learning music in a rural environment with restricted access to expert teachers, artistic and creative mentorship and an environment of creative pursuit, were enthusiastic to partake in the project. Ethics approval was sought to report the tertiary students' reflections through their ePortfolio journal.

## **Results and summary of main ideas**

Of the five students that formed the ethnography, responses were commensurate with two main themes: developing leadership and mentoring which they commented were important to their future careers as musicians and music educators. Student A said:

I developed new strategies I could employ in the future when working with groups of children. And in fact, it was not long before I had to start thinking about how I was going to do this as I was thrust into the responsibility of leading a section of the ensemble.

Whereas Student E confessed that: “being out of my comfort zone has helped me grow and develop further as a musician”.

The tertiary students set explicit goals for mentoring the younger students, culminating in a public performance at the conclusion of the program seeing the participants of the band camp form the Northern Rivers Youth Orchestra. Student B said: “just as I was inspired by my older peers when I was younger, that I can bring similar joy and inspiration to other young aspiring violinists and musicians was satisfying”. Student D concurred: “the experience was also very encouraging and exciting, and opened my eyes to the many different opportunities available in education and how much I have enjoyed these various different formats”.

The leadership experiences were strongly encouraged by the senior staff at the regional con and specifically when challenges arose. Student A said: “We learnt a lot about each other’s teaching styles and how to effectively communicate our ideas and information to a wider demographic than we had ever worked with before”.

Student D was in awe of the enthusiasm of the younger musicians and wanted to provide an equal level of motivation for the final day of the band camp. He created a list of what he believed were essential ingredients of good mentoring and coaching.

These are not ground-breaking techniques nor very surprising, however what was surprising is the distinct impact they had on the kids which informs how I could do things better. So, listen to your students; respect their ability and understanding; communicate your teaching methods and techniques clearly; don't underestimate them; encourage questions.

All five participants reported it was satisfying to collaborate with a different community of musicians whilst being placed under time restrictions and experiencing the pressure of learning repertoire outside their normal genre of performance. Student E reported: "I realised how important it is to treat young children with respect; respecting their ability and musical understanding enough to talk to them openly and bring them onto the same page".

In addition, they realised the impact of the internship in diversifying and expanding their professional network and the benefit of exploring a teaching /mentoring role whilst working with less advantaged students. Student C said: "It was incredibly rewarding and gave me new insight into career paths, as well as providing a platform for my own self-development as a leader".



To see yourself as a leader and an inspiration to younger musicians was summarised by Student B who said:

I gained a higher understanding of the tactical approaches required when things are not being done the way you think they should be in a professional environment, and experience in effective ways to bring about change through this leadership experience.

At the conclusion of the program and reflecting on their future as an emerging professional, Student C commented:

All these aspects of my internship are highly relevant in my pathway in the professional music world; but particularly in regards to teaching, mentoring and working with younger musicians who didn't have the same access to musical training that I did in the city.

In regards to diplomacy in a professional environment and general understanding of work as a musician, Student A reflected on an important aspect of work: “we must formulate a respect for others in the workplace, which of course is relevant not just in music but in all areas of life”.

## **Conclusions and implications for music education**

The outcome of the program saw the five tertiary students’ report a development of cognitive dispositions, an awareness of their own social citizenship and the emergence of leadership

skills. Acknowledging an impact and the rich contributions of music in society through socially engaged and culturally mindful practices has encouraged the expansion of this internship program.

Typical of industries which feature fierce competition for work (Bennett & Bridgstock, 2015), music work tends to be both insecure and highly mobile. As such, musicians typically hold a portfolio of concurrent roles located in community, educational, digital, professional arts and other industry contexts (Bartleet et al., 2012). So, an argument for expanding opportunities for student musicians' future careers and engaging in real world experiences of work is established as being a proactive way to transition from student to professional.

Musical disciplines across the world are diverse and this experience contributes to the richness and complexity of the professional musical possibilities for graduates. This experience clearly reports a small cohort of students who engaged in a leadership challenge that opened up the understanding and potential of a portfolio career as they understood the application of extra musical skills within a professional musician's world.

In summary, Student B saw the internship experience as one that offered a soft landing into their next stage of their musicians work:

most musicians ask themselves, where to next? Where to once my studies are completed? I had realised that in my 4 years of university life I had in some way created a safe bubble and routine, that I could rely on. This internship has offered me an immense amount of experience in shaping me as a musician. By gaining experience

in a portfolio career I now feel confident in taking on jobs anywhere as it has opened so many more opportunities for me and has equipped me with skills of professionalism, working with people, taking on responsibilities and being confident to lead and work independently while sharing my knowledge with others.

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# **Make room for music: An analysis of *careers in music* posters**

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## **Abstract**

This exploration was inspired by the theme for the 2022 ISME World Conference *A Visible Voice* and a recent publication of an industry poster illustrating/promoting careers in music. By nature, posters are visual and therefore visible, the very purpose for their existence. They are graphic designed, may be colourful, used for advertising and advocacy, and are expected to influence the reader/viewer. The overarching conference theme empowers individual music educators and researchers to express the different voices that music presents or represents in their and other's community music practice. The data is taken from eight compilations of careers in music posters published between 1999 and 2021. An analysis of the *careers* named in careers in music posters published in a span just over two decades suggest that some have a loose connection to being both career-directed and related to music. They would be better classified as allied careers, where such occupations do not rely on the broader music industry to be financially successful. Therefore, we propose in this exploration to use the description *careers using music*, rather than careers in music (where using contains *in*). The analysis allows for the inclusion of specialisms in medicine and injury rehabilitation that provide ongoing professional services to those who work in music to maintain their careers. Broadening the definition of what could considered to be a career in music, this exploration links with a suggested CEPROM 2022 theme of making space/s for music. It connects with Professor Dumbledore's campaign to make space for music, where planning was in progress

to renovate the faculty music building, improving space for teaching, practising, and rehearsing. That space enables the professionalism of music to be brought to the centre. Paying attention to space also benefits social dynamics and the degree of independent agency being experienced by learners in their daily lives. The number of careers that can be counted in the posters highlighted in this study, raises questions about the validity of each as a career. The question is posed: Are they creating a crowded environment (as careers using music) and not leaving space for careers in music that have a genuine growth and development path?

## **Keywords**

Advertising, career development, employment opportunities, careers in music, profession, vocation.

## **Introduction**

This exploration was inspired by the theme for the 2022 ISME World Conference *A Visible Voice* and a recent publication of an industry poster illustrating/promoting careers in music (Yamaha Make Waves, 2021). Career posters have two clear uses: for advertising and promotion (especially when produced by industry) and education (to encourage career planning and development). Posters are designed to be visible and to influence, however their content could be questioned with a direct focus on establishing an adaptable and rewarding career. Thus, one approach could be to consider the value of information provided by careers posters on a continuum: from planning, building, and improving a career in either an upwards or sideways progression, to finding, changing, and keeping paid employment. And the question posed: Are they all potential careers?

## **Background**

There is any number of free downloadable and for-purchase ready-made posters online. They are produced by commercial infographic companies, professional subject associations, schools, levels of government, education authorities, professional and industry organisations across the western world. Posters are content-based and used for career development, where choices are guided by what each career does. This exploration suggests a number of questions about the creation and publication of posters, that fall under the headings of purpose, content, structure and layout. Are they produced for advertising and promotion, advocacy, career development or information? The decision about the content (or focus) for a poster is tied with the trigger for production: has the impetus come from industry or education? The structure may involve grouping of content under headings or categories, or there may be no clear structure at all. The choice of headings may determine the influence that the poster has on the end user. And the layout or design is linked to the structure and purpose: they are eye catching but do they create a hierarchy of careers or a specific focal point?

Following the continuum approach, definitions referenced from Dictionary.app are considered first.

Table 1. Definitions of terms

Term	Definition
Career	“an occupation undertaken for a significant period of a person's life and with opportunities for progress”
Profession	“a paid occupation, especially one that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification”
Trade	“a skilled job, typically one requiring manual skills and special training”

Vocation	“a person's employment or main occupation, especially regarded as particularly worthy and requiring great dedication”
Employment	“the condition of having paid work”
Occupation	“a job or profession”

Relating these definitions to the careers identified in the posters that provide the data for this exploration, there are three clear categories; those that involve formal qualifications, require continuous learning by people to realise their potential and provide opportunities for growth; those that involve training in a qualification in a skill; and those that do not require a specific skill. Individual competency with employability skills is necessary always.

The name “career development” was adopted as the overarching term in 2006 by the Australian Career Industry and is used by the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) in their Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners. The Australian Centre for Career Education defines career development as “the process of managing life, learning and work over the lifespan. It applies to everyone” (Australian Centre for Career Development).

The high five principles of career development are associated with the *Bullseye Career Information* posters and listed as Change is constant, Learning is ongoing, Focus on the journey, Know yourself, believe in yourself and follow your heart, and Access your allies (Australian Government, 2013, p. 38).



The Australian Blueprint for Career Development (2010) acknowledges the following statements:

- The concept of a “job for life” no longer exists. Most individuals will change jobs numerous times throughout their working lives.
- There has been a trend away from permanent employment to more varied working arrangements such as contract and project work.
- Gone are the days where a person could gain a single qualification which would sustain them throughout their entire working lives.
- In addition to job-related skills, individuals now need skills such as communication, problem solving, teamwork and personal attributes such as adaptability, resilience, enthusiasm and openness to new ideas. (p. 7).

The Blueprint structure details 11 management competencies divided into learning areas, then four developmental phases. It is significant that the four phases begin with students in kindergarten and primary school, then students in middle school, followed by students in senior/post compulsory school, and finally, adults (2010, p. 22).

The National Careers Institute, established 9 June 2020, by the Australian Government’s Department of Education, Skills and Employment, is the country’s front door to careers information and support. The Institute comments:

The arts are vitally important to Australia’s future. We have an important story to tell, and we need highly skilled artists, performers, technicians and administrators to take our story across the nation and around the globe. The arts are being restructured by digital change – bold new technologies are being used to create, to perform, to engage and to distribute. This is an exciting place to be, and you’ll be amazed at the career choices available to you. (National Careers Institute).

