



# **INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR MUSIC EDUCATION**

Proceedings of the 23rd International Seminar of the  
ISME Commission on the Education of the Professional  
Musician (CEPROM)

**Ethics and Inclusion in the Education of Professional Musicians**

**Virtual Seminar**

**July 29-31, 2020**

**Editor Heidi Partti**

**Co-editor Leah Coutts**

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# **CEPROM Mission Statement**

## **Vision**

Undergirding the vision of the ISME Commission on the Education of the Professional Musician is the belief that any discussion or action pertaining to the education and training of professional musicians must be sensitive to the roles and status that musicians have in various societies and cultures. Of equal importance is the attention to the value systems in those societies and cultures that drive the choices concerning music, education, and the arts in a broader sense.

## **Mission**

The mission of the ISME Commission on the Education of the Professional Musician is to engage in and promote a variety of activities in international and local settings that:

- focus on the professional musician as one who accepts responsibility for advancing and disseminating music as an integral part of life, and whose engagement with music reflects perception, understanding, appreciation, and mastery in a manner that conveys meaning to people
- foster the recognition of the many modes of educating and training musicians as practised by various societies and cultures
- emphasise strategies through which educators can prepare musicians for the continually changing role of the musician in various contexts, societies and cultures
- raise awareness and develop an appreciation of matters pertaining to the general health and welfare of musicians

CEPROM Commissioners (2018-2020)

Heidi Partti, Chair (Finland)

Judith Brown (Australia)

Tania Lisboa (Brazil/United Kingdom)

Annie Mitchell (Australia)

Pamela Pike (Canada/USA)

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Judith Brown (Australia)  
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# **Preface: Ethics and Inclusion in the Education of Professional Musicians**

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The 23rd International Seminar of the ISME Commission on the Education of the Professional Musician was held virtually on July 29–31, 2020. The unprecedented circumstances caused by the global pandemic forced us to swiftly adjust our plans and create novel ways to come together to share our ideas, questions and discoveries with colleagues around the world. For the first time in the history of CEPROM, the seminar was hosted synchronously online by utilising the video conferencing service, Zoom.

## **Viewpoints on ethics and inclusion in the education of professional musicians**

The theme of the CEPROM Seminar this year was ethics and inclusion in the education of professional musicians. We chose this theme long before we knew anything about COVID-19 and the drastic changes it would bring about not only to our seminar plans but also to our way of living, working and communicating as academics and citizens. Little did we know then how timely and relevant the theme would be.

We created the seminar theme to align with the theme of the planned (and later cancelled) ISME World Conference, with its emphasis on equity and diversity in music education. Moreover, we

hoped the seminar theme would prompt broad perspectives, discussions and dialogue that would help us to better understand how arts institutions and individual musicians can foster inclusion, sustainability and equity in and through their musical practices in the world of ‘wicked problems’ (e.g. Kolko 2012) such as ecological crises and social injustice. The arts certainly have enormous potential to increase hope, tolerance and empathy. However, this potential can only be fully realised when the education of professional musicians is underpinned by a commitment to ethical responsibility and a practice and policy of inclusivity. The theme of the seminar was therefore expected to enable investigations into the ways we, as scholars and practitioners, might impart high ethical values and practices in music education and prepare students to become ethical musicians and music educators working for the benefit of humanity and the earth.

This publication includes nineteen research papers presented during the seminar. Each paper investigates ethics and inclusion in the education and career of professional musicians from a particular angle, such as gender, cultural diversity, solidarity, social responsibility, accessibility, leadership, curriculum, professional development, student engagement, social entrepreneurship and transformative pedagogy. The collection of viewpoints and insights is impressive, yet the papers presented here are only the tip of the iceberg. A fundamental goal of CEPROM seminars is to foster dialogue and discussion among participants. Each presentation was therefore accompanied by a response from a colleague. In many ways, it was in these moments of discussion between the presenter and respondent, along with the comments and questions from other seminar participants, that new knowledge was collaboratively constructed, innovative ideas conceived and unexpected opportunities detected. Technology both limited and fostered these

processes of collaborative learning. On the one hand, an online seminar provides only a limited number of opportunities for engaging in deep and lengthy conversations. On the other, the in-meeting chat feature allowed easy access to conversations as it was possible for anyone to type in their questions, comments and suggestions to the presenter.

Overall, the presentations and subsequent discussions revealed a need for an honest soul-searching among those of us involved in the education of professional musicians; a willingness to engage in communal self-reflection and longing to become a part of the solution in the face of global divisions and injustices. Over the three days, many conversations touched on the question of the decolonisation of music education institutions, curricula, repertoire choices and teaching practices. It was acknowledged that there is a lot to do to build more relational, diverse and inclusive conditions for learning. One starting point for this work is in the reflections of the “intimate connections between music, education, and society” (Westerlund, Karlsen & Partti, 2020, p. 1) and the readiness to think critically about the dominant power structures, traditions and hierarchies embedded in our professional field (see also, e.g. Hess, 2015).

Despite the enormity of the task at hand, one could sense a genuine excitement and resolution in the air, a dedication towards fostering ethical thinking in music education both globally and in our local communities. This publication extends an invitation to the reader to continue these discussions by considering how the insights shared within each paper of this collection relate to the reader’s own practices, and in sharing the ideas presented with colleagues in the reader’s own contexts the important work the conversations at the seminar started can be continued.

## **Online seminar – an unexpected opportunity for cultural shift in academia**

In many ways, meeting one's colleagues via an online seminar does not compare to the experience of spending days together in the same conference room, engaging in vivid conversations over dinner or together enjoying performances by local musicians. However, after the initial disappointment of not having the opportunity to experience all this together in Oulu, Finland, I began to see the potential of a remote meeting.

For some time I have shared the discomfort felt by many other academics (see, e.g. Academic Flying, 2020; Grant, 2018) towards the practice of academic flying, in the context of the present global ecological crises. I have aimed not only to reduce my own air travel but also to actively look for alternative and more sustainable ways for internationalisation, networking and collaboration in higher music education. Hosting an international online seminar thus provided an opportunity to explore these alternatives—that is, to see if we could shift academic culture and reduce our ecological impact without sacrificing the vital opportunities for dialogue and international collaborations.

Thanks to the diligent work of the Finnish organising team, the wonderful attitude of every seminar participant and the tools provided by digital technology, the CEPROM online seminar surpassed all my expectations. Not only did we get to appreciate a plethora of stimulating research papers and engage in academic discussions, but we were also able to catch up with our colleagues, enjoy musical performances by musicians in Oulu and even sing together!

Another unexpected treasure hidden in the online meeting was the opportunity it provided for more people to participate in the seminar. Without the need for funds and the time required for travel, many more scholars and practitioners were able to join. We had seventy-five registered participants (compared to fewer than twenty in the previous seminar in 2018), representing a delightfully diverse group of music educators from around the globe. This presented us with the ‘happy problem’ of having to manage some ten different time zones when putting the programme together. Indeed, this challenge was welcomed as a recent developmental goal of the CEPROM Commission has been to diversify and include a wider body of participants from across the world in our seminars and networks. Although there still is a lot of work to be done in terms of inclusion and the decolonisation of academia, I rejoiced over this gesture, made possible by an online seminar, towards more inclusive, equal and sustainable internationalisation in the field of music education.

Reading the papers included in this publication and mulling over the seminar conversations makes me think of what Gert Biesta (2017) wrote about the work of arts education in bringing people *into dialogue* with the world. Although music and other arts can facilitate significant ways of expressing oneself and one’s identity, the powerful potential of music has to do with the opportunities it offers for encountering the world, for exploring what it might mean to “exist *well*, individually and collectively; in the world and with the world” (ibid., p. 57). This idea of wanting to exist well, to exist as subject (ibid., p. 58), could be understood as an overarching theme of the CEPROM 2020 Seminar. Importantly, engaging in a critical self-reflection is not merely a mental exercise to be practiced during an academic discussion. To actively challenge our taken-for-granted ways of thinking and doing compels us to continuously ponder “the

question [of] when, how and to what extent we should limit and transform our own desires in face of the desires of others and in face of an environment” (ibid., p. 58). Perhaps this sudden necessity to find alternative ways of meeting and networking encourages us to consider more carefully the ethical and moral implications of our choices and activities, such as that of academic flying and its environmental impact in the face of the climate emergency.

### **Thanks to the people who made the seminar possible**

I will be forever grateful to the people who rose to the challenge and helped me shift the seminar to an online format. I wish to thank Inka Kuivamäki and Marja Ervasti from the University of Oulu, Finland, for acting in response to the shifting and difficult situation with such grace, positivity and resourcefulness. I also wish to thank Jussi Puukka from the University of the Arts Helsinki, Sibelius Academy, for stepping in the team to ensure our Zoom meetings ran smoothly. It was an absolute joy working with you all!

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Thank you to Leah Coutts for your invaluable help in putting this publication together. Your thoroughness and effectiveness made this editing process smooth and enjoyable.

Finally, thank you to each and every one of you who participated in the CEPROM Seminar 2020. I was deeply touched by the commitment you demonstrated by getting up extremely early or going to bed well after midnight, which enabled us to successfully hold the seminar. My sincere thanks for making this historic CEPROM Seminar so interesting, inspiring and invigorating!

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# **Developing inclusive practices in higher music education: A study of women in composition**

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## **Abstract**

The development of inclusive practices in higher music education remains a key challenge for music education in the higher education context. This article draws on an international survey of 225 women composers to suggest possible solutions. The composers came from multiple countries and reported their income, work and learning, relationships and networks, and the impact of gender on their practice. The data highlighted the persistent marginalisation of female composers, as a result of which the female gender was experienced as a career disadvantage. Of particular relevance to higher music education, numerous composers reported that they had been ill-prepared for their career and insufficiently aware of how to manage gender inequity

(Hennekam et al., 2019a). They also noted the under-representation of music composed by women during their higher education studies. We explore these dominant themes and use them to suggest possible actions.

### **Keywords**

equity, diversity, gender, graduate attributes, music curriculum, employability.

### **Introduction**

Awareness of equity and diversity in music education has risen considerably over recent decades. However, creating and sustaining the requisite changes in pedagogical practices and curricular design remain a key challenge. This article focusses on the case of women composers, who experience gendered disadvantage within a sector described by Redhead (2015) as a patriarchal industry with its roots in the past.

### **Summary of procedures**

We draw on the findings of an international survey with 225 women composers and interviews with 27 of the women. Participants discussed income, work and learning, networks, and the impact of gender on their practice. Closed questions were analysed using SPSS. Two researchers coded qualitative data using content analysis, including frequency counting (Wilkinson, 2011); inter-rater reliability met the cut-off point of .80.

## Study highlights

Almost half the participants (46%) reported that gender impacted the likelihood of their work being performed. Many composers conveyed that gender bias is systemic and they noted that some types of music, such as electronic music and jazz, are particularly gendered.

The intersection of gender and age emerged as a contributing factor in the marginalisation of female composers, for whom gender can be a stigmatised identity and a career disadvantage (Bennett et al., 2019). We also found that when the volume of research published about women composers decreases, the performances of their music similarly decreases, and vice versa (Macarthur et al., 2017).

To lessen the impact of their gender, women employed passing tactics wherein “one member of a defined social group masquerades as another in order to enjoy the privileges afforded to the dominant group” (Leary, 1990, p. 85). The tactics of concealment and fabrication (Newheiser & Barreto, 2014) were prevalent and women also employed minimisation and differentiation tactics. Some women minimised the extent to which their gender was salient to others, whilst others emphasised their gender and how it differentiated them from others (Creed & Scully, 2000).

The extent to which gender is visible varies in music composition: a manuscript might be submitted under a pseudonym whereas a website profile or concert appearance will often reveal the composer’s gender. Because of this, the women composers used strategies such as concealment and fabrication, typically seen with invisible stigmatised identities, in contexts

where their gender was *not* visible, and strategies such as minimisation, typically seen with visible stigmatised identities, in contexts where their gender *was* visible (Bennett et al., 2019).

## **Implications and possible actions for higher music education**

Gender inequality impacts both aspiring and practising women composers, and higher education has a role to play in negating this inequality (Bennett et al., 2018; Browning 2016; Henderson 2013; Macarthur 2010; 2014; Pitman et al., 2017). Although similar numbers of male and female students choose to study composition, Parsons and Ravenscroft (2016) suggest that only 20% of practising composers are female. Moreover, the representation of music written by female composers – even in concerts of new music – can be only a fraction of that written by men (Macarthur et al., 2017). It follows that change is needed and we contend that some of this change can be achieved through relatively simple changes.

### **Raising awareness.**

Peters' (2016) review of unintended exclusionary practices at the University of Wisconsin found that only 6% of music performed in the Department's concerts was written by women, including only 15% of new music works. Macarthur's (2007) analysis of six Australian institutions revealed that women's music is often excluded from classes in musicology and music theory. These findings are in line with research by Edwards (1997), Green (1997), the British Educational Research Education Music Education Review Group (2004), and O'Toole (n. d.). Despite the attention of scholars since Green's (1997) study, the curriculum and practices of music in higher education are still dominated by male representation.