Taking a creative approach to career development and using the career choices listed in the careers in music posters as a catalyst, students enrolled in higher education have openings to use different learning opportunities and explore other pathways (in addition to preparing for orchestral auditions) within the music industry and beyond. Students can consider musical-adjacent activities and strive to build a higher level of professionalism before entering the workforce. Some examples of research supporting higher education and musicians' career development follow.

Whitney, Rowley and Bennett (2021) discuss the importance of imbedding an internship that targets developing identity and work within the arts industry, with appropriate and supportive assessment tasks. Different from an industry placement, their study involved work-integrated learning as central to the internship. Kenny (2021) describes how establishing partnerships between university and community serve as spaces for “place-based learning” (p. 32) creating challenges and opening opportunities for students to explore career opportunities before graduation. Dons and Gaunt (2021) explore ways in which professional musicians trained in the western classical tradition can change their practices in contexts of collaborative music making in a hospital. Staying with a medical theme, Koivisto (2021) focuses on the ways in which music may contribute to the care of newborn babies in neonatal intensive care units. The research highlights how the professional responsibility of musicians change when they engage in music-making with vulnerable individuals struggling with complex issues of life and death. Similarly, the focussed inclusion of music in the *Hush Foundation* grew from an initiative of physician, Professor Catherine Crock AM, in response to her work with children undergoing painful medical procedures at The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, Australia. Working alongside anaesthetists in the development of new pain relief systems for

these young patients, she sought to reduce the stress and anxiety felt by patients, families and staff — through music.

### **Study approach**

This exploration involves a document comparison and analysis of eight careers in music posters published between 1999 and 2021. The identified careers of each poster were transferred to table form to make the visualisation of the presented material and analysis of the suggested careers more practicable. This was especially needed for the two posters that used random layouts. An analysis of the content of the posters poses the questions:

1. How clearly are the listed careers connected with being a musician and with a musicians' performance practice (given that musicians not only perform)?
2. Do the listed careers form a [type] of community of practice (on paper)?
3. What are the career trends in the posters over 20 years?

### **Data sources**

The eight posters in this exploration are *Make Music Work for You* from the ASME Advocacy Kit (1999), *What kind of a musician would you like to be?* (Bennett, 2008), a group of four *Bullseye* posters: Entertainment, Industrial Arts, Music and Performing Arts (Australian Government, 2013), a compilation by Jeanneret (2013) and *Careers in Music* (Yamaha 2021). The content of each is constructed in three different formats: two using broad headings, four categorised according to qualifications and two using random layouts.

The poster published as part of the *ASME Advocacy Kit* (1999) is designed as a wheel and uses a structured layout under five broad career categories: Music Performance (26 entries),

Music Technology (6), Music in Schools, Community & Government (20), Music and the Media (17) and Music Retail (11).

The poster titled *What kind of musician would you like to be?* (Bennett, 2008, p. 150) illustrates 48 activities in which musicians engage. Designed as a graphic, using a random layout it is subtitled, “Musicians practice in a wide variety of specialist fields”.

Four posters from the *Bullseye Career Information* publication (Australian Government, 2013) are structured according to qualifications. There are 33 in the series, based on school subjects, and are revised as the world of work and technology changes. Each are designed as a series of four concentric circles (levels of education) and titled with the same generic stem, “Do you enjoy or are you good at ...?” The four selected for this paper are Music, Industrial Arts, Entertainment and Performing Arts. A collated summary table can be described as follows: all the careers listed in Entertainment are also in Music, four careers in Entertainment are in Performing Arts (except multimedia developer), and all the careers in Industrial Arts are listed in Performing Arts and Music. The careers that are only listed in Performing Arts are piano tuner, teacher, stagehand, busker, classical musician, choral conductor. And careers only recorded under Music are music tutor, music therapist, radio announcer, musicologist, radio producer, speech pathologist, booking agent, band manager. Numbers 1 to 4 represent the four levels of education for each poster.

Table 2. Summary of careers in Bullseye posters: Entertainment, Industrial Arts, Performing Arts and Music

Entertainment	Industrial Arts	Performing Arts	Music
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Musician (1,2,3,4)	Musical instrument maker and repairer (1,2)	Musical instrument maker and repairer (1,2)	Musical instrument maker and repairer (1,2)
Sound technician (1,2,3)	Music arranger (3,4)	Music arranger (2,3,4)	Music tutor (1,2,3,4)
Audiovisual technician (1,2,3)		Musician (1,2,3,4)	Music director (2,3,4)
Stage manager (3,4)		Piano tuner (1)	Music therapist (4)
Multimedia developer (2,3,4)		Singer (1,2,3,4)	Musician (1,2,3,4)
		Music critic (4)	Production crew member (1,2)
		Music teacher (4)	Radio announcer (1,2,3,4)
		Musical director (4)	Musicologist (4)
		Sound technician (1,2,3)	Radio producer (2,3,4)
		Stagehand (1,2)	Sound technician (1,2,3)
		Stage manager (3,4)	Vocalist (1,2,3,4)
		Busker (1)	Music critic (1,2,3,4)
		Composer (1,2,3,4)	Stage manager (3,4)
		Disc jockey (1,2,3,4)	Speech pathologist (4)
		Classical musician (3,4)	Music arranger (1,2,3,4)
		Conductor (4)	Multimedia developer (3,4)
		Audiovisual technician (1,2,3)	Entertainer (1,2,3,4)
		Production crew member (1,2)	Disc jockey (1,2,3,4)
		Choral conductor (4)	Composer (1,2,3,4)

		Entertainer (1,2,3,4)	Booking agent (1,2,3,4)
		Arts administrator (4)	Conductor (4)
			Audiovisual technician (1,2,3)
			Band manager (2,3,4)
			Arts administrator (4)
5	2	21	24

The four education and training levels represent the structure in each poster, are provided as a guide only, and indicate the most common education and/or entry requirements.

Level 1 Usually has a skill level equal to the completion of Year 10, the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education, Certificate I or Certificate II qualification.

Level 2 Usually has a skill level equal to a Certificate III or IV or at least three years relevant experience.

Level 3 Usually requires a level of skill equal to a Diploma or Advanced Diploma.

Level 4 Usually requires the completion of a Bachelor Degree or higher qualification.

(Australian Government, 2013, p. 15)

In 2013, in response to the *Inquiry into the extent, benefits and potential of music education in Victorian Schools*, Jeanneret (2013) included a compilation of employment pathways in music adapted from the University of Queensland music faculty website. Under 12 headings, quite specific careers are listed: Composition (14 entries), Performance (15), Music education (17), Writing and research (8), Instrument making and repairing (6), Libraries, archives and

information services (5), Retailing and Wholesaling (7), Broadcasting (9), Music therapy (in 9 different settings), Production (22), Arts Administration (15) and Music business (20).

The *Careers in Music* (Yamaha, 2021) uses a random arrangement with 92 careers listed.

Text is in three colours and different sizes of the same font are used in the layout.

## **Discussion**

Working chronological through the careers in music posters presented in this exploration, many of the careers are similar and the structure of each does not influence those listed.

*Making Music Work for You*, was published by ASME (1999), a professional teaching association, as part of an advocacy kit. Some of the related occupations are detailed and specific with duplicate entries where the role is different according to the grouped heading.

These are sourcing and sampling under Music Technology and Music and the Media; music director, music promoter and music programmer under Music Performance and Music and the Media; music librarian under Music Performance and Music Retail; and copyright and licensing specialist under Music Performance, Music Technology, Music and the Media, Music Retail. There is a total of 80 careers and the entries under schools are very different from other posters in this exploration.

*What kind of a musician would you like to be?* was published by Bennett (2008), a classical musician, researching the work opportunities in different fields of music's practice. This poster is the only example to include performing arts medicine and a synthesist. Two other fields of music practice that are found in one other poster are researcher and music lawyer.

The *Bullseye Career Information* published by the Australian Government (2013) are targeting school leavers, focus on employment, and inspired by “Do you enjoy or are you good at [a school subject]?” The initial publication was in the early to mid 1990s and they were revised in 2013 and in 2018, when QR codes were added, linking to websites with specific information about careers. It is interesting to note the inclusion of speech pathologist as a stand-alone exception. In addition to the four school subjects chosen for this paper (Table 2), some of the same careers can be found in other subjects. A selection of these is arts administrator in Business Studies, English, History, and Media Studies; multimedia developer in Computing and Media Studies; stage manager in English; music therapist in Community Services; and audiovisual technician in Electro-technology.

The compilation of employment pathways in music adapted from the University of Queensland (UQ) music faculty website (Jeanneret, 2013) comes from an education focus. It details specific occupations (broken down into smaller components) under headings that other poster examples have used as careers in music. A total of 139 (and 147, counting separately the 9 music therapy settings) are included. Writing and research is a significant heading and music lawyer and music accountant, under Music Business are two that are different. The nine music therapy entries are worthy of mention: special education facility, aged care, acquired brain injury unit, community early intervention setting, children's hospital, rehabilitation facility, palliative care, adolescent and adult psychiatric facility and community drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility.

The *Careers in Music* poster published by Yamaha (2021) is strongly industry-based, with an advocacy focus. The obvious change is the influence of digital technology, for example, music web producer, digital aggregator, video production and digital score recordist. Like the



adapted UQ compilation there are subsets of the same type, for example, types of engineer, range of administration tasks and styles of music performers. There is a reference to talent booking, scout and recruiter. These entries match with talent acquisition specialist noted under “Emerging roles clustered in the jobs of tomorrow, People and Culture” in *Future of Jobs Report 2020* (World Economic Forum, 2020, p. 32).

The content of the posters analysed in this paper reveal an array of careers, requiring a wide range of knowledge, skills and understandings linked with a variety of qualifications and specialised training. Returning to the observation presented earlier in this exploration, that careers could be placed on a continuum, consideration needs to be given to the availability of appropriate education and training. Where progression and growth are part of a person’s contribution to a career, continuous learning opportunities are needed for the realisation of an individual’s potential. Short courses, including pathways that combine to create a formal qualification are necessary. Accessibility to completing courses whilst being employed and attending to family responsibilities and with the flexibility to add specific topics or units (help needed now) at the request of the participants are essential. Completion may take place overnight, online. There has always been a time lag between developing and completing qualifications that require several years of study. Predicting what will be needed in the world of work before a person can gain employment and fill a new career role is also a challenge. Occupations that require manual skills and special training need suitable work placement environments. Generic employability competencies fill a major role in career development. Learners and educators both need a full grasp of these skills, the foundation on which to build, to pivot, to adapt, to accept challenges and to grow. Three such lists are the 36 constructs supporting the key concepts of the OECD Learning Framework 2030 (p. 17), the top 15 skills

for 2025 (WEF, 2020, p. 26) and the nine general capabilities in the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2013).

## **Concluding comments**

Careers that are fully immersed in music, for example, performer, composer, arranger, musicologist, music educator, music therapist, music adjudicator/examiner, music administrator are strongly connected with being a musician and a musicians' performance practice. The remainder of the careers that use music, are examples of skills that can be used by workers in other sectors. Throughout their working life, musicians create portfolio careers encompassing performance, teaching, non-creative roles associated with managing a musicians' performance, work that borders musical activity and non-musical occupations. Musicians may work on the music fringe, however this may not be their major work activity. It must be acknowledged that musicians work in totally different fields, for example science, and dabble in composition.

The poster world is crowded with suggestions about what could be careers in music and the space for careers that genuinely involve music is overshadowed by those which play a supporting or very peripheral role. Over more than two decades there has been little change in careers in music in the eight poster examples analysed. Observing the content of careers posters as a spider's web visual representation of a community of practice, where the centre point [the spider] is *music professionalism*, the radius threads are the careers that undeniably involve music. The linking threads capture spirals for careers that use music and by placing a separator between them the numbers would be reduced.

As Westerlund and Gaunt comment,

There is an urgent imperative to enable the potential of professional musicians in our contemporary societies to be more fully realised, recognising both intense challenges that are currently threatening some traditional music practices, and significant scope for new practices to be imagined in response to deep veins of societal need.

Professionalism encompasses the conduct, aims, values, responsibilities, and ongoing development of a practising professional in the field. (2021, n.p.)

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# **Moving On after a Professional Music Career:**

## **A Study of the Barriers, Opportunities, and Transitions**

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### **Abstract**

This paper is based on findings from my doctoral research, which scrutinised the career trajectory of 13 former professional classical singers from Australia, documenting their career development and decline as well as their subsequent professional reinvention. The qualitative interview-based investigation revealed the processes the singers undertook to reach their career goals and discovered the deep identification they have with their embodied craft, and the specific economic circumstances in which they continue to seek a livelihood.

To understand the singers' experiences, the research interrogated theoretical and empirical studies regarding careers, sociology and economics of the arts, and empirical studies from elite dance, sports, film and acting cohorts. These studies formed the building blocks on which the singers' comments were analysed. In turn, the analysis was related to discourses from musical training and entrepreneurship in the creative arts. What emerged was a distinct typology mapping out the singers' careers and acknowledging each stage of their experiences. The five typology stages are as follows: 1) Pre-Career; 2) Breaking In; 3) Peak; 4) Denouement; 5) Moving On.

The last stage, Moving On, involves the singers' transition following the end of their professional singing career into a time when their new careers remained firmly related to

creative endeavours. Pedagogical practices are important to their new roles, but entrepreneurial approaches are more so, as they seek to run small businesses. This paper will focus on the former professional singers' entrepreneurial practices and will compare their experiences to studies that investigate the growing popularity among senior Australians in establishing business start-ups and their motivations for this. The paper concludes with a section offering helpful business tools and skills that such businessowners might utilise, based on my own experience.

The insights gleaned from the former professional singers suggest there is a critical link between the pre- and post-career stage of their lives. Their experiences imply the need for the identification of practical and broadly representative models of leadership and career planning beyond the archetypal figure of heroic performers. The originality of this research lies in the examination of former professional singers with modest careers, a cohort whose career development and trajectory past their professional lives on stage largely remains uncharted.

### **Keywords**

Singers-turned-businessowners, entrepreneurial skills, business skills for artists, moving on stage, career trajectory of professional musicians

### **Introduction**

My doctoral research explored how a career path in the arts might be experienced by professional classical singers from Australia. Despite the reservoir of entrants to the labour market of performing arts, scant literature exists that discusses careers in this field, highlighting the need to understand the real experiences of singers. I interviewed 13 former professional classical singers from Australia who had modest but successful careers. The

findings led to the identification of a typology comprising five career stages. It builds on the model proposed by Jones (1996) and encapsulates the career trajectory of these singers, encompassing their training, labour and work experiences, and especially their attempts to maintain a career in Australia. The five stages are: 1) Pre-Career; 2) Breaking In; 3) Peak; 4) Denouement; 5) Moving On (Connell, 2018).

The focus of this paper is the Moving On stage, in which the former professional singers find new career paths, markets and communities, and explore unknown processes toward restoring their incomes and involvement in work. The majority of the singers interviewed for this study were aged between their late thirties and mid-forties, which researchers (Throsby & Zednick, 2010; Towse, 1993; Maxwell, Seton & Szabo, 2018) have identified as the typical age when performing artists begin to experience a decline in work contracts or start to seek out a more autonomous working life. Of the 13 participants, six sought to upgrade their teaching skills and enter educational settings; and six ventured down the path of starting a small business. Of these latter six, three began start-up niche performance companies; one set up an agency representing artists; and two established sole trader teaching practices in their city or regional areas. I asked them to discuss their experiences as they took on a self-employed role. The attention of this paper is on the skill sets these six participants needed to incorporate into their new roles.

The confluence of increased life expectancy, improved health outcomes and work centred on creativity has the potential to see mature workers starting their first business. Indeed, in many Western countries, the fastest growth in business start-ups is occurring among people aged between 50 and 64 (Kautonen, Down & South, 2007, pp. 85–86; Maritz, Perenyi & Zolin, 2017, pp. 81–82). Learning new skills after a lifetime of involvement in creative practices is



found to improve wellbeing, to maintain and update hard-won specialised skills, to increase social cohesion and inclusion, and to capture the human capital of highly trained artists such as professional singers (Peiprel, Arthur & Anand, 2002; Hajkowicz & Dawson, 2019).

To understand aspects of professional singers' training and labour, the market conditions they face, and their career behaviour, my research interrogated literature in education, economics and sociology (McPherson & Welch, 2012; Towse, 1993; Hesmondhalgh, 2007; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). Career theory was applied to analyse the singers' comments regarding their experiences and work processes. My findings concur with studies regarding elite dance and sports practitioners—that they will most likely reach a peak career stage, but will subsequently need to transition from their specialised environments to new opportunities. (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2002; Baillie, 1993; Wylleman, Alfermann & Lavelle, 2004; Throsby & Hollister, 2005; Jeffri & Throsby, 2006; Ryan, 2002). Comprehending the fragility and insecurity of artists who transition voluntarily and involuntarily from their field, investigations by Mor (1996), Schafer (2006), Bennett (2008), and Maxwell et al. (2018) highlight multiple issues, including a lack of support and counselling, as well as financial insecurity.

In 2020, two systematic literature reviews regarding entrepreneurialism in creative practices (Dobrev & Ivanov, 2020; Stroem & Foss, 2020) surveyed over 200 studies published between 2000 and 2020, confirming the increased interest in this area. The authors argue the need for cross-disciplinary training and a definition of business skills required to survive the precarious and self-employed approach to working as a creative practitioner in the 21st century. Artists have used a portfolio of income streams for centuries (Bennett, 2008), yet only recently have the competencies for this work life begun to be defined (Bridgstock, 2005,

2011, 2012; Bennett, 2012; Hennekam, 2014; Coulson, 2012; Mietzner & Kamprath, 2014).

Proficiency in business skills requires training, practical application and organisational capacity, and researchers Kautonen et al. (2007) and Maritz et al. (2017) argue that without these, barriers will inhibit mature workers, creating an underutilisation of workers and weak survival rates of businesses. This paper ends by outlining some of the services offered by the NSW Government Department of Small Business (n.d.), which I have taken advantage of in my own business. The following participant from my doctoral study illuminates the necessity of training and the motivation it created.

My business was a partnership...which dissolved in a mess of legalities. ...I continued working as a sole trader... I undertook a business course for artists, which gave me more clarity and boosted my business skills... I was very excited the first year I wrote my business plan...and the sense of direction it gave me was significant. I rewrite it every year, basing it on my financial reports: seeing which aspects of the business gave the best return on investment and changing my focus accordingly. (F 7)<sup>3</sup>

### **Enterprising Singers: Pushed or Pulled?**

The majority of participants in my study were *pushed* to self-employment, while a minority were *pulled*. Being pushed into sole trading, researchers argue, can be a barrier to success, as it is often an unwelcome or necessary choice, while an individual pulled to self-employment is attracted to new skills, autonomy and the challenge of growing a business and it is likely to be a sustainable choice (Kautonen et al., 2007; Hennekam, 2014; Maritz et al., 2017).

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<sup>3</sup> Participants are identified by gender (F = female, M = males) and number only.

During the semi-structured interviews, the singers discussed the diverse skills they either repurposed, such as networking, and those they needed to rapidly acquire, especially those related to technology (Connell, Brown & Baker, 2020). As the following singer describes:

Someone I knew suggested starting a semi-professional opera group...Reality began to strike...I could sell, sell, sell my singing career or I could stop reacting to what had happened and take a bold new step...I went on to start a small opera company ...Creating a company was a new world and I had to become highly computer literate, learn how to run a website, databases, government arts policy, funding bodies and about budgetary constraints. (F 3)

This artist's recounting of synergising her artist identity with that of a businessowner is a tension researchers observe in both creative and other vocations (Kautonen et al., 2007; Mietzner & Kamprath, 2013; Hennekam, 2014; Maritz et al., 2017; Nobis, 2015; Stroem & Foss, 2020). To dispel the incongruity of an artistic identity paired with the logic of markets, Stroem and Foss (2020) argue, requires roadmaps with relevant skills and models. Entrepreneurial training embedded in arts courses has encountered resistance (Beckman, 2010; Stroem & Foss, 2020) and led to inappropriate models (Dobrevá & Ivanov, 2020). Some argue that artists become entrepreneurial somewhat accidentally (Coulson, 2012; Hennekam, 2014). Skills that go beyond, between and above core discipline are becoming necessary, and Tolmie (2013) argues that the language of business be used in training when musicians are considering a portfolio of income streams (p. 254). One participant undertook training in visual arts, where they found business education an accepted component:

I decided to do a course in visual arts practice. In the course you have to take studies in how to set up and run a studio practice and how you will begin to earn a living as an

artist. We learnt how you apply for funding, your rights as an artist, and working with agencies and how you see your product as a business... Later, we moved to a regional centre ...and I identified with being a [singing] teacher...those skills supported my move into running a practice (F13).