Raising awareness of equity and diversity emerges as both a precursor to change and a change strategy in and of itself. Peters' (2016) faculty and students embraced a one-year project of awareness-raising and change. Participants introduced concerts of works by women and reviewed music history texts, repertoire lists and set works, shared their findings via posters, ensured that speakers and presenters included female musicians and musicians of colour, and established a student-faculty committee to address diversity. Many students and faculty reported that as a result of the project they had made changes in their teaching and performing practices and had become advocates for equality.

### **Being prepared.**

A second consideration relates to students' career awareness and their understanding of equity and diversity within the profession. Most established composers emphasised that their music education had not equipped them to find the work opportunities that had underpinned their success. Participants highlighted the need for general career awareness alongside specific business skills, grant-writing skills, and compositional skills in multiple genres and contexts. They also reported that unrealistic expectations for graduate life had led to feelings of failure. An *ad-hoc* graduate approach to visibility, reputation-building, online presence, access and networking, was related directly to the absence of these discussions within their education.

Aspiring musicians need the metacognitive capacity to negotiate challenging careers (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013; Bennett, 2016). This demands a mindful, inclusive curriculum in which student musicians begin to conceptualise multiple musical worlds. We recommend that music in higher education develop students' broad and critical understandings of music's societal and

global relevance by addressing the rights, responsibilities and realities of musicians' practice (Bennett, 2008), including the gendered nature of work.

Diversity training has an important role in this regard as it can increase awareness about difference and how this can be used as an asset. Such practices can provide a much-needed collective voice to marginalised populations, help combat discrimination, and increase inclusion. Although Hess (2017) warns that a critical pedagogy might re-inscribe the hegemonic values and relations it attempts to erase, the counter-argument is that by not introducing critical thinking and social justice, male dominance and other inequitable practices will prevail.

### **Challenging gendered behaviour.**

Gendered behaviour is a significant contributor to inequity and it can be challenged. In our study, the women composers counteracted gendered behaviour by variously exposing gender imbalances, promoting positive discrimination, incorporating the works of women when teaching and lecturing, becoming role models, and creating more exposure for women's work.

Born and Devine (2015) have highlighted the sexual stereotyping of technology and they exposed the dominance of the male canon in both the traditional music degree and the music technology degree. Born and Devine note that these discriminatory discourses can exclude women from the canon. O'Keeffe (2017) adds that discriminatory practices also perpetuate a digital creative field that is dominated by males. Higher music education might lessen this dominance by ensuring that women teach and engage in the music technology curriculum and that women are present as role models.

### **Creating connections.**

Higher music education could encourage students to participate in multi-mode communities of practice (CoPs). Such networks simultaneously provide exposure to people in positional power, increase market visibility, and enable workers to leverage a place within the network of decision makers (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2008). However, networks are also known for their potential to be discriminatory and exclusionary (O'Brien, 2014).

In our study, many women composers engaged with women's online networks as both an alternative approach to career development and a tool through which to circumvent gendered challenges. The online environment emerged as a safe, collegial space for female composers to connect, find support, seek feedback and mentorship, increase their visibility, and develop career agency through knowledge acquisition (Hennekam et al., 2018). The separate spaces enabled the women to operate outside traditional masculine spaces, but we acknowledge that women-only spaces can potentially marginalise career development activities when compared with the dominant spaces where much of this development takes place.

Blended and multi-gender CoPs are likely to diminish gendered stereotypes by facilitating regular exchange and dialogue among members. University environments present a valuable opportunity for composers to create initial professional networks, both within the student cohort and through lecturers and visiting artists. Community internships and placements, for example, offer valuable opportunities for student musicians to review their ideological assumptions and become aware of opportunities for work and funding. These strategies are likely to contribute to student composers' self-identity and self-efficacy (Burland & Davidson, 2002).

Greater opportunities for teamwork and interaction would enable students to re-evaluate prevailing negative stereotypes when they encounter new information. This could challenge students' preconceived ideas about composers. Affinity networks are known to provide opportunities for support, career advice and greater connections within identity groups (Dobbin et al., 2011). Affinity networks wherein women composers meet on a regular basis to discuss the dynamics of sexism, oppression and privilege (Blitz & Kohl, 2012) could provide opportunities for communication and for group members to create change. Such networks can be useful for many marginalised groups and they could be established during higher education studies.

### **Concluding comments and recommendations**

The need for women composers to disguise or hide their gender is likely to persist until the prevailing norms and practices of composition are changed. In higher music education we could contribute by modelling inclusive behaviours, raising awareness of normalised gendered behaviours and perceptions, and preparing students with related career support strategies.

In inclusive organisations, individuals of all backgrounds are fairly treated, valued for who they are and included in core decision-making. By proactively creating such environments, organisations can leverage the benefits associated with diversity. However, the creation of an inclusive climate requires diverse representation, equitable practices and a change in interaction patterns (Nishii, 2013). By creating an inclusive climate in which individuals feel they can be themselves, institutions should be able to increase feelings of authenticity and connectedness (Shore et al., 2011).

In common with all music graduates, composers need to graduate with business-related skills alongside an understanding of their legal rights and responsibilities. They need to maximise their opportunities for work by knowing how to write for diverse genres and contexts and by engaging with relevant networks and social media. They also need to be aware of exclusionary practices and to possess the strategies to overcome these.

Stereotypical images of the composer could be challenged by having students engage with established composers and with role models who have diverse genders and cultural backgrounds. Music faculties might engage diverse professionals to perform and record student works, paying attention to the representation of female composers. More music faculties could establish music ensembles of different genres which invite submissions of new works by student composers. Music faculties could also provide student composers and performers with more opportunities to collaborate, giving the student composer a greater understanding of what is entailed in writing for different contexts and ensembles.

Macarthur (2010) describes how the music and attitudes of the composer-educator combine to create a version of the composer that reproduces the music itself and the associated attitudes of the training. This can be resolved to an extent by including the music of women and other marginalised groups as exemplars in higher education music curricula and in performance programming. Inviting women composers to lecture or as residents would grant composers valuable access to studio space and performance opportunities as well as exposing students to female role models and the nature of composition practice.

Assessments could recognise peer-learning, risk, creativity and improvisation such that students are encouraged to experiment with technology and different genres and settings. Creating regular opportunities to work with performers might lead to assessment practices that encourage performers to learn repertoire outside the canon, particularly if combined with the work of student composers and artists-in-residence.

In summary, there are multiple opportunities to support the development of women composers, including their preparedness to negotiate the obstacles they might face when entering the workforce and confronting normalised sexist attitudes. Increased awareness, among both faculty and students, is a logical place in which to begin.

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# **Women's work: What makes these women's works work?**

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## **Abstract**

While a significant number of female singers are represented in the contemporary music industry, creative outputs by women in composition, arrangement, instrumental performance, band leadership and education occupy a relatively small portion of contemporary music repertoire and related educational study. The research that this paper “Women’s work: What makes these women’s works work?” reports on was instigated by an initiative at Southern Cross University to, within a year, have 50% of its Bachelor of Contemporary Music (BCM) teaching repertoire comprised of works composed or performed by women (preferably Australian), and written within the last five years; a very ambitious target. This institutional initiative, reflecting a growing impetus in recent scholarship for stronger representation of female musicians in Australia’s contemporary music industry and higher education curricula, has broader philosophical and pedagogical considerations, such as the musical quality of newly included repertoire, musicological history and canon of existing works, and curriculum placement and integration.

By investigating the work of three female musicians, Australian educator and composer Dulcie Holland, American conductor, band leader, pianist, composer/arranger and educator Maria Schneider, and Australian bassist Tal Wilkenfeld, this research explores their relevance and

potential contribution to contemporary music study in areas of performance, composition, musicianship, higher education and related resources. Examples of my personal contribution of contemporary musical works to higher education music repertoire and resource-building, including current, original arrangements for choir, big band and musicianship texts, will be discussed. The paper also highlights initiatives that are established practices at my university, promoting the output and careers of women musicians and educators, and their impact as role models and mentors for aspiring generations of students.

### **Keywords**

women musicians, composition, band leadership.

### **Theoretical/pedagogical background**

While a significant number of female singers are represented in the contemporary music industry, creative outputs by women in composition, arrangement, instrumental performance, band leadership and music education occupy a relatively small portion of contemporary music repertoire and related educational study. Poor representation of women musicians and composers is paralleled in the classical field. The lack of representation of women composers in Australian classical concert repertoire and higher education music curricula was reported by Macarthur in 1989/90. Her 2007 study of six Australian tertiary music education providers showed this situation had exacerbated, revealing a decline in the performance of Australian women's music, despite increasing numbers of women in the higher education music sector (Macarthur, 2007). Thirty years after Macarthur's 1989 report, this imbalance still exists, exposed in current research by Bennett, Macarthur, Hope, Goh and Hennekam (2018), whose work explores issues

of gender in music composition and offers strategies to counteract and improve this situation.

They advocate that “the pedagogical practices and curricular design that might support aspiring women composers are in urgent need of attention” (Bennett et.al., 2018, p. 1).

The research that this paper “Women’s work: What makes these women’s works work?” reports on was instigated by an initiative at Southern Cross University to, within a year, have 50% of its Bachelor of Contemporary Music (BCM) teaching repertoire comprised of works composed or performed by women (preferably Australian), and written within the last five years; an ambitious target, given that only approximately 20% of the world’s composers are female (Parsons & Ravencroft, 2016, p. 4). This institutional initiative, which reflects a growing impetus in recent scholarship for stronger representation of female musicians in Australia’s contemporary music industry and higher education curricula, has broader philosophical and pedagogical considerations. *Musical quality*: rather than being simply a numerical exercise that can be interpreted as tokenism and patronisation, the inclusion of musical works in tertiary music curricula needs to fulfil the pedagogical requirements of musical standard, educational value and authentic representation of musical styles, forms and genres. *History*: Hennekam, Bennett, Macarthur, Hope and Goh (2019, p. 2) state that “Gender has ... played a role in constructing a duality in which two distinct histories are traced: a dominant (male) history; and a counter (female) history.” Despite most of the representative repertoire being composed and performed by men, any musical tradition has a canon of works that define and develop the genre, which should be studied on the basis of its musical content rather than the gender of its author. Much contemporary music of the last five years lacks the musical characteristics or musicianship standards our higher education music curricula aim to teach. *Curriculum placement*: the

introduction of new repertoire needs to be timely and integrated into teaching delivery in a systematic and scaffolded manner. Hennekam et.al. (2019, p. 2) acknowledge the necessity of women composers having “to develop strategies for navigating the male-dominated profession of music composition”. Accordingly, I have developed a framework that establishes a musical benchmark and satisfies the requirements of this pedagogical challenge, increases the representation of female composers and musicians in my teaching curricula, and integrates my own original music into the higher education music curricula. The criteria that underpin this framework are that the women musicians chosen for study should demonstrate significant impact through a portfolio of industry, performance and educational works; repertoire must fulfil curriculum learning objectives; and more broadly, institutional graduate attributes and course learning outcomes should dictate the repertoire chosen for study, rather than an idealistic target for course repertoire defining the curricula.

### **Aims/focus of research**

By investigating the work of three female musicians, Australian educator and composer Dulcie Holland, American conductor, band leader, pianist, composer/arranger and educator Maria Schneider, and Australian bassist Tal Wilkenfeld, this paper explores their relevance and potential contribution to contemporary music study in areas of performance, composition, musicianship, higher education and related resources. Embedding these women’s work as models of good practice into the BCM curricula is part of a process which responds to internal pressures at Southern Cross University to heighten representation of women’s creative work in repertoire and teaching examples. As an Australian female musician and educator, examples of my personal contribution of contemporary musical works to higher education music repertoire

and resource-building, including current, original arrangements for choir, big band and musicianship texts, will be discussed. The paper also highlights initiatives that are established practices at my university; guest artist programs promoting the output and careers of women musicians and educators, and their impact as role models and mentors for aspiring generations of students.

## **Methodological framework**

The approach taken in this research has been to identify significant female musicians who have contributed to Australian music and education through performance, composition and education. For examples of their work to be chosen for study in the BCM, the following criteria are applied:

- educational and pedagogical rigour;
- musical standards, advanced musicianship content, technical skills;
- relevance of repertoire for BCM curriculum, course learning outcomes and university graduate attributes;
- the impact and influence these women and their work have exercised on the music industry and related education; and
- the availability and access of their repertoire and resources.