Mietzner and Kamprath (2013) argue that training in basic business administration, legal knowledge, multimedia and communication skills can be a source of empowerment, motivation and adaptability for artists. Promoting a business requires competency in a range of computer skills and social media savviness, an enthusiasm for technology and an ability to manage projects. Grappling with these skills, as the following singer found, can leave sole traders disconcerted: “We began to form the repertoire and I did the promotion side. ...The promotion of the recitals was rather haphazard... I still find this side of business and administration challenging” (F 6).

Soft skills found in business degrees such as selling and communication, Jones, Matlay and Maritz (2012) argue, could be shared in arts and science training. A broad range of simulated business start-ups, such as those as taught by Lynn and Taylor (1993) and Tolmie (2013), can train those anticipating self-employment in designing business plans, market research and budgeting.

Significant monetary loss was the most prevalent challenge the singers described. Risk of financial loss, reliance on benefits or a grants regime are found to be a barrier to self-employment. Maxwell, Seton, and Szabo’s (2018) investigation revealed few actors had little understanding of the pecuniary problems associated with low earnings, multiple work engagements and planning for longer term needs and in agreement with other researchers,

(Kautonen et al., 2007; Maritz et al., 2017; Chell, 2007) they recommend training in financial and reinvestment skills. Focussing on older actors, Nobis (2015) found actors' career identity and financial security are tied to an imbalanced, infantile notion of fluid concepts (p. 205). Superannuation, the actors reported, was unreliable or often used during lean contract periods, leaving them with few savings or investments. The participants in my study experienced financial loss and success, yet measured this against a mindset of gaining new skills and bringing artistic enterprises to markets, as evidenced in the following observations:

I teamed up with another collaborator and we started a production company. I learnt how to pitch an idea, administer a company and communicate with a whole range of different people. We produced many shows and this company became my new life. I learnt so many new skills, but we lost a lot of money (F 11).

My skills in business and administration were the underpinning of the business. I began to add script writing, directing shows and broader creative artistry. I wanted to run a serious business and find a place where singing and art are in my life which my organising skills support. My 'sixties show' was a huge success (F 7).

Notwithstanding that the majority of the participants' journeys that led to self-employment may be regarded as unfavourable, the senior creators found *gold* in their artistic know-how and balanced these with an entrepreneurial spirit (Coulson, 2012). Assessing whether your venture has a potential market is one of the most difficult tasks a businessowner can undertake (Lynn & Taylor, 1993). Adopting a small, local vision, the following singer found a market existed for a style of event previously unfamiliar to her work life.

By singing for people who would never buy a ticket to theatre, I felt I had exposed them to an art form they had never experienced. So, my focus began to shift to creating a business that would bring music to a new audience... (F 7).

Finding feasibility in a service needs opportunity, as the above singer found, and the following participant's experience demonstrates a motivation to plan and avoid past exploitative work conditions, leading to a long-term teaching practice.

I made the effort to build a sustainable private studio practice... I had experienced those schools that take part of your fee for rent or pay you on a casual rate. I knew I could run a business on my own and set out to do that. Ten years later, I have a very busy and thriving private studio in a large city, with a range of singers (M 5).

Developing a narrative which connects known skills and new capabilities builds a sense of agency, allowing the individual to move through periods of ambiguity and validates their choices. Researchers Brookes and Daniluck (1998), Meijers (1998) and Ibarra and Barbalescue (2010) advance that this approach can lead to a more seamless moving on, as this singer-turned-businessman in the performing arts shows:

I took the decision to change my career track. With singlemindedness, support from my family and a lot of slog, I have achieved a good business... I'm very clear about my role, what I do, how I do it and for whom... It's taken 14 years of hard work... As my own boss, I get out of bed every morning and have the satisfaction of knowing I will create things for people... Now I speak with authority and confidence (M 12).

The former professional singers have rehabilitated their careers, innovated small arts businesses, learnt new technology, business skills and succeeded in their goals. The singers-

turned-businessowners in this study demonstrate a willingness to overcome challenges and find incentive toward supporting their micro arts businesses. The following section offers some practical business tools and skills that such practitioners might wish to adopt, and is informed by my own experience as a small businessowner offering music tuition in NSW.

## **Practical Business Tools and Skills**

Without appropriate information, a new business can be impeded. The NSW Business Connect Program offers individual consultations with independent, qualified and experienced consultants. A business is assessed, a planned program is designed, and other tools and resources are made available. Via this program, my micro practice in arts education was eligible for support and the following are examples of practical tools.

*A business proposition* clearly explains your service or product, what it offers, how it will benefit your clients and how it will deliver its promise. Accompanying this statement is a *target market* description. Creative arts businesses are most often service-orientated and defining the clients one plans to attract is essential. Primary, secondary and tertiary markets are described and categories of age, location, gender and other background builds information necessary for understanding the market.

*A competitor analysis* scrutinises competing businesses. Descriptors explored include location, primary target market, the unique value the business offers their customers, price, convenience and quality of service. Defining the competitors' main weaknesses and strengths and time in business will help the sole trader to understand the marketplace for their business.

*A budget and actual spreadsheet* is a monthly activity that provides a complete picture of the amount of trading in the business. Sole traders and those with a portfolio of income streams can use this to classify and locate their sources of income. *Variable and fixed expenditure* registers costs incurred by the business. Examples of variable expenses are bookkeeping fees, GST payments or purchases, while fixed expenses could be rent, utilities or payments to contractors. The main benefit of this data is providing a holistic picture for sole traders, as without this history trends are not visible.

*An aggregation of enquiries and sales* archives data, including type of product or services purchased, incoming enquiries and the status of the communication with the enquiry. This accumulation of a history of high and low activity periods is useful for promotional campaigns.

*Marketing campaigns* need a 12-month plan and my business uses a *content calendar* that defines topics, target market, writers, links, headings, a call to action and a schedule of delivery dates. Communications via digital platforms need scheduled processes and administration. Building relational marketing tools (Sonkova & Grabowska, 2015) are fundamental for Arts businesses and with appropriate implementation can lead to long term associations.

*Archiving data*, an inventory of resources and detailed information pertinent to the business activities, can be aided by project management systems and multimedia technology. My business invests in a program which automates the sharing of resources, invoices, client details, lesson progress, performance activities and schedules.



Depending on capacity, support or unplanned events, a businessowner may wish to explore *options* for growth. With a secure picture of the business, expansion, employment or mentoring may be considered.

## **Conclusions**

The experiences of the singers at the stage of Moving On reveals a select group of senior creative practitioners venturing into self-employment. The five-stage typology offered by my research proposes a distinctive career arc of ascent and decline for professional singers and the Denouement stage predicts the need for engineering the Moving On stage (Connell, 2018, Connell et al, 2020). The singers exemplify an internal motivation towards learning new skills as they face barriers, especially a grasp of financial expertise and understanding their potential new markets.

The singers' experiences concur with studies across a variety of cohorts, showing that the incongruity between an artist's identity, enmeshed in specialised artistic skills and communities, with that of a businessowner requiring a more generalist skill set, is an initial barrier, but one that can be resolved with relevant training and models (Dobрева & Ivanov, 2020). The former singers' narratives give a voice to the barriers they faced of unfamiliar skills, the need for training in new technology and managerial logic, and the careful use of their assets in networking and communication skills.

The need for public policy that supports and trains mature workers to bring to market services and products that have cultural and creative value is found by researchers to need cross-disciplinary approaches and government support if wastage of human capital is to be avoided (Kautonen et al., 2007; Stroem & Foss, 2020; Dobрева & Ivanov, 2020). This article has

provided an overview of business skills and tools I have utilised in my own small business, derived from help offered by the NSW Government aimed to improve and sustain business start-ups. Most creative entrepreneurs are small or micro businesses and there is a need for practical, concrete examples to assist in the understanding of the realities of enterprises. Collaborations between micro businessowners, universities and training facilities could advance peer recognition and open dialogue between generations, contributing to the “kind of industry artists want to be part of” (Nobis, 2015, p. 209). Listening to and seeing the visible voices of older creative practitioners offers an opportunity to stimulate urban and rural cultural enterprise and to mentor a generation of artists.

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# **An interactional process of regional community engagement for future music professional practice**

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## **Abstract**

Musicians' educational needs are changing, with a growing relevance for training in regional community engagement. Vocation preparation courses at higher music education institutions could meet this need by equipping students to deliver music initiatives that make a positive contribution to regional community development. While such projects have been shown to encourage local action and facilitate the growth of new or existing networks, awareness must also be raised about the possibility for unhelpful outcomes to emerge from misunderstandings of the local context. This study proposed that an interactional process of community engagement might positively impact the development of an appropriate music performance initiative for one regional community: the Atherton Tablelands in Far North Queensland. It implemented an exploratory sequential mixed methods design to explore the perspectives of arts-active community members through qualitative semi-structured interviews, as well as the perspectives of community members not necessarily involved in the arts via a supplementary quantitative survey. Findings on arts partnerships and arts interests affirmed a participatory approach to project design and implementation that may be useful for course designers seeking to prepare student musicians for future regional collaborations.

## **Keywords**

Regional community engagement; arts-based development; music; interactional theory; vocation preparation.

## **Introduction**

Further compelled by public funding cultural sustainability stipulations, current Australian art music small-to-medium, and larger performing organisations such as the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and Opera Queensland include regional and rural community-focused performance and education programmes in their suite of arts activities (see Freeman, 2020; Siddle, 2020). Such arts opportunities have national momentum extending to the independent musician, as evidenced by recent government arts policy targeting regional touring to stimulate post-pandemic disruption (Fletcher, 2021). It is therefore realistic to suggest such a trend has implications for the professional requirements of musicians to include beyond technical capability and business skills: strong networks, creative initiative, pedagogy, engaging presentation and a willingness to adapt to community needs and involvement.