## **Results: Five examples of women's work**

### **Dulcie Holland (1913-2000).**

The career of composer, cellist and educator Dulcie Holland, which spanned approximately seventy years and encompassed most of the twentieth century, exemplifies a portfolio, lifelong career in an era where female professional musicians were much less visible and numerous than

today. Of significance to this research is her output of educational resources. Holland composed educational pieces for instrumental study at all levels of development, many published in the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB) syllabi. Holland's *Master Your Theory* texts are important educational resources, equally relevant to the study of classical and contemporary music. An important feature of Holland's texts is their concise, informative presentation of musical concepts, then the application of this information in practical examples, such as rhythm exercises, melody writing, chord construction, harmonisation, formal structures and musical analysis. Contemporary music students frequently enter higher education with little knowledge of fundamental musical concepts. The simple presentation of content and practical application of musical concepts exhibited in these texts is an effective and efficient way to upskill music students quickly in musicianship and theoretical comprehension.

A fundamental aspect of the BCM training is teaching students to build and maintain a sustainable musical career. Although from a previous century, Holland's oeuvre exemplifies this model. Through a variety of compositional work, for film, professional performance (orchestral works, instrumental and chamber music), and graduated educational repertoire; plus the authorship of multiple educational music texts, Holland became "Australia's most celebrated music author" ("Dulcie Holland", n.d.). The alignment of much of her composition and theory writing with AMEB syllabi, a national accrediting educational system, models a highly effective, intelligent and lucrative business strategy, enabling her works to be easily accessed and in high demand throughout Australia for generations. Holland's creative and educational work has been nationally recognised by many awards, including Represented Artist of the Australian Music Centre (AMC) and Order of Australia (AO), 1977 ("Dulcie Holland (1913-2000): Represented

Artist”, n.d.). A fundamental attribute of an effective pedagogue is their generosity in gifting their knowledge to students. Holland’s ethos “that a teacher should help others in explaining the art of two-part writing, melody writing and so on” (“Dulcie Holland (1913-2000): Represented Artist”, n.d.), plus her decision in later life to concentrate on writing music text books, believing “‘making new converts to music’ to be more important than adding to the volume of existing music” (Fuller & LeFanu, 1994, p. 153 in “Dulcie Holland”, n.d.) verify the authenticity of her educational leadership, her commitment to music education and her legacy of inspiring musicians to pursue their love and practice of music.

### **Maria Schneider (b.1960).**

Marian Schneider is described as “one of the luminaries of contemporary jazz” (Quinn, 2015). After university study Schneider began her career apprenticed to arrangers Gil Evans and Bob Brookmeyer. Her big band, the Maria Schneider Jazz Orchestra played weekly at *Visiones* jazz club, Greenwich Village, New York from 1993-1998 and toured extensively. Schneider also has conducted performances of her works with many European radio orchestras (Yarnow, n.d.). The originality of Schneider’s compositions is characterised by its mixture of avant-garde jazz and modern classical music, plus the inclusion of bird calls and nature sounds in her music. She is credited with “revitalizing the popularity of big band music in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by enlivening modern classical arrangements with unique melodies” (Schreiber, 2016). In the tradition of Duke Ellington, as an effective band leader, Schneider composes to illuminate the strengths of her ensemble musicians (Schreiber, 2016). Similarly to Ellington, the musicians in Schneider’s band reciprocate by displaying a loyalty and commitment that is rare in modern ensembles. Most of the orchestra membership has remained intact for its two decades (Woolfe, 2013). “So much of

what happens in my music is because of those musicians playing it” (Schneider, 2018).

Schneider has won Grammy awards for best instrumental composition (*Cerulean Skies*), and three Grammy awards for the album *Winter Morning Walks*, one of a few artists to successfully cover jazz and classical genres (Quinn, 2015). Schneider’s approach to big band composition goes beyond traditional timbres and includes more classical influences.

Schneider wanted the muscle and precision you get with 15 or 20 loud instruments, and she wanted the backbone of improvisation that is fundamental to jazz. But she was also drawn to the colors of the orchestra: shifting, ethereal prisms out of Ravel and Debussy (Woolfe, 2013).

This stylistic approach, merging big band jazz, classical and Impressionist techniques and timbres make Schneider’s arrangements uniquely effective studies for instrumentation, orchestration, third stream composition and film scoring. Schneider also is a model of leadership in musical direction, ensemble management and conducting; having successfully conducted, led and managed her large ensemble for decades.

An important ethos underpinning Schneider’s career has been her advocacy for musicians’ rights and copyright, and her board membership of NARAS (National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences) (“Maria Schneider (musician)”, n.d.). Intellectual property and musical ownership are fundamental principles in today’s contemporary music industry and ones that aspiring young musicians need to be thoroughly informed about. A trail-blazing example of contemporary marketing and album distribution techniques, Schneider’s 2004 album *Concert in the Garden* “made history as the first recording to win a Grammy with online-only sales” (Quinn, 2015). Schneider has also taught at many universities internationally.

### **Tal Wilkenfeld (b.1986).**

Tal Wilkenfeld is a female Australian bass player, guitarist, band leader, singer and songwriter whose early career began with playing jazz clubs in New York and London. In 2013 Wilkenfeld was voted “The Year’s Most Exciting New Player” by *Bass Player* magazine (“Tal Wilkenfeld”, n.d.). She has played with some of the world’s most acclaimed rock and blues musicians, including Jeff Beck, Mick Jagger, Eric Clapton, Sting, Prince, Toto, Steve Lukather, the Allman Brothers, Robben Ford and Jackson Browne; and jazz musicians Herbie Hancock, Lee Ritenour, Wayne Shorter and Chick Corea (“Tal Wilkenfeld”, n.d.). Wilkenfeld’s career provides an excellent model for aspiring young bassists and guitarists. Her position is rather unique, as bass is an instrument not commonly played by women, particularly at such an advanced international level. Wilkenfeld’s success in a diversity of contemporary music styles (rock, blues, jazz, fusion, indie) is evidenced by the status of the musicians she plays with, and her esteemed position as a young musician in very high demand by veterans of the global music industry. Her bass style exhibits virtuosic techniques, the ability to play authentically in a variety of genres, formidable soloing and improvisation, and a melodic approach to bass playing that has been likened to that of Jaco Pastorius (Jisi, 2019). Wilkenfeld states “There are so many great bass players out there. I get inspired by the ones who have a solid groove and create a bass line that is just as melodic as the top line” (Jisi, 2019).

### **Choral arranging**

Part of my university teaching comprises teaching the university choir, a large 4-part SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) vocal ensemble which is core study for first and second year music students, and voluntary for all other BCM students. To keep the choir repertoire current and

relevant to the curriculum, and to satisfy the musical tastes of the students, I create many original arrangements of current popular songs and student requests for this ensemble and also compose original works. Example 1 is an excerpt from my original arrangement of the Latin song *Rio de Janeiro Blue*, composed by John Haeny. This selection aligns with the BCM second year theory/musicianship content and exemplifies the following musical characteristics: bossa nova Latin dance rhythm, syncopation and accents, advanced harmonic vocabulary, jazz chords, extended and dissonant harmonies and tritone substitution. Students learn to navigate arrangements with extended forms, read notation correctly, interpret dynamics, and scat sing angular melodic lines. Vocalists must learn to pitch in harmony with accurate intonation on extended and dissonant chords and punctuate accented chord riffs. The different roles of individual voices and vocal sections within the choir, and their contribution to the whole ensemble, is emphasised by antiphony (call and response) and the texture and harmony created by moving line progressions. Student instrumental ensembles who accompany the choir learn techniques such as piano chord voicings, Latin dance rhythms, stylistically authentic bass lines, and drum and percussion grooves.

Example 1:

### RIO DE JANEIRO BLUE

♩ = 126 Bossa Nova Chord alterations John Haeny

Dm<sup>7(b9)</sup> G<sup>7(b9)</sup> G<sup>7(b9)</sup> Cm<sup>9</sup>

**SOPRANO**  
I \_\_\_\_\_ get a feel - ing that I've seen the last\_ of you

**ALTO**  
I get a feel - ing that I've seen the last\_ of you

**TENOR**  
I get a feel - ing that I've seen the last\_ of you.

**BASS**  
I \_\_\_\_\_ get a feel - ing that I've seen the last\_ of you

**Bass Guitar**

Bossa nova bass line

F<sup>13</sup> Dm<sup>7(b9)</sup> D<sup>6</sup> Cm<sup>9</sup> F<sup>13</sup> F/G Ab<sup>13</sup>

**S.**  
— you\_ you. Ri - o de Jan - ei - ro Blue Blue ooh ooh

**A.**  
F<sup>13</sup> you\_ Antiphony you. Ri - o de Jan - ei - ro Blue Blue ooh ooh

**T.**  
Seen the last of you, Ri - o de Jan - ei - ro Blue. Blue ooh ooh

**B.**  
Seen the last of you, Ri - o de Jan - ei - ro Blue. Blue ooh ooh

**Bass**

Tritone substitution Syncopation

My pedagogical strategy for the choral program in the BCM includes horizontal alignment of choral repertoire with the theory, musicianship and practical curriculum content across each year level of the BCM course, the transferability of skills learned in Choir to individual and extra-curricula instrumental/vocal activities, the repertoire's currency and relevance to students whilst maintaining musical integrity, and the "showcase" value of Choir performances as a visible marketable product for the course and university. The success of this approach is affirmed by the following statements:

The choir performed three songs, one of which was students' choice which enabled the students to have a strong sense of ownership in the ensemble. Annie's stewardship of the choir has been excellent and I look forward to seeing the choir develop as an integral part of the music program over the coming months and years (Course Co-ordinator, BCM, 2017).

I love that all year levels are welcome; I feel better after a Choir session, I enjoy it; it is definitely fun to interact and sing in a group; great for my confidence with vocals, really good to bring these skills back to my band (Choir, student feedback, 2017).

Further student feedback attests to improved self-efficacy: "It's been great for developing my voice and confidence with vocals; overall my singing improves, especially with the high difficulty parts; I can practise my sight reading and my ear training improves against the other part singers" (Choir, student feedback, 2017).

## **HEESP and APRA**

Two extra-curricula programs have complemented core offerings in the BCM for several years. These programs, funded by competitive national grant schemes, have been designed to promote Australian musicians and composers and integrate their work into the BCM curricula. The HEESP (Higher Education Equity and Support Program) facilitated annual concerts, workshops and artist residencies by Australian women musicians and composers; and was offered from 2004-2010.

The Australasian Performing Rights Association (APRA) represents over 47,000 composers, lyricists and music publishers throughout Australia and New Zealand (“Apra Amcos, n.d.). Through annual competitive grants from APRA, the BCM has been enriched by a Visiting Artist Program since 2002. Contemporary musicians are invited to attend the university to present performances, guest lectures and workshops about their music, compositions and career management. Many of these artists are women currently successful in the contemporary music industry; some are now BCM graduates. The APRA Visiting Artist Program is integrated into the songwriting, composition and production areas of the BCM curricula. Both the HEESP and APRA programs have illuminated the careers of Australian contemporary female musicians, exhibited role models who provide mentorship for our students, and established networks between successful musicians working in myriad aspects of the music industry and students aspiring to such careers.

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

There are significant musical, pedagogical and professional lessons demonstrated in the examples of women's work described above. The inclusion of repertoire written by women in all music education is imperative and the aim of increasing their representation should be strongly advocated and supported. An effective approach to fulfil this aim is to target specific women whose careers establish a benchmark of excellence through the musical integrity and standard of their creative work, have significantly impacted on the music industry, and which model sustainable, professional expertise. The selection of any repertoire for study into higher education music curricula requires justification through a rigorous pedagogical framework that is applied to *all* repertoire, so that the course learning outcomes, vocational objectives and graduate attributes of the university are achieved. For women music educators, such institutional and disciplinary requirements can be adapted strategically to achieve their academic career objectives. Recommended strategies include women musicians/educators writing their own educational resources, composing musical arrangements for use in teaching, performing and publishing original works and researching their own creative practice, thus making significant contributions to contemporary repertoire and related scholarship of music of all styles. Ideally, engagement in such musical activities can allow women musicians the fulfilment of their personal creative potential, the creation of a legacy that inspires the lives of younger musicians, and enriches the musical repertoire available for musicians to study and perform.

“It was such a joy to be with a musician that celebrated the beauty of their own music”

(Schneider, 2018) on Brazilian composer Ivan Lins.

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# **Response guided workshops on musical interpretation: Developing a model for participatory instrumental teaching within higher music education**

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## **Abstract**

Earlier research indicates that the conservatoire tradition still influences higher music education. In the context of Western classical music, it has been criticised for unreflected use of the master–apprentice model, e.g., emphasising imitative aspects of one-to-one tuition, favouring technical over interpretive aspects of musicianship, and lack of systematic development of students’ autonomy.

Research on group learning of Western classical music within higher music education has highlighted that although students say that group lessons are valuable, they often do not realise the inherent learning potential. Also, students need instructions for how to prepare (and actually prepare) to be able to contribute actively during lessons.

Studies of text seminars have shown that student activity, quality of response, ownership of learning, and participation on equal terms can increase through using response models. Although growing attention is given to collaborative learning within higher music education, there is a

need to better understand how learning of musical interpretation could be developed using such models.

This paper aims to study how response guided workshops can be arranged to improve piano students' learning of musical interpretation of Western classical music. During autumn 2019, five workshops were conducted with a group of four piano students from the bachelor programme at one institution within higher music education in Sweden. In the response model used, students, one week before the workshop, scanned their scores, audio recorded their performances, described where they were in their interpretational process, and included questions directing the desired response. All participants shared their written response, and students beforehand selected topics to focus on during the workshop.

The produced empirical material consists of:

- scanned scores, audio recorded performances, and written instructions;
- participants' written responses;
- transcriptions of four workshops;
- reflective one-minute papers written at the end of each workshop; and
- the researcher's field notes and reflections.

The preliminary findings indicate the importance of communicative aspects and how a response model is implemented as challenging and changing established educational traditions are complicated. The students showed a limited capacity for verbalising their thoughts about musical interpretation, selecting topics to focus on during workshops, and tended to focus on details.

During the study, the students' understanding of musical interpretation seemed to increase, and

they stated that such workshops should be included in the curriculum. Consequently, further developing such workshops may contribute to increasing student autonomy and responsibility, equal participation, and multivoicedness.

### **Keywords**

musical interpretation, higher music education, Western classical music, prepared response, workshop, peer learning.

### **Introduction**

Earlier research indicates that the conservatoire tradition has been and remains a strong influence within higher music education (Burwell, 2005, 2006; Davidson & Jordan, 2007; Gaunt, 2008, 2009; Gaunt, Creech, Long, & Hallam, 2012; Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013; Holmgren, 2018, in press; Jørgensen, 2000, 2009; Nielsen, 1999). In the context of Western classical music, this tradition has been criticised for unreflected use of the master–apprentice model, e.g., emphasising imitative aspects of one-to-one tuition (Hultberg, 2010; Gaunt, 2009), and lack of systematic development of students’ autonomy (Holmgren, in press; see also Jørgensen, 2000, 2009; Szczepek Reed, 2017). Also, it has been indicated that teachers commonly relate to their own, rather than the student’s, understanding of a particular piece of music and of how it could or should be interpreted (Hultberg, 2008). Thus, instead of developing an individual understanding of musical interpretation, students seem to be expected and able to copy their teachers’ performances (Burwell, 2005; Kvale & Nielsen, 1999/2000), thus achieving “‘defined’ excellence” rather than “‘expansive’” ditto (Carey et al., 2013, p. 362). Consequently, too little attention appears to be given to the areas of what (performative) musical interpretation is, which

interpretational paradigm the learning is taking place in, freedom of interpretation, and students' explorative approach (Holmgren, in press; see also Burnard, 2013; Haddon & Burnard, 2015, 2017).

## **Background**

Research on group learning of Western classical music has identified two important areas for improvement. First, although students say that group lessons are valuable (Hanken, 2015c; Nielsen, Johansen, & Jørgensen, 2018; Rumiantsev, Maas, & Admiraal, 2017), they do not (always) realise the inherent learning potential (Bjøntegaard, 2015a; Hanken, 2015b). Second, students need instructions for how to prepare (and to actually prepare) (Bjøntegaard, 2015b; Hanken, 2015a) to be able to make active contributions (Hanken, 2015a). Thus, there is a need to better understand how teachers can encourage and aid peer learning within higher music education (Hanken, 2016).

### **Response seminars.**

Text seminars have been studied, and models using prepared text-related response been developed to increase activity, learning, and participation on equal terms (Cronqvist & Maurits, 2016; Dysthe, Hertzberg, & Hoel, 2000/2011; Ferm Thorgersen & Wennergren, 2010; Rikandi, Karlsen, & Westerlund, 2010; Wennergren, 2007). Research has shown that formalised structures for how authors ask for response and how it should be given increase students' ownership of both their texts and the seminars, and that the focus tended to change from the specifics to the (more) general (Ferm Thorgersen & Wennergren, 2010; Wennergren, 2007); the quality of response increased as well as the authors' capacity to autonomously revise their texts

(Cronqvist & Maurits, 2016; Dysthe, Hertzberg, & Hoel, 2000/2011; Wennergren, 2007).

Although growing attention is given to collaborative learning within higher music education (Bjøntegaard, 2015a, 2015b; Blom, this volume; Carey & Coutts, 2019; Fern Thorgersen, 2014; Gaunt & Treacy, 2020; Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013; Hanken, 2015a, 2016; Johansen & Nielsen, 2019; Rumiantsev, Maas, & Admiraal, 2017; Rumiantsev, Admiraal, & van der Rijst, 2020), there is a need to better understand how learning of musical interpretation could be developed using prepared response models.

### **Requirements for a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Sweden.**

Although no specific criteria for music are given, students shall, for a degree of bachelor of fine arts in Sweden, demonstrate abilities such as critically reflecting on artistic approaches; identifying, formulating, and solving artistic and creative problems; presenting and discussing their artistic issues; making assessments informed by relevant artistic, social, and ethical issues; and identifying their need for further knowledge and taking responsibility for their learning (Swedish Code of Statutes [SFS] 1993:100). Consequently, such education must enable these students to develop adequate strategies and skills to achieve these goals.

### **Aim.**

This paper aims to study how response guided workshops can be arranged to improve piano students' learning of musical interpretation of Western classical music.

### **Method**

Participatory action research is in this paper viewed as a research approach where action and reflection appear in an iterative, cyclical process (Cain, 2008; Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Reason,

2006). Knowledge and learning are viewed from a hermeneutical perspective. Thus, the iterative movement between the parts and the whole, and the dialogical and verbal nature of the fusions of horizons (Gadamer, 1960/2013) has affected the study. Consequently, students' verbalisation is viewed as a tool for learning musical interpretation.

### **Participants.**

Participants were a group of four piano students consisting of the total number of students from the second and third year of the bachelor programme at one institution for higher music education in Sweden, and the researcher, who also led the workshops. The participants gave their informed consent, and ethical aspects were discussed multiple times during the study. As a leader or facilitator of the workshops, my knowledge of musical interpretation—as a pianist, experienced teacher, and analyst—was a prerequisite.

The reasons for not including the students' main instrument teacher in this study were twofold. First, to let the researcher remain in control over the situation, as an inclusion could increase the complexity of the relational dynamics. Second, as the study was based on equal participation, it would require that the teacher subscribed to this philosophy and acted accordingly.

### **Disposition of the workshops and description of the response model.**

The workshops, excluding the first focusing on introducing the study, applied the Piteå model (Ferm Thorgersen & Wennergren, 2010), collaboratively developed for PhD and research seminars, as follows:

1. Each workshop (2 hours long) centred around the work with two students' musical interpretations (approximately 45 minutes each).

2. One week before the workshop, the two students scanned their scores, audio recorded their performances, described where they were in their interpretational process of these works (already part of their coursework), included questions directing the desired response, and sent this to all participants.
3. All participants annotated the scanned scores or wrote a text in a separate document and shared their response at a negotiated time and date.
4. The two students beforehand selected topics to focus on during the workshop.
5. Both the prepared written response and workshops intended to develop the students' understanding of musical interpretation, knowledge about interpretational paradigms, freedom of interpretation, explorative approach (Holmgren, in press), and music-related argumentative competence (Rolle, 2013).
6. After each workshop, the form, content, model, and communicational strategies were evaluated to develop the workshops further.

Through such a structure, the definition of musical interpretation as such, how students' musical interpretation could be developed, and the workshops' dispositions were continuously verbalised and negotiated with the students. Thus, striving to achieve a multivoicedness (Dysthe, 1996), accepting and valuing a diversity of opinions and experiences, ultimately furthering equal participation.

Response thus took place both asynchronously during preparation to the workshops and synchronously during them. In preparation, all participants could listen to and study the material sent out multiple times, allowing time for contemplation and reflection not seldom lacking in traditional forms of instrumental education. Furthermore, through formulating instructions

directing the desired response and beforehand selecting topics to focus on during the workshops, the students were forced to thoroughly reflect on their current level of performance and which aspects they would like to improve. Through such preparation, the synchronous response given during the workshops, e.g., in the form of follow-up questions or comments of a musical performance, were based on a more informed understanding of the student's current and desired musical interpretation.

### **Content of the workshops.**

The aims, activities, and materials used in the workshops, as summarised in the table below, were roughly conceptualised from the start of the study based on earlier studies and my ongoing research. However, due to the study's developmental nature, the specific contents of the workshops were adapted to the students' expressed wishes and my understanding of their needs.

**Table 1.** The workshops' aims, activities, and materials.

<b>WS</b>	<b>Aims, activities, and materials</b>
1	Establishing a "communicative space" (Kemmis, 2001, p. 100), introducing the response model, and practicing giving response; recognising the difference between personal interpretation and how a student's specific musical interpretation could be improved, and highlighting the importance of the response relating to the score (including the student's and teacher's annotations) (see description below)
2	Practice using the response model and introducing the students to take responsibility for the workshop itself
3	Addressing students' tendency to focus on details, losing the overview of the global

perspective, through adapting and using the text triangle to the realm of musical interpretation

- 4 Discussing differences between the interpretation of a text and performative musical interpretation (Carlsen & Holm, 2017; Levinson, 1993), highlighting the importance of both internal (i.e., interpretational vision) and external listening (i.e., hearing both one's own and others' performances)
  - 5 Adapting and using the concept of aesthetical argumentation (Rolle, 2013) to develop giving, categorising, and evaluating response, and further a shared metalanguage for talking about both musical interpretation and response
- 

During the first workshop, the students three times got to listen and give response to an audio-recorded student performance of *Prelude and Fugue in B-flat major*, BWV 866 from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book I by Johann Sebastian Bach: first, without the score and not knowing which piece that would be performed; second, with the score; and third, with the score including annotations from both the student and teacher. The piece was selected due to three criteria. First, the two movements are relatively short, and part of a, for pianists, central baroque work. Second, the score contains no instructions regarding dynamics, articulation, and tempo, thus highlighting the need for the performer's interpretation. Third, I had access to both a score (containing annotations from teacher and student) and a recorded performance by a pre-professional student. This level was considered suitable for practising giving response.

## **Production and analysis of empirical material**

During autumn 2019, in total, five workshops (2 hours each, two or three weeks apart) were conducted.

The produced empirical material consists of:

- students' scanned scores, audio recorded performances, and written instructions;
- participants' written responses;
- transcriptions of the verbal dialogue from the video and audio recordings of four workshops (excluding the introductory);
- reflective one-minute papers written by all participants at the end of each workshop (Angelo & Cross, 1993, p. 148–153; Wilson, 1986);
- the researcher's field notes and reflections.

The preliminary analysis consists of multiple times viewing the recordings and reading the transcriptions and written documentation.

## **Preliminary findings and reflections**

The preliminary findings—primarily based on the researcher's field notes, written reflections, and experiences from the study—are mainly twofold. First, the implementation of response models for instrumental teaching deserves to be investigated more thoroughly, as challenging and changing established educational traditions are difficult. Second, the students showed a limited capacity for both verbalising their thoughts about musical interpretation and selecting topics to focus on, and tended to focus on details.

### **Communicative aspects and implementation of the response model.**

Challenging and changing established educational traditions is central for action research (Reason, 2006). As the organisation of teaching and learning include aspects of power and responsibility (Ferm Thorgersen & Wennergren, 2010), changes might at first create confusion, uncertainty, and make the situation more uncomfortable, when students' and teacher's roles have to change (Gaunt, 2009; Hanken, 2016). These new roles could also expose (new) areas in need of development. In this study, the main issues related to establishing a functioning communication and the implementation of the response model itself. Workshops based on prepared response entail that multiple deadlines are met, both for sending out material and for giving response. Such communication—first, using e-mail and later the university's learning management system—might have significantly differed from the ones the students' were used to in their instrumental tuition. The students' sometimes lacking communication and failure of meeting deadlines could have been interpreted as indicating a less engaged and more sceptical stance towards the study than in the end seemed to be the case.

Lastly, every implementation of a model will be different due to the group's composition and context. Thus, the complex skills that workshop leaders need in handling such settings should not be underestimated. The students expressed that my openness, non-judgmental attitude, and prestigelessness were crucial in establishing a fertile learning environment. For me, it was revealing to consciously alter between the roles of researcher, workshop leader, musician, and teacher, as their interests and rationales differ. Although I strived to have a reflective awareness and carefully monitor my practice, and articulate my choices to the participating students during the study (Kristiansen & Bloch-Poulsen, 2004; Reason, 2006), this could be elaborated in the final report.

### **Students' capacity for verbalisation and selection of topics.**

That the students showed a limited capacity for verbalising their thoughts about musical interpretation is in line with previous research that also has indicated that teachers question how often they explicitly talk about such matters (Holmgren, 2018, in press). Although needing more time for implementation, adapting and using the seven-stage competency model (favouritism, authority, taste relativism, subjectivism, conventionality, aesthetic judgment, and aesthetic discourse) proposed by Rolle (2013 & 2014; Rolle, Knörzer, & Stark, 2015) seemed valuable for strengthening students' music-related argumentative competence. Used as a pedagogical tool, it could potentially help students' develop their giving, categorising, and evaluation of response, and further a shared metalanguage for talking about such aspects.