Higher music education curriculum design is already reflecting professional practice, moving away from contextualising performance-only careers towards producing Artistic Citizens whose livelihoods enact: connection to community, social responsibility plus diverse arts practices (Duffy, 2013; Gaunt et al., 2021). Consequently, tertiary music education curriculum aspires to transform actively from the traditional conservatoire model towards a more fluid structure reflecting the educational needs of the sustainable musician working in multiple employment identities and locales (Tregear, Johansen, Jørgensen, Sloboda, Tulse, & Wistreich, 2016; Tolmie, 2017). Of the latter, Throsby and Petetskaya's (2017) economical

study of arts workers recognised a growing geographical trend whereby musicians increasingly sustain their arts practice in regional, rural and remote locations: 18% (2001), 19% (2009) and 26% (2016). They determined one in five Australian musicians live in regional cities and towns and the mean age is greater than those living in capital cities. This indicates a high likelihood for increased future professional opportunities outside of metropolitan locales.

Given these changes in industry, it can be easily anticipated that vocation preparation courses will continue to be deemed as necessary, particularly to support the argument for employable graduates. Furthermore, they will experience a tailwind as degrees further integrate the ethos of developing skills of initiative and offsite real-world experience in a variety of non-traditional contexts. This means such learning activities will be diverse, geographically broad and will strive to mimic current arts industry innovations. Therefore, regional and rural communities are likely to become more attractive as places and spaces for authentic professional learning.

Where vocation preparation courses within higher music education strive to equip future musicians with the skills to engage in multiple communities, it is pertinent to question what processes of community engagement should be taught to enable students' capabilities to develop, implement, and sustain music projects in regional settings. To begin answering this question, we will draw on the analysis of a study exploring how musicians might apply an interactional approach to the development of music performance projects within a specific region: The Atherton Tablelands.

## Literature review

For some regional Australian communities, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to offer opportunities for transformation and development. The Australian Bureau of Statistics evidence this, reporting the net in-migration of Australian residents from capital cities to regional areas in 2020 as the largest in decades (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Furthermore, scholars have suggested these figures also represent the choice of some regional residents to “stay put in their country towns” (cf. May, 2021; Terzon, 2021). They speculate whether such a population shift will develop further, or whether the prior outmigration will resume. Should this trend continue, regional communities could face further negotiation between the opportunities and risks of growth and development (see Guaralda et al., 2020).

Arts activities can offer such opportunities for regional development through their encouragement of both social and civic engagement (Anwar McHenry, 2011; Balfour, Fortunato, & Alter, 2018; Mahon & Hyyrylainen, 2019). Participation in festivals, workshops, community programs, and other activities or events may help establish or reinforce networks that could be utilised as a resource for other local projects (Anwar McHenry, 2011). Within this broad scope, arts activities directly related to music have been explored for their impact on regional Australian communities. Gibson and Connell (2012) relate how some music festivals have stimulated local action, created and renewed social networks, and occasionally transcended divisions within communities. Gibson and Gordon (2018) further paint a picture of cultural vibrancy as nurtured by community music programs in one regional area of New South Wales. Community choirs, orchestras, bands and arts societies encourage a participatory or “all hands on deck” approach to creating musical experiences (Gibson & Gordon, 2018, p. 269). Thus, the arts — and music in particular — could play a positive role in the transformation of regional Australia.

While the potential benefits of arts-based development seem clear, attention must also be paid to the possible unhelpful consequences of misapprehending the intended community.

Guaralda et al. (2020) suggest “superimposing planning and development policies meant for metropolitan cities could simply result in transferring the ills of capital cities to regions and exacerbate unsustainable development and heightened socioeconomic inequalities” (p. 1). In contrast, those seeking to develop appropriate pathways for development through arts activities could strengthen their awareness of each place’s unique qualities (Mahon & Hyrylainen, 2019). They could also explore how the local community’s supportive context might affect the development of an arts initiative (cf. Balfour et al., 2018; Fleming, 2009; Regional Arts Australia, 2019). Failure to do so in an appropriate manner could potentially lead to conflict with local interests and priorities, the ostracisation of the local community, and strain on local resources (see Gibson & Connell, 2012).

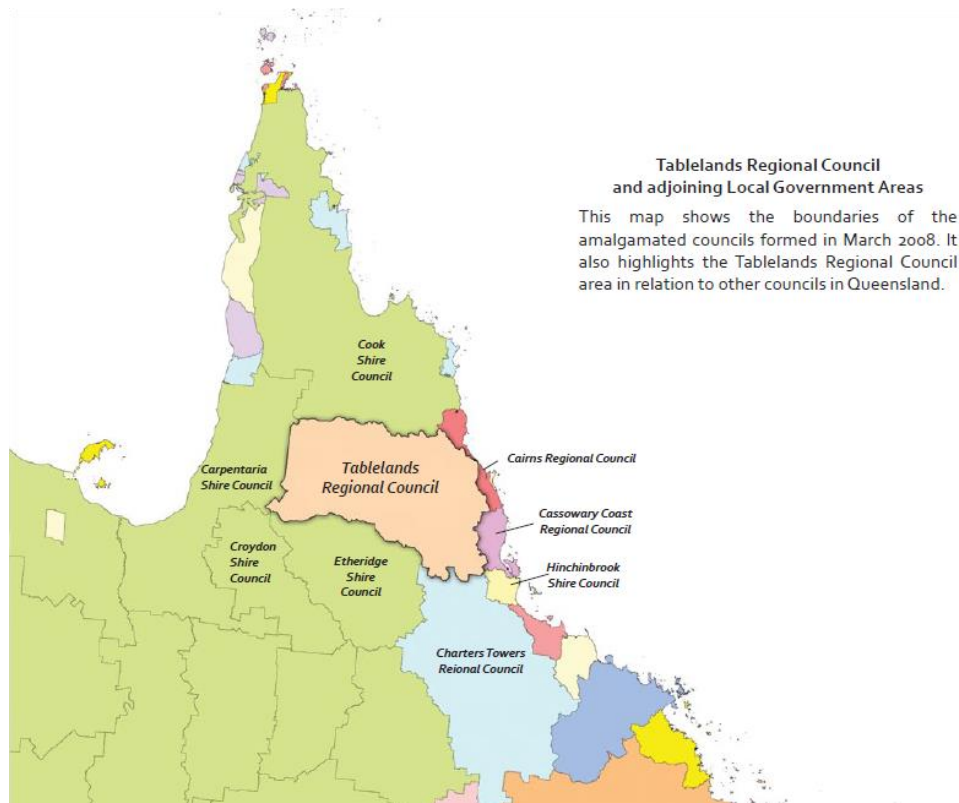
One framework suggested for the effective development of an arts initiative within a regional community is the *interactional theory of community* promoted by Wilkinson (1970, 1991), among others. According to Wilkinson (1991), community development occurs through development of the *community field*, which is conceptualised as a process in which individuals and associations act together towards shared locality-oriented interests.

Community field development involves intentional efforts to link actors from different *social fields*, understood as processes of actions with more specialised interests (1991). Balfour et al. (2018) propose an arts initiative “would be intended to link and coordinate multiple social fields with overlapping common interests, building collaborative capacity and structure that can be applied to a variety of projects and networks over time” (p. 234).

Professional and student musicians could adopt this framework for the specific purpose of developing a rural arts initiative with a music performance focus. They could consider existing arts actors, associations, and activities proposed to relate to a local arts social field (or collection of arts social fields). They could then explore whether and how existing partnerships occur between these actors and associations. In addition, they could seek to identify whether and how shared interests are expressed through arts activities and bear potential for facilitating further community field development. This study undertakes such an exploration in relation to the Atherton Tablelands community in Far North Queensland.

## **Methodology**

For the purposes of this study, the Atherton Tablelands region was defined according to the contemporary local government areas for the Tablelands Regional Council and the Mareeba Shire Council. This choice of boundary defers to the Tablelands Regional Council local government area of 2008, mentioned in the most recent *Community Plan* (Tablelands Regional Council, 2016b).



**Figure 1:**

*Local government areas map (Tablelands Regional Council, 2016a)*

The study utilised an exploratory sequential mixed methods design (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2017), with integration occurring at the level of methods (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). It sought to uncover a more comprehensive answer to the research question: How might musicians apply some Atherton Tablelands community members' perspectives on arts interests, arts partnerships, and limiting factors to the development of a music performance initiative for the region?

The researcher (co-author) conducted semi-structured interviews with 25 adult participants during the months of June and July in 2020. Participants were members of the Atherton Tablelands community active in both the arts and in the community. These individuals were recruited via snowball sampling (15 participants), contact through the researcher's own

networks (4), direct contact (3), or a notice placed in the local regional council's arts newsletter, *Arts on TRaCk* (3). Thematic analysis of interview transcripts informed the development of a quantitative survey, which collected responses from 31 July – 29 September 2020. Thirty-three adult members of the Tablelands community not necessarily involved in the arts provided responses, with 28 respondents answering in full. The researcher's friends, colleagues and family helped to distribute the survey link, as well as some interview participants who did not respond themselves. Social media groups also published the link. Major qualitative themes relating to arts interests and limiting factors were then integrated with quantitative findings. However, findings described in this report include arts interests and arts partnerships only.

Limitations of the study included the time- and location-sensitive quality of the findings, the survey instrument's inaccessibility (reflected in a lower-than-expected response rate), and an overlap between the revision process for qualitative themes and the design process for the survey which may have caused some quantitative questions to lack specificity. Demographic limitations included homogeneity of the interview participant pool, with 64% of participants being over the age of 65, 52% being retired, and 64% being female. Seventy percent of survey respondents were also female. In addition, participants and respondents were not asked to provide information about their ethnic background. They may not have represented the cultural diversity of the region's broader demographic. Finally, themes may not represent the perspectives of all Tablelands community members as 40% of participants and 54% of respondents resided in Atherton at the time of the study.



## **Findings**

### **Arts partnerships**

Participants explored the partnership between the musician developing the initiative and the intended community. By engaging with the community before development, the musician could: better understand community needs or interests; choose an appropriate venue; and “link through a variety of groups” (P6) including schools and council in order to encourage attendance or recruit volunteers. Such a process of engagement may help the musician embed the initiative in the local community (Mahon & Hyrylainen, 2019).

Interview participants also described collaborative efforts that culminated in specific events as one expression of local partnerships between arts actors and associations. The annual Tablelands Folk Festival was mentioned for bringing together many local arts groups including choirs, bands, and theatre companies, as well as schools and businesses. The Far North Queensland Annual Theatrical Association’s One Act Play Festival demonstrated a long history of collaborative commitment among theatres in the region, with the first festival taking place in 1957. The Victory Pacific concert hosted in 1995 as a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the end of the War in the Pacific (World War II) emerged from the combined efforts of theatres, schools, council, and a local big band. Such partnerships signify a history of community field activity in the region. Musicians can apply this understanding by engaging with those arts actors previously or currently involved in the above events who might provide useful insights into how the different associations might be encouraged to work together towards a new initiative.

Furthermore, interviewees understood a crossover in membership between different groups to be a partnership. The Atherton Performing Arts theatre group was said to share members with

the Malanda Theatre Company, as well as choir Bella Cappella and The Arts Council Tablelands Incorporated (TACTIC). The Hotshots, Tablelands Brass, and Barron River Brass bands were connected through membership ties, as well as the Hotshots and the United Tableland Pipe Band. This understanding that arts partnerships might also be expressed through shared members agrees with participants' observation that connections between arts groups on the Tablelands are not necessarily of a formal, coordinated, or visible character. One former member of the Tablelands Regional Council's Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) committee found it difficult to describe specific partnerships and acknowledged that "apart from personal connections with people that are maybe in more than one group, [arts groups] are not terribly coordinated or necessarily willing to get involved in cross-cultural things" (P23).

Understanding such informal partnerships to be part of the existing context of arts partnerships can prompt musicians to consider that a music performance initiative could be limited in its attempts to encourage cross-group collaboration. A potential response to this element of the local context includes engaging with shared members for further insights into how future collaborative efforts between groups towards a new initiative could unfold.

### **Arts interests**

When asked about their involvement in the arts, participants cited past or current involvement in local theatre, art, music, and dance activities or events, and with arts bodies such as the Tablelands Regional Council's RADF committee and TACTIC. A major interest behind these activities seemed to be the enjoyment or satisfaction participants themselves received.

According to one choir director (P4), arts participation leads to the development of new skills and a resulting "sense of achievement", as well as "a sense of well-being, group activity,

[and] social connection” fostered by interaction within an arts group. Participants also stressed the difference between personal reward from involvement and that of attendance, in “*doing* an activity rather than just *watching*” (P6) (cf. Ife & Tesoriero, 2006).

Some participants also appeared to observe a connection between the action of attendance and an underlying interest in the arts. A local musician (P2) linked community interest in Malanda Theatre’s musicals to “full houses” on production nights. Others cited audience numbers as indicative of community desire and appreciation for concerts. Musicians can consequently incorporate this connection in the design of a performance initiative by aligning with interests shared by many members of the community.

The survey helped to confirm whether other community members might share an interest in the arts as expressed through attendance and participation. 85% of respondents indicated some level of interest, with 36% stating they were very interested in arts activities and 49% stating they were somewhat interested. Only 9% of respondents were uninterested. In addition, a majority of survey respondents had previously attended or participated in an arts activity. 73% of survey respondents had been involved. The data also revealed an overlap between interest and involvement, as 83% of respondents who were very interested in arts attendance or participation and 81% of respondents who were somewhat interested had also attended/participated in an arts activity. 66% of respondents uninterested in either attendance or participation had not been involved. Musicians can explore whether this connection applies in other settings by distributing a post-event survey to clarify motivations behind community members’ attendance.

A second underlying interest behind some interview participants' arts activities appeared to be in providing opportunities for children or younger people: they coordinated or provided mentorship in bands or theatre programs, taught through schools or private studios, and provided opportunities for emerging musicians to perform. A sense of personal responsibility for providing opportunities appeared evident in many interviews, along with a sense of pride in young people's achievements. As one musician explained:

When I was young, I couldn't access that education and I knew that I wanted to. There was just no way for me to reach out to access that kind of thing because of the distance, we just couldn't travel that far... For me, the passion there is to provide that opportunity for kids. It's very important to me to really nurture my students and go a bit above and beyond a normal teaching studio to give them opportunity. (P22)

Survey findings seemed to confirm that interest in providing or supporting opportunities for younger people might be shared by members of the broader community.

67% of respondents indicated they were very interested in providing opportunities for children. Combined with the 30% of respondents who were somewhat interested, nearly 97% of respondents shared some level of interest. In addition, 67% of respondents had actively been involved in providing opportunities. A strong overlap could then be demonstrated between those with strong interest and those who had been involved. 81% of respondents who were very interested in providing or supporting opportunities for children had also been involved. This might indicate a connection between interest and involvement for most respondents who indicated a strong level of interest. However, the inclusion of this interest in the design development of a music performance initiative may not necessarily encourage attendance or participation from those community members only somewhat interested. Only 40% of respondents who were somewhat interested had also been involved. Nevertheless, the

majority of respondents who did express an active interest in providing or supporting opportunities for children might more readily consider attending or participating in such a music performance initiative.

## Conclusion

This study offers a preliminary investigation into the suitability of an interactional process of community engagement for the development of a music performance initiative. Findings on arts partnerships and arts interests prompted the emergence of several strategies that professional and student musicians could use to align an initiative with the existing context of the Atherton Tablelands community (listed below):

**Table 1:**

*Strategies for the development of a Tablelands music performance initiative*

Section	Strategies
<b>Arts partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with local arts actors and associations before development, including those previously involved in collaborative events</li> <li>• Consult shared arts group members to explore possibilities for collaboration between groups</li> </ul>
<b>Arts interests</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate interest in arts for enjoyment and arts for younger people</li> <li>• Administer post-event survey to confirm interests behind audience members' attendance</li> </ul>

By involving the intended community in these ways, musicians could amplify their project's contribution to regional development. In addition, these strategies could be adopted by course designers seeking to equip students to design, implement and sustain projects in regional communities. Such a process may serve as a helpful starting point for students exploring how they might effectively collaborate with other regional communities in future. Further research would be advised to determine the extent to which findings might apply across locations.

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# **“Just watching them spark up!” Orchestral performers’ perceptions of community engagement tours**

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## **Abstract**

This paper explores the articulated perceptions of professional musicians as they navigate the practical challenges of delivering community engagement sessions as part of their work in a post-pandemic context. Through analysing their stories, this work seeks to illuminate the challenges and opportunities available to those who seek to prepare professional musicians for careers into the future, and also provides suggestions as to ways that the field can support existing professional musicians who might want to extend their skills into areas around education and community engagement. The findings from this study reveal that the musicians were unfailingly passionate supporters of music tours and educational programs, seeing them as an important part of their advocacy work, and each expressed their desire to build stronger relationships with particular communities or schools. They desire more robust protocols and support strategies to enhance both program offerings and learning outcomes for students. Musicians also discussed the lack of professional learning or rehearsal time for these experiences. They noted they were often unaware of the experiences, interests and needs of the audience they were performing to, which they felt made it difficult to prepare an appropriately targeted performing program. This paper proposes using a music education frame to address challenges faced by music professionals who find themselves mid-career, needing to reinvent themselves in their career.

## Introduction

In order to foster a growing and sustained audience base, orchestras are increasingly aiming to generate “feelings of inclusion and participation” (Dobson, 2010, p. 111). A common strategy to build connections between orchestras and the community (at large) is to run an engagement program alongside traditional seated concerts. This typically involves children’s concerts, instrument demonstrations in schools, presentations in community settings, and occasionally playing alongside school and community groups in side-by-side events. The success of such work depends largely on the musical skills, time and emotional investment of individual orchestral players. Orchestral community engagement is dependent on the skills of orchestral performers – professionals who have largely been employed based on their skills on a particular instrument. These professional musicians have very rarely been educated in areas of pedagogy, curriculum creation and instruction. Much research supports the assertion that the most successful community engagement experiences employ strategies from education. Successful community engagement/education requires advanced professional skills in the field of education. Therefore, in contemporary orchestral work, we find a possible disjunct between the skills required by the performers and those skills upon which they were employed. Research into musician’s careers (Bartleet et al. 2020; Canham, 2021) identifies the importance of preparing professional musicians for the complexities of their employment. Ethically educating professional musicians in 2021 and beyond requires developing in them a wide raft of skills, including entrepreneurial and education skills, and listening to the stories of professional musicians “illuminate[s] the ways they understand and maintain a balance between their artistic interests, their art form and industry standards, and the context in which they work” (Canham, 2021, p. 50). In this paper, we argue (through analysing the words of the performers themselves) that this is, indeed, something that orchestras and arts

organisations more broadly need to consider into the future.

This paper details the findings from an orchestral engagement project undertaken between 2020 and 2021 that explored orchestral musicians' expectations, experiences, and the social, emotional, cultural and educational impacts of the experience. Post-hoc interviews were delivered, and we analysed the data using qualitative thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Our research explores the perceptions of the orchestral musicians who performed on these tours and delivered the engagement experiences.

The research questions addressed in this paper are:

1. How do orchestral players view their involvement with community engagement experiences?
2. In what ways do orchestral players' perceived occupational identities intersect with their role as deliverer of community engagement activities?

Findings are discussed in relation to how this research should inform the education of professional musicians and the provision of ongoing professional development for practising musicians.

## **Method**

Eleven musicians were interviewed over nine months from 2020- 2021. Each interview explored participants' reasons for being involved with the engagement experiences, their expectations regarding the experiences and benefits that they were likely to attain, and the ways in which engaging online and/or attending a performance can or did impact on quality of life, educational benefits and benefits to their community. Interviews were recorded with the participants' permission and transcribed. We employed a thematic analysis approach for the interview data. Interview data were loaded into NVivo, and pseudonyms were created.

Data were separately analysed and coded by the two researchers. Findings were compared across codes and then analysed using Braun and Clarke's Thematic Analysis approach (2006). Through an iterative process, we identified six main themes and, from there, identified and labelled several subcodes within the themes.

## **Findings**

The musician's responses were rich and detailed. Without exception, the musicians spoke in glowing terms of their involvement in the touring groups. They felt, almost as one, that their role as musicians was to advocate for quality classical music and to provide access to audiences and students who may not otherwise enjoy such events. Some also felt that they lacked the education or professional learning to prepare targeted, age-appropriate concert programs and that the rehearsal time allocated was often inadequate. Musicians longed for quality music arrangements that would appeal to the students and more enduring relationships with the schools, teachers and regional centres.