The students reported that they found it easier to give response than selecting topics to focus on. This could indicate a limited self-awareness, capacity for listening to themselves, and training to autonomously judge response, potentially due to them mainly being used to teachers leading lessons, regardless of format.

That the students tended to focus on details, losing overview of the global perspective (see Hoel, 2000/2001, pp. 29–30), and viewed interpretation as a collection of beautiful passages in contrast to striving for a conception where the parts and the whole interact (Carlsen & Holm, 2017, p. 49) could indicate a cognitive overload (Sweller, 1988). If students lack knowledge of general principles for how interpretations could be formed within a particular interpretative paradigm, the task of viewing the larger picture might be very difficult. After having used an adaptation of the text triangle (Bereiter, 1980; Dysthe, Hertzberg, & Hoel, 2000/2011; Hillocks, 1987), we decided that students' instructions henceforth should include a written description of their

overarching interpretation of the particular piece. Furthermore, the model opened for discussions of interpretational paradigms, freedom of interpretation, and what musical interpretation is or could be (Holmgren, in press), which seemed to be a promising way of addressing a detail-focused approach.

Lastly, during the workshops, the students tended to start from the beginning of their pieces and continue phrase by phrase. This tendency might be understood as analogous to the writing practice of “what happens next” (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986), i.e., a dialogue where one person’s line determines the other’s answer. Such processes are additive, associative, and unable to handle overarching plans and large-scale rhetorical awareness. Although the resulting constructions have local coherence, they lack global and thematic dittoes (Evensen, 1990; Hoel, 2000/2001). The students may also be influenced by their (earlier) teachers’ practice of (mainly) commenting on details, potentially as a response to direct, specific questions. Teachers’ tendency to focus on details, and not explicitly make students aware of the relationship of the details and the whole, has been stated as problematic (Chronister, 2005, pp. 10–18 & 21–22).

## **Implications**

Although the preliminary findings and reflections articulated above do not draw from the whole empirical material, they should nonetheless both be valuable in the development of further research and the organisation of instrumental teaching in higher music education. During the study, the students’ understanding of musical interpretation and the function of response seemed to increase, and they stated that such workshops should be included in the curriculum. Consequently, further developing such workshops may contribute to increasing student

autonomy and responsibility, equal participation, and multivoicedness, i.e., opening for a diversity of opinions and experiences within instrumental teaching in higher music education.

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# **Positions and leaderABILITIES in Higher Music Education:**

## **Recomposition of the professional musician**

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### **Abstract**

This paper is part of the results of my PhD research on the influences of higher education on the professional identity of bachelor's in music. I present reflections on the recomposition of professional identity of the multi-subject musician. The study, conducted with 42 graduates from four Brazilian Higher Education Institutions, showed that the recomposition happens mediated by: 1) the instrument teacher at the under graduation course; 2) the training at the work (learning by doing); 3) the life experience, that goes beyond the professional environment. The answers presented in the questionnaires revealed a lack between the curriculum practice and the market label.

### **Keywords**

Professional development, LeaderABILITY, Higher Music Education.

### **Introduction**

According to Bennett & Stanberg (2006), it is quite common for people to take professional identity as synonymous with their position/occupation. Defining an identity becomes a complex

situation for musicians: “self-definition as a musician could report to a career as a performer, teacher, sound artist, administrator or researcher” (Bennett & Stanberg, 2006, p. 3). The authors argue that, in music, professional identities will be based on career aspirations and goals, which may be composed of various gaps between what is subjectively intended and what is actually made of an objective way.

Narrow or not, the gaps between objective and subjective aspirations could determine the subject's recompositions in his career as a professional. It demands the understanding of a “period humor”, conceived by the work trends, which consists in “emphasizing the weakening, precariousness, disassembly, and the consequent need for transformation of the 'traditional' career models, based around of the notion of employment inherited from industrial society” (Bendassolli, 2009, p. 388). The impasses experienced by professional musicians regarding jobs as stable positions and jobs as profitable occupations are aggravated in this trend, putting in face expectations and realities regarding the profession. This text, taken from a broader research, intends to discuss the recomposition of musician subjects who carry multiple characteristics to remain active in the world of work: the multi-subject.

In order to understand these recompositions, the following questions were posed: How were the practice and the professional market discussed during your undergraduate education? How do you understand training to work and training during the work (learning by doing)? What were your expectations of education and how did they relate to the job market?

The analysis of participants' answers pointed to three possible mediations for the subject's recomposition in the professional environment: 1) by the teacher of the instrument chosen as the

performance focus; 2) by training at work - practice and adaptation to actual working conditions and situations; 3) by the construction of the subject in the world - personal maturation, understanding of experiences, internal negotiations with social reality, and formative processes. These analyses will be presented in the first part of the text. These mediations can be interpreted within a more general framework of positions presented in the second part. Here, I present the concept of position (Nóvoa, 2017) and its derivations for actions to develop a kind of higher education based on ethics, professional sustainability, and human development. The conclusion recognizes the gaps in higher music education considering the profession of a musician as a maze. The reflections highlight the individual and collective dimensions of training as a leaderABILITY development exercise.

### **Recomposition mediations**

Yau (2016) argues that negotiations in building a professional identity in music involve external and internal dialogues largely influenced by bachelor's instrument teachers. In this research, the subjects who had this dialogic construction with their teachers during their training developed a more positive attitude in understanding their identity as a multi-subject. They left their courses more aware of the realities of the profession. Instrument teachers catalysed reflections on market realities and difficulties and the needs of multicompetence development. It should be noted, however, that this is not a practice of all teachers, nor an indication in the curriculum documents.

*VJ: I discussed this reality relatively often with my piano teacher in our classes. The difficulty of entering the market has always been a point raised.*

Neni: *I was especially discussing my instrument teacher (viola), who drew my attention to the importance of expanding my areas of interest and knowledge, to have more acting alternatives, given the scarcity of positions in our profession.*

According to Huhtanen (2012), professional identity will only be built in the real work environment. One of the questions I asked was about the differentiation between job training to work and training at the work (Grossi, 2003), learning to do or learning by doing.

Abc: *Training at the work for me it's experience. The person plays, records, does everything they have to do to gain experience and know-how they do it; what works, and what doesn't. And then, over time, the person probably going to make a lot of mistakes, probably, but in time one going to know a little bit about it ... I did it 500 times, I missed 300... But after 300 I started to hit and since then I just hit.*

Lorena: *And the job training was exactly what I did, right? Come on! I studied a little, but it goes in the face and the courage. And sometimes you don't even know if you're making a mistake. You do your best but have no assistance. You go on doing it, after a few months you find out you did something wrong you have to go back and fix everything. So ... it's a more "by rook or by crook" process.*

The contributors used the terms “by hook or by crook” which, in colloquial language, express action by virtue of practical necessity. Much of this need arises, according to them, by a gap between the higher education and life situations outside the academic field.

*A.: I studied performance at school and everything. But music is not just a musical matter. There are several things that involve music training. It is not enough to play well. There are many things that determine including the permanence of people in the job market. For example, there are a lot of guys who play very well but have an out-of-work behavior that compromises the good development of the project. And it happens a lot. Sometimes it plays very well, but it has problems for reasons of behavior.*

Practice, as a field of experience, through necessity builds the identity of the multisubject capable of perceiving and adapting to those needs. The experience was analysed as the last mediator: the acquisitions and mobilizations of different capitals in the fields in which the subjects are acting.

The professional transition processes showed breaches of expectations with the training that impacted the identity construction, both positively and negatively. Positive impacts were generated in the confrontation between the lack of something and the adaptation to the work demand. Negative impacts directly affected internal psychological contracts and were generated by both external and internal interference in the process of professional maturation. It revealed the instabilities and doubts in the process of identity construction.

*Bratsche: I thought about changing jobs because it's so hard to stay in the field earning so little.*

*Elias: It was hard to continue the course out of fear, insecurity about my ability.*

In the process of professional transition, the confrontation between expectation and the reality in career building evidenced higher education unrelated to the realities of the labor market.

*Rabello: In the technical part as an instrumentalist, we have contact with the various techniques of the instrument. But I think the preparation for the current market is very lacking. The requirements and how to behave and create alternatives to be a performer. An example I had no experience with recording at college and then came across it is having difficulties. As an instrument teacher, I later came across having to deal with a variety of musical genres which I was not aware of during my graduation. And I still have a hard time formatting projects and taking it forward, given the many facets that a musical project has, from administrative, financial, marketing, and all the planning that involves.*

This gap in the training process could be the key to interpreting the career development and professional identities of the multisubjects who graduate (Ascenso, McCormick & Perkins, 2016). The awareness of the multiplicity of the subjects in their formation and in their process of professional transition should be discussed and observed by higher music education in a critical, realistic, effective, and efficient manner.

### **Establishing positions: leaderABILITIES in higher education training processes**

Higher education, as a field of practice of habitus and acquisition of capital (Bourdieu, 2008), mediated the subject's reconfiguration in relation to work. The understanding and awareness of what the process of initial education (higher education) can include, as well as what HEIs can do

for processes of professional induction and transition, is relevant. For this reason, I adapt and suggest the action model by positions, as presented by Nóvoa (2017).

It is necessary to understand how to mark a position not only on a personal level but also within a given professional setting. Next, it is crucial to realize that positions are not fixed but depend on permanent negotiation within a given professional community. In this sense, positionality is always relational. Finally, it is important to look at the position as a position-making, that is, as the public statement of a profession (Nóvoa, 2017).

Nóvoa's reflections revolve around reform in higher education that addresses changes in curricular practices, pedagogical conceptions, and positions of educational institutions in their actions as public-political institutions. These reforms, in line with the views of Carruthres (2019), and Bennett and Freer (2012), impact the processes of identity and career-building, besides demanding to take of the positions from each subject involved.

**Personal disposition: Learning to be a musician.**

The choice of career is very much based on the taste and pleasure in making music. The choice is pointed out as “the first weakness of the profession” (Nóvoa, 2017, p.1121). It is necessary to know the motivations of undergraduates and their predispositions for the courses to offer effective training. In order, for students to understand their training processes and where they are being inserted, the course must provide knowledge of the profession. It is a double way path. "Becoming [a professional musician] is turning a predisposition into a personal disposition." Therefore, time-spaces must be created for: 1) a “self-knowledge and self-construction work”; 2) for developing the processes of identification and building of professional identities; 3) for the

accompaniment and “reflection on the profession from the first day of college” (Nóvoa, 2017, p.1121). Learning to be musicians or to become a musician, is an exercise that demands “the development of own cultural and scientific life” (Nóvoa 2017, p.1121). This applies to both musicians in training and higher education teacher. “It is necessary to have a thickness, a cultural density” (Nóvoa, 2017, p.1121) for a formative richness. Technical training, in a musical instrument or an exclusive music style, must be transcended. Becoming a musician requires understanding music and higher music education as a total social fact - “a phenomenon of a systemic, structural and complex character, therefore pluri-dimensional” (Kleber, 2006, p. 27).

In this disposition the building of the professional ethos ethical dimension must also be observed. The dimensions of the respect, the help, and the sharing knowledge and experiences, the values of justice and social equity, all of these go through the process of professional training and will reflect directly on the quality of the professionals (Renshaw, 2007).

Finally, in the personal willingness to learn to be a musician, it is necessary for trainees and trainers to have the understanding that musicians “must prepare to act in an environment of uncertainty and unpredictability” (Nóvoa, 2017, p. 1122) professional. In arts and music this theme is better explored by Menger (2000). It is becoming a common reality in countries, such as Brazil, that suffer from political instabilities that directly affect education and culture systems.

### **Professional Interposition: Learning to feel like a musician.**

The axis of any vocational training is in contact with the profession, knowledge, and socialisation in each professional community.

It is not possible to train doctors without the presence of other doctors and without the experience of health institutions. Likewise, it is not possible to form [musicians] without the presence of other [musicians] and without the experience of institutions [and spaces where the music takes place]. This simple statement has great consequences in the way of organizing [musician's] training programs. (Nóvoa 2017, p.1122)

How to minimise the gap between training and the profession? The paths most adopted by higher education institutions, which have already understood the need for curricular and pedagogical reforms, are inter-institutional collaboration and supervised insertion of undergraduates in professional communities. After all, “it is in collaboration, in its potentialities for learning and in its democratic qualities that the formative paths are defined” (Nóvoa 2017, p.1122).

The development of leadership qualities involves self-knowledge, self-management, and management of others, adaptability, and collaboration (Renshaw, 2007). However, leadership should not be considered merely as the development of leaders who, in the work organisation relationship, are leading others. To translate this word to Brazilian Portuguese could create confusion and simplification of the complexity that encompasses leadership processes. So, I would suggest the term leaderABILITY: a state of consciousness of leading and being led, that is, conducting one's personal and professional education and development. It allows oneself to be conducted in the collaborative constructions of oneself in different communities of practice, whether professional or not. With this understanding, I reinforce the idea of the development of skills and knowledge not only of the individual who is in training but of actions that derive from all positions that make up the formative environment.