While the emotional and engagement impacts of the orchestra touring program were more commonly discussed, some musicians talked extensively of the educational benefits of the experience and the need to engage with students in person. Musicians discussed the impact that venues and styles of engagement (workshop/concert/side-by-side) they perceived had on the value of the experience. Workshops were contrasted with concerts; working with secondary-aged students was contrasted with working with primary-aged students.

The importance of the experience as enjoyable, or fun, was emphasised. The perception was that the greater the active engagement with the audience/children, the more beneficial the activity (and the more 'learning' occurred). There was a definite perception that the impact of

the engagement lasted longer than the time spent in front of the children in schools. Indeed, an extended engagement in partnership with local teachers was seen as the gold standard for the education concerts. Musicians highlighted the importance of an ongoing relationship with schools and students to facilitate the best outcomes from the program. Musicians reported being profoundly impacted by the experience. Their passion for music, and desire for connection, relationship and community education were particularly noticeable. They spoke in rich detail about the positive experiences of playing for these audiences, particularly the ones where they felt there was a personal connection, even as they felt that, at times, their contribution was taken for granted.

The musicians valued relationships with students, teachers, and the communities visited, and they spoke extensively about the connections they hoped to make with these communities in the long term. They longed for a more robust relationship with music teachers with better communication and connection in preparation for targeted learning. Several musicians commented on the positive engagement by music teachers and the potential impact on the music programs in the schools. Importantly, musicians talked about the benefits of sharing their instruments and knowledge with the students and promoting engagement with classical music: One musician, commenting on a workshop-based school event, noted:

In a way, it's more connection with the audience that way, rather than in a concert hall where it's quiet and serious, and you don't really have that interaction with someone's face – looking into the kids' faces and their eyes and seeing their enjoyment. So, it's a real personal connection with the audience that is really, yes, it's great, I love it. That makes it worthwhile, that makes all of the practice and all of the rehearsal make sense, that you actually do have an effect on other people, it's great.

The desire for connection had both relational and educational elements, and musicians spoke of the need to connect with teachers to improve learning outcomes and ongoing relationships. “It leaves us wanting more.”.

That’s why it’s really important, I think, for us to also connect with the teachers out there and to actually give workshops to them so that we can then help guide them.

And I think because we’ve now got used to using things like Zoom and Skype, I think we should have regular contact with community teaching staff, giving them lessons or whatever so that they can then pass that on to the students. That I think for me is very important. ... if we’re trying to improve the quality of the playing, then we need to be more active if you see what I mean.

## **Expectations and opportunities**

Musicians spoke extensively of the opportunities they felt could eventuate subject to increased funding or better planning and preparation. There were several carefully considered ideas discussing how the orchestra could more effectively and impactfully engage with the schools and communities in regional and remote areas. These ideas included creating a package for schools with more targeted educational aims and spending time on creating a professional-looking show that was not as ad-hoc as many musicians stated was typical for the touring programs. Some musicians talked about the possibility of creating commissioned works specific to the area to engage with the community in a more meaningful way, while others talked about their desire to have ongoing connections and more profound learning opportunities with students and music teachers in those regions. Some talked of the benefits of workshops and side-by-side experiences for students, which they felt could be followed up by online engagement.



There was a general sense from all the musicians that while they felt the current experiences for school students and communities were generally beneficial, there was room for improvement. Some discussed their prior experiences with education-based providers of music in schools, where the educational aims of these programs were provided as a professional learning experience for the musicians. All spoke of the beneficial experience of live music for school students and communities, some in purely engagement terms, others considering the emotional impact of live music on an audience, and the cultural kudos it provided the town or region. Nearly all of the musicians talked about the desire to play quality music, even if they were playing music that students were familiar with. Some musicians wished for better versions of popular works to play, to encourage greater student engagement. There was a definite emphasis in the performers' accounts, on the benefits of live music, with ongoing engagement before and after the face-to-face time. Some of the musicians also discussed the need for teachers in the regions to have access to quality professional learning experiences. They were happy to provide this support where they could. There were plenty of suggestions made by the orchestral musicians in terms of ways to improve the planning of the experience.

They spoke of the need for:

1. Increased valuing of the education and outreach programs as serious components of the orchestra, evident in increased rehearsal allocations and funding;
2. Better preparation for the musicians, so that they are aware of the expectations of the schools and teachers, interests, ages and skill levels of the students;
3. Technology support for Zoom lessons, including 'producing' the link (some remote schools have inadequate internet connections and sound capabilities);
4. Greater meaningful connection opportunities with the audience/participants/teachers both

before and after the face-to-face engagement;

5. Clearer understanding of the objectives of each call, and the need for assistance

(professional development) in achieving these. Musicians were confident in performing, but desired assistance in education/engagement/motivating the audience ideas as appropriate to the audience/participants;

6. Some creative thinking around refreshing resource/repertoire choice/program development including the suggestions that compositions could be tailored to the locations. The musicians were keen to re-conceptualise the program in order to improve it;

7. In the case of school concerts, the need for the children to be familiar with the music before the concert; and

8. Strategic planning about the long-term goals and outcomes of the program, to ensure a consistent approach with a professional presentation.

## **Summary**

While the aims and visions of orchestras have synergies with the aims and visions of traditional music education (to inspire, to teach, to transform etc.), the methods to achieve these aims and visions within performance environments are largely evaluated in terms of whether those who engage (the audience) ‘enjoy’ the experience. This paper takes a different look at the experiences of community engagement by listening to the performers who are employed to deliver these programs. The findings from these interviews suggest that rather than ‘enjoyment’, it is recommended that orchestras and arts companies use the frame of music education as engagement to ascertain the effectiveness of programs, and that the perceptions of all stakeholders are valued in this process. By so doing, orchestras may align more readily with the findings from decades of research into music education, pointing towards design learning that is ongoing, the result of active engagement, involves reflection,

is responsive to individuals and contexts, links to self/prior knowledge/cultural comfort, fosters community belonging/ relationships, which are appropriately challenging, and requires a thoughtful (and sometimes creative) response.

Analysis of the articulated perceptions of orchestral players for this research project reveals that they value their involvement as community engagement agents, but that there is a tangible disjunct between their perceived skill set and the role/s required to successfully deliver community engagement activities. The ways they negotiate the dissonance in their occupational identity depend largely on how flexibly they approach challenges and their willingness to learn or extend their skills sets.

This research points toward the development of support strategies to enable orchestras and similar organisations to deliver engaging and beneficial live music experiences to their audiences. Strategies from music education which facilitate a feeling of agency, or engagement (regardless of how traditionally ‘passive’ the experience may look) can inform the design of engaging and beneficial music engagement/professional development education for orchestral musicians into the future. Equally, by listening to the narratives that these musicians tell us about their experiences in this work, we can ensure that musicians in the future are supported with professional development that enables them to do what they passionately desire: connection, relationship and community education with music at its core.

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# **The Professor, the Duke, the Wizard and Jazz**

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## **Abstract**

Professor Glen Carruthers was globally renowned for his leadership in music education and music educational administration, pedagogy and scholarship. Glen was also lovingly referred to by his students as “Professor Dumbledore”. In the spirit of CEPROM 2022, to “explore and honour the legacy and lessons of esteemed music and music education champions”, the aim of this paper is to analyse and compare the leadership styles and characteristics of three significant educators, all of whom possessed “a visible voice”: Professor Glen Carruthers, musician/band leader/composer/conductor Duke Ellington, and wizard and Hogwarts Headmaster Professor Albus Dumbledore. This research has been conducted using a multimethod qualitative approach, framed within current leadership models. The leadership attributes of Carruthers, Ellington and Dumbledore are analysed and their impact upon (music) education evaluated. The lasting influence of these charismatic, transformational leaders is attested to by many whose lives and careers have been inspired by their guidance, example, mentorship and love.

## **Key Words**

Transformational leadership, authentic leadership, impact, legacy, mentorship

## **Background**

At the Closing Ceremony of ISME’s 2018 World Conference, in Baku, Azerbaijan, the last time our esteemed association assembled together in person, I spent the later part of this night

of celebration sitting on my own. We had enjoyed a hugely successful conference: tonight delegates listened to closing speeches, applauded music and dance performances, admired the gorgeous carpets and wall-hangings, then chatted to colleagues from around the world. I could see Professor Glen Carruthers and his beautiful wife, Heather, engaged in a group conversation which I didn't like to intrude upon. I had already spent some lovely moments with them during ISME and CEPROM and there was always next ISME to catch up again. I was sorry then not to have joined the conversation. I am much sorrier now, as my friend and colleague is gone. Maybe he is still teaching me: don't hesitate to take a risk, grasp the opportunity when it's available, and don't assume there will be another time. Do it now!

## **Aim**

Professor Glen Carruthers was globally renowned for his leadership in music education and music educational administration, pedagogy and scholarship. Glen was also lovingly referred to by his students as "Professor Dumbledore", testament to their "reverence, respect, deep affection and love" (Wilfrid Laurier, 2020) for him. The manner of his leadership inspired and motivated colleagues, staff, students and friends through its kindness, inclusivity, generosity and foresight. In the spirit of CEPROM 2022, to "explore and honour the legacy and lessons of esteemed music and music education champions", the aim of this paper is to analyse and compare the leadership styles and characteristics of three significant educators, all of whom possessed "a visible voice". These champions and leaders are Professor Glen Carruthers, (Dean, educator, pianist, musicologist); Duke Ellington (band leader, pianist, composer and conductor), and Professor Albus Dumbledore (wizard and Hogwarts Headmaster). The legacy and lessons of these educational and musical champions will be explored and the implications for higher music education will be discussed.

## **Methodology**

This research has been conducted through a multi-methodological qualitative approach. A literature review of leadership styles and characteristics was conducted to create a framework against which to analyse the data about each leader. Scholarly literature about Ellington and Dumbledore was collected. The concept of learning about leadership from jazz performance was also investigated. Data concerning Glen's career, particularly leadership in higher education, was collected from the institutions where he had worked. This was further informed by Glen's own introspective and enlightening scholarship, and affirmed by myriad tributes from colleagues and students. These methods have been triangulated by my participant observation of leadership styles in higher music education and related autoethnography. The data has been analysed thematically according to the characteristics of each selected leadership model. The impact of such leadership on music education is then evaluated.