Partnerships are relationships between individuals who share perspectives, engagements, in an open communication process. They involve dialogue, planning, management, negotiation, and obviously generate tensions that must be resolved at their multiple levels (Renshaw, 2010).

Institutional partnerships, whether public-public or public-private, connect formative processes with social realities, giving assistance in the process of professional induction, in the transition from student to professional status. Teachers, institutions, and students can share a realistic view of their goals by designing common projects, short, medium, and long term.

Establishing such partnerships, a function of institutional leadership is not as simple as my writing can make it seem. Such partnerships need to overcome: a) the bureaucratisation of public systems, education, and culture (Silva Ferreira, 2010), b) the worldviews of the academic field that have distanced themselves from the professional field - changes of conservatory habitus (Pereira, 2013) beyond mere cosmetic action; c) the difficulties arising from political changes, devaluation of education and culture (Souza & Soares, 2019). It is a multilateral effort and requires a personal, individual, and collective willingness for such overcoming.

### **Professional Composition: Learn to act as a musician.**

Professional knowledge, such as human and emotional capital, is located as 1) Knowing how to put oneself in the professional market, and in front of other professionals. 2) Having tactfulness to understanding the musical environment - what kind of music, for example? Or having it in interpersonal treatment - relationship with other musicians, parents, students, contractors, organisations, institutions, etc. 3) To have discernment: “that is, the ability to judge and decide in daily professional life” (Nóvoa, 2017, p.1127). It is an “art of doing” (De Certeaux, cited in Nóvoa, 2017, p.1127) that transcends simple know-how, but integrates experiences of individual

and collective professional practices. It is a knowledge that comes from reflection and daily research in praxis (Freire, 1996; Vásquez, 2011).

Professional knowledge will vary within the individual understanding of what it is to be a musician and how to be a musician. It is a constant recreation of professional habitus (Silva Souza, 2019). At the professional discernment, which considers the daily performances, the maintenance and sustainability of the career, one of the values considered is the entrepreneurship. Far beyond owning his own business, the entrepreneur is a leader of himself; a person that exercises his leadership, understanding his spaces and seeking changes that favor his autonomy - be it financial, emotional, among others. A kind of selfpreneurship.

## **Conclusion**

The professional identities of bachelor's in music are multiple due to the multiplicity of their profession. The subjects are being recomposed from their training and from their experiences at work. They are multisubjects recreating themselves in the labyrinth of music as a kind of work.

The role of the higher education teacher proved to be preponderant, either in the construction of reflection on the profession (Yau, 2016) or as a professional model of how to be or not to be (Silva Souza, 2016). The roles of educational institutions were also central, as they foster training and practice models, and as a legitimiser of professional knowledge (Bourdieu, 2008), as a house of knowledge (Nóvoa, 2017). Both teachers in higher music education and institutions exercise leadership and create leaderABILITIES conditions. They can promote situations of professional induction establishing partnerships with professional communities; reformulating

themselves to teaching that better understands their own profession, and finally, developing different positions in the professional training of musicians.

However, the effective development of these conditions, although supported by the academic and professional field, is still individual. Developing leaderABILITY and career sustainability is a daily personal exercise of self-awareness and insight into what to do, what steps to take. It is a decision making in the face of the possibilities that the professional environment offers. It is putting into practice “self-knowledge, knowing one's strengths and weaknesses, their tastes, values, and ideals. It is “having the imagination, flexibility, and initiative to explore new avenues and possibilities in the musical, cultural and educational domains”. It is understanding the profession as a maze. It is having a reflective and proactive attitude to one's own practice and the needs of the market”. It is exposing himself as a professional with the possibility of adapting to new demands, “having the motivation to renew one's skills through a coherent, structured system of professional development. that is relevant to the changing needs of the music industry” (Renshaw, 2007, p.30). It is being aware of its place in the world.

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# **Synchronous online lessons: A gateway to learning for older adults**

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## **Abstract**

Distance teaching has emerged as a viable alternative or supplement to face-to-face instrumental music instruction. To date, most of the research on synchronous distance lessons has focused on children or young adults. The third age is recognised as a psycho-social development stage of adulthood that encompasses people who are semi- or fully-retired but still active in pursuing learning, leisure and volunteer activities. Census agencies throughout the world note that the population over the age of 65 in the developed world is increasing rapidly and predict that the third age group will form a significant portion of the population by 2050. Since many adults pursue individual music study during the third age, this case study explored benefits and drawbacks of two sexagenarians studying cello and harp at a community music school via synchronous distance music lessons. Data were triangulated and the constant-comparison method was used to identify common themes of their online study experience. Common themes included: musical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual benefits; gratitude for the opportunity to study an instrument online; finding meaningful ways to share music with others; and, experiencing few technology issues or drawbacks in the online lesson environment. Implications for teacher education are discussed.

## **Keywords**

leisure learners, musical and psycho-social benefits, online instrumental lessons, synchronous online music instruction, third-age.

## **Introduction**

### **The older adult and benefits of music study.**

Census data reveal that populations of developed countries are aging more rapidly than those in less-developed countries. By 2050, the world population over the age of 65 will have increased 7%, to one in six people (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019). In the United States, 25% of the population will be over the age of 60 by 2040 and the number of people over the age of 65 will reach 88.5 million by 2050. Third age has been used to denote the life stage of retirement, when adults are actively pursuing learning, leisure and volunteer activities (Laslett, 1991).

Researchers have studied third-age adults who participate in formal music making activities (Creech et al., 2014). From a biological standpoint, markers for stress-related genes were suppressed in healthy adults after an hour of professionally-guided group music making (Wachi et al., 2007). Increased cognitive function, specifically improvements in working memory, have been demonstrated by adults who experienced music lessons (Bugos et al., 2007). Older adults engaged in group piano instruction exhibited improved cognitive control, processing speed and verbal fluency, even after short, but intense, periods of piano training (Bugos & Kochar, 2017).

Older adults engage in intellectual or musical activities to gain new knowledge and prevent cognitive declines (Gilhooly et al., 2007; Pike, 2001). Third-age music participants regularly report social, emotional and skill improvements as benefits of musical engagement (Coffman, 2002; Perkins & Williamon, 2014). Solé et al., (2010) found that regular musical activity contributed toward maintaining a high quality of life. Quality of life benefits are accentuated, if considered through Hettler's (1976) six dimensions of wellness model. Hettler contended that adults maintain healthy lives if they engage in occupational, physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual activities. It stands to reason then, once work activities cease in the third age, that the other five dimensions of wellness become more important for a healthy lifestyle.

### **Barriers to music making and the online gateway.**

Not all third-age adults live in urban areas or have access to qualified adult music educators. As people move into the fourth age, mobility problems can limit participation in musical activities. Indeed, Americans over the age of 75 reported a 3% decrease in the amount of time that they spent socialising and participating in arts activities, compared with when they were younger. Decreased mobility was one reason cited for this decline (Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics, 2012). Could online music lessons help to increase participation in leisure music activities as the population ages?

In music, distance teaching is recognised as a viable alternative to face-to-face instrumental music instruction, when qualified instructors are not available (Bennett, 2010). Expert online instrumental teachers create environments where typical student learning behavior is exhibited (Pike, 2020). Advantages over traditional instrumental lessons, such as more eye contact and increased student

performance time during online lessons have been reported (Dammers, 2009; Orman & Whitaker, 2010; Pike & Shoemaker, 2013).

Technology use among people in the third age is commonplace. Sixty-two percent of adults over the age of 65 own a computer and 59% of older adults use the Internet regularly (Zickuhr, 2014). Pike (2011) found that third-age students in a group piano class became empowered to use and assist peers in using music technology during in-class and ensemble experiences. To date, few studies have reported how third-age music students might be using online technology to learn a musical instrument.

This paper reports on part of a larger collective case study that sought to explore the benefits and drawbacks of individual synchronous distance music lessons from the perspective of older adults. It reports on the case of two students, a cellist and a harpist, who engaged in regular, weekly online lessons. Specific benefits experienced by these students and implications for future educators will be examined.

## **Purpose of the Study**

Researchers studying music learning across the lifespan should learn about current practice that will inform progress in the music education field (Myers, 2008). The purpose of this case study was to understand the experience of synchronous online instrumental music study from the perspective of two third-age adults. The researcher sought to:

- discover musical and non-musical benefits of instruction;
- identify best practices in teaching;

- determine which mechanisms for student support are necessary for older adults, and;
- ascertain whether or not online music instruction might be a viable alternative to traditional music instruction for older adults.

A successful online program at a large community music school in Minneapolis, Minnesota (USA) with 13,000 students of all ages was identified. The administrators, teachers and students agreed to participate in the study.

## **Method**

This was a phenomenological case study of two older adults (over the age of 62) who were engaged in ongoing online music lessons. The study participants studied the harp and cello with experienced teachers. Subjects completed initial online surveys, which were followed up by in-depth Skype interviews with the researcher. Interviews were recorded using Screenflow (<http://www.telestream.net/screenflow>), transcribed and each individual case was studied for themes using the constant-comparison method. A sample lesson was recorded, transcribed and reviewed by the researcher to corroborate statements made by subjects, to identify best practices in teaching and to identify potential themes that did not emerge from interviews. Teachers completed a survey and participated in Skype interviews. A profile was created for each student, then the cases were compared to identify common themes. Data were triangulated through survey data, interview transcripts, lesson videos and member checks. Individual subjects are referenced by pseudonym throughout this paper.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Why online music?**

Danielle lives in a small community about 1,300 miles from her teacher. Once she decided to pursue harp lessons, she realised that all of her support (from purchasing an instrument to obtaining lessons) would have to come from online resources. Sandra lives in an isolated location where she is “32 miles from a quart of milk.” There were no qualified cello teachers in the closest community, so she explored unconventional options for musical instruction. Each student noted that studying her instrument had been an important goal upon retirement and online lessons were the only viable option for weekly lessons.

### **Institutional support & personal rapport.**

The community music school provided appropriate technical support. The students cited the online manager’s calm, welcoming demeanor during Skype chats and the thoroughness of the complimentary online preparation (tech checks), as allaying any fears they had about online lessons. While “tech checks” typically took about 15 minutes, the online manager scheduled follow-up appointments to tweak equipment, ensuring that the technology functioned smoothly prior to lessons. Even at a distance, the online manager established a rapport with each student, setting a positive tone for the subsequent learning. Neither student spent more than ten minutes setting up for weekly lessons.

The teachers adapted if technology glitches arose. Online faculty at the school availed of several options to develop skills for online teaching, including: online lesson observations and evaluations; one-to-one IT training; online peer practice teaching; individual IT support during

lessons; institutional video and written resources; and, support from various colleagues across the country.

Additionally, the teachers demonstrated that they cared about their students, which was valued by the older learners. The cello teacher gave Sandra extra time following a lesson cancellation due to a technology issue on the student's end. The harp teacher found an instrument for Danielle to play at her son's out-of-state wedding. These deeds were not required by a studio policy or contract, but were examples of how the teachers understood the needs of their students, both in and out of the studio, and how they cared about the person they were teaching.

The teachers were aware of each student's personal needs and goals for music study and understood physical or cognitive challenges that each faced due to age. The teachers adapted instruction to suit the individual. They were patient, kind, supportive, but honest with the students about what needed improvement and held them to high standards. Rapport had developed between each teacher and student. Their relationships developed primarily through weekly online interactions and music making. Thus, positive experiences and rapport can be generated through online lessons.

### **Benefits & drawbacks of online music study.**

Most of the benefits described by the students fell into the musical or quality of life categories (personal gratification, fulfillment of musical ambition and intellectual satisfaction).

Convenience and accessibility of the technology, which also emerged as beneficial for these students, fall under the quality of life category, but as these have not been cited in previous

research, they are singled out here. Additionally, spiritual and emotional benefits emerged. The students spoke about how playing and practicing brought them emotional fulfillment and peace. Sandra noted that playing her instrument was a spiritual and healing experience.

Students cited specific benefits of online music instruction including: the ability to pursue a lifelong dream; being able to study the specific instrument; convenience; optimal use of time; ease of using the technology; direct and clear feedback from the teacher; musical modeling by the teacher; and, effective, efficient, productive and enjoyable learning. The students knew they could not get away with errors in the online environment. Each noted that her teacher maintained high standards and held her accountable during lessons. The students appreciated those teacher attributes. They insisted that their teachers could hear and see them extremely well via Skype. They believed that their online music study kept the mind nimble and the fingers limber as they aged.

The students had difficulty identifying drawbacks of online music study. When pressed, common drawbacks included: occasional computer/technology glitches; lack of physical presence when trying to learn specific physical gestures; the online environment demanded more attention from the student to see or hear subtle details; and, not being able to study in a group setting online. Students noted that lack of access to an instrument or a high-speed Internet connection would be a barrier for some older people who could benefit from the musical opportunity.

### **The third-age novice: Starting over at sixty.**

These women led successful and demanding professional lives prior to retirement. Consistent with previous research on adults who pursue music lessons in the third age, the feeling of being a novice at an older age was disconcerting. They experienced nervousness prior to lessons and found it stressful to make errors or not play to their full potential during lessons. However, the compassionate teachers and supportive lesson environment helped them to persist. They cited the joy that they experienced when playing alone and the calm they felt during practice as reasons to learn to cope with the stress of individual lessons.

The students noted age-related physical issues. They recognised that their cognitive processing had slowed, but were willing to adjust weekly learning objectives, put in extra practice time to meet their goals and discussed these concerns with their teachers. Similar age-related issues have been noted previously (Edwards-Henry et al., 2011). The teachers accommodated specific learner needs by adjusting weekly assignment expectations, adapting fingering, slowing tempi and providing ample time to experience new skills. Interestingly, the students mistakenly believed that were learning at a slower pace than their peers. They did not attribute this to the online environment, but to their age. Older students who study in group settings tend to recognise that their learning is at parity with their peers (Pike, 2018).

### **Sharing with others.**

While adults engage in informal music learning online (Kruse & Veblen, 2012), these students only occasionally used the Internet (to listen to specific performances or to learn more about an unfamiliar music technique). They were not aware of online communities for their instrument or

for older music learners. Peer interaction and social support through music making is one of the benefits of group activities for older adults. Due to the distance between each teacher and student, and due to limitations of technology at present, the community music school did not provide any institutional support for online students to share music. Yet, the students felt adequately supported in their learning and they did not feel isolated by the experience of online lessons.

Initially, the students reported that they had no desire to share music with others, since they took lessons and played to satisfy personal desires and emotional needs. Yet, these students did share music with others, in ways that were personally meaningful. Sandra played cello duets and performed for her grandson. Danielle played at nursing homes with a group, two to three times each month. While they believed that performing was not a necessity, the students were sharing music with others who were important to them. They were making and using music in powerful ways outside of the lesson.

### **Gratitude.**

The students expressed gratitude for the opportunity to study their instrument online, with exceptional teachers. Playing a musical instrument satisfied important needs. Yet, without the option of online lessons, neither Sandra nor Danielle would have had weekly access to a teacher. They were profoundly grateful for the benefits that online lessons brought to their daily lives.

## **Implications for Music Education**

With respect to bringing music to the underserved, practitioners are exploring the potential of the Internet. Shoemaker (2011) taught piano students in rural Zambia via a keyboard and computer connected to the Internet in the village community center. Pike (2015, 2017) demonstrated how an online teaching internship for pedagogy majors could reach underprivileged students beyond the local community. If a tablet, with a high-quality camera and microphone, an Internet connection and an instrument can be securely set up in a local community center, adults could avail of online music lessons. In the meantime, the population of older learners may benefit from studying an instrument from their homes.

The emotional, spiritual and intellectual benefits experienced by the students in this study would be valuable for many in the older population. If online instruction can be harnessed as a gateway to music, the long-held desire to learn a musical instrument might be realised. Future educators should consider how to accommodate older learners in the online environment. Pedagogy classes may already include modules that train preservice teachers to work with music technology or adult learners. However, specific content on working with third-age learners and in developing skills to teach music online should be incorporated into existing curricula.

When teaching music online, instructors must give full attention to the student to detect subtle visual and aural cues. They need to understand, cope and calmly deal with technology glitches that arise during lessons. Institutional support for online technology, equipment maintenance and teacher training are recommended for optimal musical and learning experiences. Music

education students should observe and critique quality online instruction. Even peer teaching online can help to develop important pedagogical and online skills.

Finally, teachers of older adults need to remember that although they possess musical expertise, the student brings a lifetime of experiences to lessons. The goals for music study should be reached in partnership with the student (Pike, in press). Teachers may have to adjust teaching strategies, adapt the lesson pacing, slow the tempi of music requiring complex motor skills and remember that while important to the student, music is only one of many activities that they are pursuing during retirement (Pike, in press). Learning how to maintain high standards, while enjoying the process of music making are critical skills for teachers of older adults to develop. It takes courage for adults who were accomplished in their professional lives, but whose bodies do not always respond to mental commands, to enter our virtual studios as novices. Thus, the lesson space is sacred; what occurs there, when the pupil and master teacher collaborate and make music, can transcend many other experiences.

## **Conclusions**

While findings of case studies are not generalisable, in this study of two healthy sexagenarians pursuing instrumental lessons online, the benefits outweighed drawbacks. Although it was beyond the scope of this study to quantify benefits resulting from music lessons, these students reported psychosocial, intellectual and musical benefits of online music study.

As a larger portion of the population enters the third age, and as they explore ways to improve their quality of life, retirees will turn to music to meet personal, emotional, social, spiritual and

musical needs. However, not everyone lives in a location where there is access to quality music instruction. For the third-age students involved in this project, studying music online helped them to satisfy musical and emotional desires, and it brought joy and meaning to their daily lives. It may be that synchronous online lessons are a gateway to music making for older adults.

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# **Making a difference in the world: Social entrepreneurship in three American music conservatories**

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## **Abstract**

Music conservatories traditionally educate and train exceptionally talented musicians for professional careers primarily in Western classical styles. Conservatories ‘conserve’ the musical canon, potentially museum-ising both art forms and artists, creating rarified havens of elite musicians performing for elite and often wealthy patrons. Whether or not this description has ever been fully accurate, some conservatories are rethinking and reorganising their core institutional missions to reflect not only the individual development of artistic talent but also artists’ integral role in society. These conservatories also seek to expand the range of skills and options leading to long-term career sustainability for their graduates.

This paper provides a brief overview of three distinct, forward-looking American conservatories responding to a rapidly changing world by embracing mission-driven approaches to preparing young musicians for the unknown realities of their future artistic careers. Acknowledging the pace and scope of local and global change along with their institutional culture, they educate their students to meet challenges with eyes wide open, well-prepared artistically, technically, and philosophically to create and adapt with confidence, skill, compassion, and values-based

responsibility. This paper also responds to a challenge raised by the authors of the CMS Manifesto (2014) advocating passionately for significant changes in music major education: “What responsibilities, if any, does the curriculum have relative to the greater good of society?” (Sarath, Myers, & Campbell, 2017, p. 34).

No single formula provides universal direction for this work. All three conservatories in this study prioritise the importance of the artist-citizen, social entrepreneurship, and the teaching artist to show students “a very broad definition of success in the music world” (Javian, 2019). By aligning social responsibility and the role of the artist in society with the practical imperative of helping graduates create satisfying, meaningful, and sustainable careers as musicians, these programs represent a significant shift in meeting the profound opportunities, realities, and challenges of a globally connected world.

### **Keywords**

Social justice, social entrepreneurship, audience engagement, 21st-century musician.

### **Introduction**

Music conservatories traditionally educate and train exceptionally talented musicians for professional careers primarily in Western classical styles. Conservatories ‘conserve’ the musical canon, potentially museum-ising both art forms and artists, creating rarified havens of elite musicians performing for elite and often wealthy patrons. Whether or not this description has ever been fully accurate, some conservatories are rethinking and reorganising their core

institutional missions to reflect not only the individual development of artistic talent but also artists' integral role in society.

This paper provides a brief overview of three distinct, forward-looking American conservatories responding to a rapidly changing world by embracing mission-driven approaches to preparing young musicians for the unknown realities of their future artistic careers. Acknowledging the pace and scope of local and global change related to their institutional culture, they educate their students to meet challenges with eyes wide open, well-prepared artistically, technically, and philosophically to create and adapt with confidence, skill, compassion, and values-based responsibility. This paper also responds to a challenge raised by the authors of the CMS Manifesto (2014) advocating passionately for significant changes in music major education: “What responsibilities, if any, does the curriculum have relative to the greater good of society?” (Sarath, Myers, & Campbell, 2017, p. 34). By illustrating several innovative approaches prioritising social justice and community engagement integrated within a high-level conservatory music education, I hope to engender thoughtful discussion around possible new approaches to preparing young musicians for successful and meaningful lives in music.

First, I provide broad context around the role of social responsibility in elite music conservatories, defining and contextualising the topic. Next, I describe the motivations and actions of these conservatories to reconsider their mission and curriculum in light of rapidly changing social structures and changes in higher education in the U.S. I compare and contrast how each conservatory's educational philosophies and culture have informed curricular changes and review ways they integrate an awareness of social justice and societal changes, ultimately

creating artists who are social entrepreneurs. Finally, I conclude with analysis and additional ideas for further exploration.

## **Conservatories and social responsibility**

What, if any, accountability do conservatories have in promoting the public good? How can conservatories stay relevant in these fraught social, environmental, and political times? (Bebbington, 2014; Sarath, Myers, & Campbell, 2017; Sotomayor & Kim, 2009; Tregear, et. al., 2016). How do conservatories educate socially responsible citizens as integrated artist-citizens, reinforcing the potent role of artists in society, thoughtfully prepared with the tools, experience, and compassion to serve as “change agents for a greater good in and through music creation and participation that provides expressively rich experiences consistent with the realities of musical experience across times and cultures” (Meyers, 2017, p. 139)?

Building consciously cultivated, deep audience engagement has become a core value of increasing numbers of conservatories (Grant, 2019; Sarath, Myers, & Campbell, 2017). While community-based performances in hospitals, prisons, and schools have become common in many conservatories, some conservatories address community and audience engagement from a profoundly philosophical perspective. Older educational presentation models (one colleague described these as “drive-by assemblies”) often focused on knowledge transfer or entertainment prioritised for performer/institutional needs rather than those of the audience. Newer models encourage longer-term relationships with high levels of active engagement with audience members, whether children, seniors, prisoners, or hospital patients. A shift to often student-driven, creative problem-solving, confidence-building responsibilities may cultivate attitudes,

skills, and experiences becoming incorporated into conservatory students' artistic identity (Booth, 2009; Elliott, Silverman, & Bowman, 2016).

On a practical level, conservatories also seek to expand the range of skills and options leading to long-term career sustainability for their graduates. By developing audience engagement, program development, management, and organisational skills, young artists' expand their musical identity beyond the concert hall. These additional income streams can help them transition from school into both fulfilling and sustainable professional lives (M. Javian, personal communication, November 5, 2019; Kaschub, 2009; B. Pertyl, personal communication, November 12, 2019; K. Zorn, personal communication July 12, 2019). Ongoing substantive community connections can build future audiences and may increase public funding support (Javian, 2019; Kaschub, 2009; Pertyl, 2019; Tregear, 2016; Zorn, 2019).

Rather than primarily music for music's sake, many advocate for well-rounded graduates, educated for good citizenship (Elliott, Silverman, & Bowman, 2016; Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2008; Grant, 2019; Tregear, 2014; Tregear, et.al., 2016). "The way forward," says Tregear, is to "produce graduates who have an empowered sense of agency and responsibility for the musical culture that now surrounds us," and the three conservatories described below demonstrate this approach (Bebbington, 2014, n.p.). Continuing background and context, the next section defines social justice and social entrepreneurship, the central focus of my study of these groundbreaking conservatories.

### **Defining social justice and social entrepreneurship.**

The core objective of social justice is to create “a fair and equal society in which each individual matters, their rights are recognised and protected, and decisions are made in ways that are fair and honest” (Oxford Reference). Broadly speaking, the current and rising generations of college-age students often simultaneously embrace a holistic, socially conscious mindset while recognising the practicality of business-minded entrepreneurship skills in tackling social, political, environmental, and other global issues (DiMaggio, 1982; Feldman, 2017; Fry & Parker, 2018; Woodcock, n.d.).

With social justice as the noun, social entrepreneurship provides the verb, the action. “Social entrepreneurs... are creative problem-solvers who instigate social, economic and/or environmental change” (Ng & Jones, n.d.). Traditionally, professional musicians are trained with a highly technical, vocational approach centered on the young artist, a highly individualised, mentorship orientation long considered necessary for optimal talent development and achievement. For gifted, highly skilled and driven young musicians, the notion of social entrepreneurship may require a fundamental shift in world-view and a new awareness of the potential roles of an artist in society yet the broadly generational shift toward social responsibility may support this approach (Feldman, 2017; Fry & Parker, 2018; Graf & Igielnik, 2019; Sarath, Myers, & Campbell, 2017; Woodcock, n.d.).

While social justice has a robust history in primary/secondary and community music education research, the concept is still emerging at the tertiary level (Benedict, Schmidt, Spruce, & Woodford, 2015; Gould, 2009; Hess, 2017; Thekaekara and Thekaekara, c. 2004; Theoharis,

2007; Wagoner, 2015). The American conservatories profiled in this brief overview have enthusiastically and successfully melded high achievement, excellence, and artistry in music with a fundamental embrace of the profound opportunities and roles artists can play in society (Bebbington, 2014; Elliott, 2016; Sarath, Myers, & Campbell, 2017; Tolmie, 2019; Tregear, 2016; Wagoner, 2015; Webster, 2015). Some conservatories listen carefully to social concerns and the evolving world-view of their students, making significant changes. In fact, incoming students may embrace these curricular changes or the expansion of the institutional mission and curriculum beyond purely musical pursuits more easily than some faculty (Sarath, Myers, & Campbell, 2017).