## **Theoretical/Pedagogical Background**

Leadership operates on many complex levels in the music discipline: its educational institutions, performance ensembles, its professional associations and community organisations. Of many leadership styles, two models that appear to encompass the leadership of Glen, Ellington and Dumbledore are transformational leadership and authentic leadership.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership is a style driven by motivation and positive emotions (Bass, 1997 in Rowland & Rohmann, 2009, p. 42) that inspires changes in its followers (NSW Govt CEC). Energetic, enthusiastic and passionate leaders work with teams to identify what needs to be changed, guide change through inspiration, and execute change (NSW Govt CEC).

Leadership characteristics include role modelling, connecting individual's sense of identity with the collective identity of the team or organization, understanding individual talents and weaknesses and aligning these to the achievement of collective opportunities and goals.

Followers are motivated to accept greater ownership for their work and contribution (NSW Govt CEC). Bass (1990) identifies four components of transformational leadership: intellectual stimulation challenging the status quo, individualised consideration fostering supportive relationships and recognising others' contributions, inspirational motivation with clear vision and articulation, and idealised influence which followers emulate.

### **Authentic Leadership**

Authentic leadership is an open, genuine and transparent style where individuals lead by example to build relationships based on legitimacy, honesty, accountability and humility (Robbins, 2021). Authentic leaders demonstrate strong values through their behaviours and expectations of teams, and are highly self-aware (Robbins, 2021). Shamir & Eilam (2005, p. 398) identify the following characteristics of authentic leadership: a core leadership self-concept, high self-resolution, self-concordant goals, and self-expressive behaviour (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 399); all motivated by one's genuine beliefs, values and true identity.

Authentic leaders often use narrative life stories to construct their self-knowledge and self-concept (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 402). These important self-expressive and self-regulatory vehicles can also clarify relationships and justify leaders' self-presentation and efficacy (Shamir & Eilam, 2005, p. 403).

### **Yes to the Mess**

Dr Frank Barrett is an unusual scholar, a world-touring jazz pianist with the Tommy Dorsey Band and a Management Professor. While this dual career could be regarded as contradictory



and dichotomous, this diversity informs his scholarship which explores parallels between organisational dynamics, leadership tasks and jazz improvisation (Barrett, 2012, p. 6).

We need a model of a group of diverse specialists living in a chaotic, turbulent environment: making fast, irreversible decisions; highly interdependent on one another to interpret imperfect and incomplete information; dedicated to innovation and the pursuit of learning and disciplined imagination” (Barrett, 2012, p. 6).

He compares great organizational leaders with great jazz soloists: “The great ones are distinguished by how far ahead they are imagining and how they strategize possibilities, shape the contour of ideas, adapt and adjust in the midst of action, and resolve organizational tension” (Barrett, 2012, p. 8). Barrett observes that management would be enhanced with some skills used in improvisation: adjustment, flexibility, invention, discovery.

### **Provocative Competence**

Another theme of Barrett’s scholarship is provocative competence: affirmative, powerful interventions where leaders hold a positive image of others’ capabilities and strengths (Barrett, 2012, p. 147), are aware such interventions are moments of learning vulnerability and respond appropriately, and introduce disruptions incrementally so people are engaged mindfully (Barrett, 2012, p. 148). “Leaders who disrupt on a regular basis or try to be provocative all the time are obnoxious” (Barrett, 2012, p. 148). Gifted leaders can uncover people’s potential even if the person can’t recognise it. “That’s a true gift: to be able to see people at their very best when their current behaviour is far less than that” (Barrett, 2012, p. 150). Provocative leaders develop double vision: seeing the present while simultaneously also envisioning new opportunities and possibilities.

### **B3 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders**

The B3 style leaders described by Reeves (2014, p. 121) share similar characteristics to those described above. B3 leaders take essential and appropriate risks, make connections and act within a broader context, understanding and demonstrating the importance of communication of purpose and meaning, thus adding value to their activities.

### **Summary of Main Ideas**

#### *The Professor*

“Through all of the changes, he always put students first” (Bruner-Prime, 2020). Throughout Glen’s tenures at Lakehead, Brandon and Wilfrid Laurier Universities, he initiated innovative changes and implemented programs that greatly increased access for students, broadened curricula, improved facilities and connected the academy with the local community. At Wilfrid Laurier, inclusive and creative strategies resulted in many students being accepted on their potential without conforming to traditional entry requirements, staff flourishing through mentoring, the introduction of new Bachelor and Master’s degrees in Community Music and partnerships with regional colleges. Glen’s legacy to Wilfrid Laurier is described as “transformational”, putting “the institution at the forefront of music education in Canada” (Bruner-Prime, 2020). Glen describes institutional leadership as “predicated on visionary leadership that provides the framework and infrastructure to address the evolving challenges of student recruitment, curricular reform, and program relevance” (Carruthers, 2019).

“Dean Carruthers is an example of how true leadership sparks leadership in those around them”: a student/graduate attesting to Glen’s transformational leadership (Wilfrid Laurier University, 2020). The authenticity of Glen’s leadership is affirmed by his genuine caring relationships with students and staff, an open door policy and open-minded approach which

welcomed and made time for all, compassionate and engaged listening, and the ability to see the potential and talent in others. “He was deeply invested in the success of both faculty and students, and he had an infectious love of music and uncanny ability to help people find their passion and strengths” states Brandon University Dean of Music, Greg Gatien (Brandon University, 2020). In Glen’s own words: “People will only care how much you know when they know how much you care” (Wilfrid Laurier University, 2020).

### *The Duke*

Similarly, Duke Ellington had a talent for recognizing the potential in musicians, bringing out their best performance, inspiring motivation, dedication and loyalty, and allowing people the freedom to develop and display their own talent.

My aim is and always has been to mould the music around the man. I’ve found out that it doesn’t matter so much what you have available, but rather what you make of what you do have – finding a good *fit* for every instrumentalist in the group (Ellington in Humphreys, Ucbasaran & Lockett, 2012, p. 47).

Consequently, much repertoire played by the Duke Ellington Big Band was specifically composed to display the unique talents of his sidemen; such as *Concerto for Cootie* (virtuoso trumpeter Cootie Williams). “He was brilliant at using the materials at his disposal to bring out the best in people, notice their unique voices, support their strengths, and create the conditions so they could branch out and blossom” (Barrett, 2012, p. 135). Described as a master of “relational coordination” (Barrett, 2012, p. 136), Ellington managed communication and the achievement of shared goals in an environment of mutual respect. The success of this orchestral leadership is mirrored in the musical direction of Maria Schneider and her big band, and its resultant longevity. Barrett (2012, p. 159) describes the leadership of jazz greats

Duke Ellington and Miles Davis as “visionary”, noting that while creating “organizational designs, structures, tasks” and an improvisatory culture, “they were careful to preserve organizational memory” (Barrett, 2012, p.159). “Change that endures is about designing organizational structures to sustain successful existing procedures while simultaneously triggering improvisation and creativity beyond existing capabilities” (Barrett, 2012, p. 159). Hosking (1988) reinforces the wisdom of this approach: “By viewing leadership as a process we are able to break down the distinction between the leadership of people and the management of organization” (Hosking, 1988 in Humphreys, et.al., p. 42).

### *The Wizard*

It is a curious thing, Harry, but perhaps those who are best suited to power are those who have never sought it. Those who, like you, have leadership thrust upon them and take up the mantle because they must, and find to their own surprise that they wear it well. (Professor Albus Dumbledore in J. K. Rowling, 1997).

Dumbledore shared many of the leadership qualities that have been described above; seeing the potential in people who may not recognise it in themselves, leading by example and encouragement, the virtue of kindness, the ability to inspire trust in the leader and each other, and ethical and fair decision-making. “He has an eye for great talent and knows how to effectively deploy people to the greatest advantage of the group and the individuals” (Paulsen, 2010). Paulsen (2010) describes Dumbledore as epitomising a great leader, not only leading Hogwarts’ school but leading a universal fight of good against evil. Dumbledore, like most significant leaders, is highly connected with a network of important, significant colleagues, working in roles that facilitate his vision and goals. The three charismatic leaders discussed in this paper all exhibited calmness and composure that projected onto others, inspired

optimism, faith and love. With a shared love of narratives and tale-telling, and as competent provocateurs, “they invite people to live in hopeful stories” (Barrett, 2012, p. 151).

## **Implications for Music Education**

Professor Glen Carruthers, Duke Ellington and Professor Albus Dumbledore all exhibit exemplary educational leadership; skillfully improving their institution/s (whether the university, the orchestra or school), guiding its progress, expanding their offerings, and maintaining high standards of integrity, fairness and excellence. They genuinely demonstrate student- or musician-centred leadership, crafting decision-making and planning around the talents, needs and aspirations of the teachers and learners in their care. Despite the inevitable varied personalities, conflicts and rivalry found in work institutions, they rise above these distractions, nurturing the best qualities in their colleagues to collaboratively build and maintain positive collegial relationships and networks. In Glen’s case, he led very successful initiatives to develop mutually rewarding networks between the universities and their communities. These curricula and social initiatives were supported by literally expanding resources and spaces for music education to be taught. Our three leaders were renowned for mentoring their students, colleagues and peers; an impact that was frequently life-changing and life-affirming. Their guidance and legacy is a permanent blessing to their followers, the lessons lasting long after they have passed.

## **Conclusion**

The following quotes attest to the legacy and lessons of (respectively) the Professor, the Duke and the Wizard.

"For him [Glen], music was a part of what made a good life ... and you could see it in what he did,". "He was a presence — a force in the School of Music." (Scott Grills, Dean of Arts, Brandon University in Clarke, 2020). When I heard Glen's students called him Professor Dumbledore, I remarked that this statement was really the ultimate compliment.

"In recognition of his musical genius, which evoked aesthetically the principles of democracy through the medium of jazz and thus made an indelible contribution to art and culture".  
Pulitzer Prize Special Citation, 1999.

"Ah, music" he [Dumbledore] said, wiping his eyes. "A magic beyond all we do here".  
(Rowling, 1999).

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