### **The CMS Manifesto of 2014: Educating 21st Century Musicians**

In 2014, a College Music Society task force released the “Manifesto for Progressive Change in the Undergraduate Preparation of Music Majors,” whose charge was to answer, “What does it mean to be an educated musician in the 21st century?” (Sarath et al., 2017, p.11). Describing many curricular changes over the last century as “additive to the established core of music studies,” the authors stated they “lacked the radical reimagining of both the needs of career musicians and the needs of society for the roles and contributions of career musicians” (Sarath et al., 2017, p. xl). Shared widely across the U.S. and beyond, the report defined three key pillars of creativity, diversity, and integration in developing young musicians as performer-composer-improvisers. Immediately provocative, often inspirational, and also controversial, the Manifesto launched passionate and sometimes heated discussions foregrounding important but sometimes latent concerns across the curriculum (Webster, 2015; Sarath et al., 2017). Elements of the Manifesto and its later iterations have ultimately found their way into various types of curricular

reform in many schools of music (some modest and others more comprehensive), and its influences can be noted in the three conservatories described below, when concentrating on the social responsibility elements of the Manifesto. In the preface to *Redefining Music Studies in an Age of Change: Creativity, Diversity and Integration*, Campbell calls for “philosophical perspectives and discourse that emanate(s) from a nexus among the nature of music itself, the fundamental nature and work of being a musician in society, and the responsibilities of musicians to contribute to the public good.” (Sarath et al., 2017, xiii).

Over the past fifteen to twenty years, many music schools have worked to prepare students more thoroughly for future careers by recognising the necessity of business, entrepreneurial, and audience engagement skills while expanding musical competencies into a wider array of genres, composition, and improvisation. Some changes have been driven by accreditation (required training in improvisation, for example, for NASM schools), others by visionary leadership such as those in the conservatories profiled below. Some schools add a course or two, others develop robust career-oriented programs by providing fellowships/internships/externships, partnerships with business schools, and new majors or minors or areas of emphasis and specialisation. Others have integrated change at philosophical levels, addressing social justice, audience engagement, and independent innovation as their core beliefs, building programs from this foundation (Dewey, 1934; Elliott, Silverman & Bowen, 2016). Still others combine the philosophical and the practical, exploring the ‘why’ while modeling practical possibilities. Holding the best intentions for their programs, challenges remain numerous, ranging from buy-in by faculty, students, upper administration, and accreditors, to critiques of core curriculum, to the nuts and

bolts of credit hours and scheduling, to current faculties' training and abilities to design and implement new approaches (Covach, 2015; Sarath et al., 2017; Sayrs, 2016; Webster, 2015).

### **Three American conservatories focused on social justice**

The next section introduces three socially-conscious conservatories who prioritise the role of artists in society as a mission-based imperative and an important path to career sustainability who are creating new approaches embedded into their school's truly unique culture. Each serves distinct types of students, differs in traditions, style, history, and geography, but each of these diverse institutions also highly values social justice and social entrepreneurship, demonstrating a range of possibilities within this small sample size. Importantly, these institutions are not alone in taking a social justice stance in their mission, curriculum and student experience, however, they provide clear, comparable examples of possible approaches and the importance of aligning mission and curricular changes with an institution's core values and unique populations.

#### **Longy School of Music at Bard College.**

We require every student to live our bold mission—to *prepare musicians to make a difference in the world*—by serving the community around them. And we are the only conservatory in the United States weaving artistry and service together as an integral required part of our curriculum (K. Zorn, personal communication, July 12, 2019).

Founded in 1915 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Longy's philosophy and initiatives have coalesced in the past several years to carve out a unique niche among American conservatories. Under the leadership and vision of President Karen Zorn, Longy models a radical transformation

of conservatory training. “Students choose Longy because of our social imperative mission and because they are passionate about making a meaningful life in music.” (Longy) Longy embraces diversity and inclusion on many levels. Among the nearly 300 students, almost all receive financial assistance and more than half are international students. With a strong emphasis on teaching artistry and audience engagement, training and application, students connect with underserved communities through programs such as El Sistema Side by Side, Street Symphony, and urban public schools (Booth, 2009). The Longy mission of making a difference in the world is deeply integrated throughout the curriculum and campus culture, connecting the dots of student learning. Longy supports broad identity development by embracing excellence, artistry, and service, integrating musicians into their community and modeling what highly trained musicians can bring to the world. At Longy, career preparation is incorporated into and assimilated throughout the curriculum.

Longy’s new model culminates in the Catalyst Curriculum, launched in the Fall of 2019. This innovative program at the Master’s level (with an undergraduate version to come) coalesces many elements of the educational reimagining proposed by the CMS Manifesto authors including embedding a social justice imperative and significant student independence in preparation for professional life. In Longy’s unique Master of Arts in Teaching, based in Los Angeles developed with the L.A. Philharmonic and in partnership with the Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA), students develop their artistry studying with Los Angeles Philharmonic musicians while simultaneously earning a California teaching credential. The program boasts a 100% placement rate.

## **Curtis Institute of Music.**

Renowned as one of the most prestigious and selective music conservatories in the world, Curtis admits just 4% of those who apply each year and has a student body of about 175 students at its Philadelphia campus, enough to fill a symphony orchestra and a small opera program, with a few composers, pianists, and classical guitarists. Curtis prides itself on developing the musical leaders of the future and exemplifies the highest levels of musical artistry. In addition to intense musical training, under the leadership of Curtis president Roberto Diaz and Chair of Career Studies, Mary Javian, Curtis students now also participate in both Career Studies and Artist Citizen courses designed to develop attitudes, skills and experience in social entrepreneurship, audience engagement, and community connections. Largely project-based, these courses provide an important aspect of the Curtis curriculum, melding high artistry and commitment to community. Throughout her own career as a Curtis graduate and bassist in high demand, Ms. Javian has modeled the life of an artist/social entrepreneur and has helped change the culture of Curtis in doing so, sending graduates into the world who understand and continue to innovate at the highest levels of performance and education in diverse settings. In 2020, a sea-change comes to Curtis with the creation of the Intercultural Ensemble, funded by a large grant from the Pew Foundation. Asking the question, ‘does our artistry really reflect our culture?’ (M. Javian, personal communication, November 5, 2019), Curtis students will interact with professional guest artists across genre and international musical boundaries, develop improvisational and listening skills, and create a profoundly new, visible, large-scale project integrated into and augmenting the current curriculum as an inspiration within and beyond Curtis’ walls.

## **Lawrence University Conservatory of Music.**

(We) “empower a way of thinking--music is a real, deep pathway to meaningful social change.” (B. Pertyl, personal communication, November 12, 2019)

Housed within a liberal arts university of about 1400 students on a beautiful campus in the small city of Appleton, Wisconsin, the Lawrence conservatory attracts dedicated young artists with a passion for music, deep intellectual curiosity, and a strong sense of social engagement. The Lawrence Conservatory bills itself as “where entrepreneurial mindset and creative impulse meets arts advocacy” (Lawrence). Lawrence’s robust 21st-century musician approach links many of the central concepts of the Manifesto, including solid core musicianship and artistry along with skills to flex creative muscles in composition, improvisation, and multi-genre experiences in collaborative and community-based settings. Using Pauline Oliveros’ Deep Listening modality, focusing on personal empowerment, and recognising, “music is everyone’s birthright helps Lawrence students and the communities they serve become more active and creative music makers” (Pertyl, 2019). Lawrence aspires to integrate all aspects of music learning, performing, artistic endeavors with the breadth provided by the liberal arts to send its graduates into the world as innovative social entrepreneurs, able to design and create within societal change with enthusiasm and skill.

## **Conclusions and next steps**

“Artistic citizens are committed to engaging in artistic actions in ways that can bring people together, enhance communal well-being, and contribute substantially to human thriving” (Elliott, Silverman, & Bowman, 2016, p. 7)

This brief overview identifies three pioneers significantly shifting and enhancing the traditional conservatory curriculum. Centering institutional mission around social justice and a commitment to living that mission via an integrated social entrepreneurship model drew me to investigate each of these schools. Each institution builds curriculum, opportunities, and structure to serve the distinct needs of its students and faculty while keeping a strong emphasis on artistic excellence and developing community connections in accordance with its history, purposes, and deeply held values. Imparting clear skills, attitudes, and artistry among its graduates helps attract potential students who can align successfully with a mission of social entrepreneurship within a conservatory's high expectations.

No single formula provides universal direction for this work. All three conservatories in this study clearly prioritise the importance of the artist-citizen, social entrepreneurship, and the teaching artist as ways to show students “a very broad definition of success in the music world” (M. Javian, personal communication, November 5, 2019). Some commonalities between schools include:

- An imperative of each school to ask, “Who are we? And double down on that!” (B. Pertyl, personal communication, November 12, 2019).
- Both the institution and the individual bear responsibility for social justice work.
- A significant change of mission requires passionate, committed leadership and consensus-building across constituencies.
- Programs include education plus deeply connected real-world experiences.

- Goals of confidence, self-sufficiency, innovation, and engagement through understanding of audience needs helps build a model of the 21st-century artist.
- Social entrepreneurship experiences have a lasting impact on the students and influence self-identity and future work choices.

By aligning social responsibility and the role of the artist in society with the practical imperative of helping graduates create satisfying, meaningful, and sustainable careers as musicians, these programs represent a significant shift in meeting the profound opportunities, realities, and challenges of a globally connected world. With their careful attention to authentic, deeply held values and institutional culture, the models outlined by these top-tier music conservatories can potentially inspire music departments in universities and colleges to consider institutionally appropriate changes to address these issues. Ultimately, Javian suggests musicians embracing social entrepreneurship by developing teaching and audience engagement skills along with excellence in music helps create “not a Plan ‘B’ but a Plan ‘A+’” for future careers (M. Javian, personal communication, November 5, 2019).

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# **Unearthing the independent music scene in India: An India- Australia collaboration**

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## **Abstract**

This paper reports on a collaboration between the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) (Brisbane, Australia), the KM Music Conservatory (Chennai, India), and industry partner, Earthsync (Chennai, India) since 2015. The project is informed by an existing experiential learning model and research project, the Indie100, which previously ran for seven years at QUT. Within the Indian context, the project centres around an intensive, publicly visible, music recording program held over four days. Each year, twelve independent artists/bands are selected through an application process and invited to participate in the project in Chennai. These artists work with professional producers from both Australia and India to record a compilation album. The album and artists are promoted by both QUT and KM music business students, and distributed on major streaming platforms to an international audience. Indie 100 India, brings together knowledge and experience from industry partners, professional producers, students, academics, teachers, higher education institutions and local musicians.

Insights into what it means to be an independent musician in India, has been gleaned through interviews each year with project participants. Many of our participants shared a general

optimism and a strong sense of dedication to the pursuit of music as a full time career, and acknowledged that the arts are becoming more widely accepted as career pathways in Indian society. It was also found that the majority of our participants learned about popular music performance and music business through engagement in their own informal communities of practice in the college years, culminating in performances at college rock competitions. Project participants stressed the importance of collaboration opportunities afforded by college festivals and projects such as the Indie100 due to the expense and scarcity of formal popular music education in India.

Collaboration exposes local musicians to new practices, new audiences and new knowledge, and the high intensity environment of Indie100 gives students a real-world experience that will hopefully make them work-ready, entrepreneurial and resilient. These insights make a contribution to a very emergent field of research, and raise questions around the role that higher education institutions, and inter-cultural collaborations may play in the lives of local musicians.

### **Keywords**

inter-cultural collaboration, informal learning, communities of practice, Indian independent music

### **Introduction**

This paper reports on a collaboration between the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) (Brisbane, Australia), the KM Music Conservatory (Chennai, India), and industry partner, Earthsync (Chennai, India) since 2015. The project is informed by an existing experiential learning model and research project, the Indie100, which previously ran for seven years at QUT.

The Indie 100 is a large scale recording project that records and promotes 100 songs in 100 hours. It brings together local and national industry figures, three hundred to five hundred local musicians, and around seventy students from music, entertainment industries, management, marketing and law. It serves as an intensive ‘classroom’ for students, and brings them in contact with professional producers and local artists, and inducts them into the intensity of a commercial production environment (Graham, Dezuanni, Arthurs, & Hearn, 2015).

The singer/songwriter rock tradition in India is very young. At the time of its emergence, perhaps 30 years ago, the industry was predominantly focused on Bollywood music, leaving the independent scene to emerge underground, without the affordances of a music industry structure we know in the West. Still today, according to Earthsync CEO, Sonya Mazumdar, the independent sector receives little attention and support, leaving musicians to have to work it out for themselves. After collegial discussions with Earthsync (independent music and film organisation), we decided that the Indie100 model may be a novel way to engage and expose Indian independent artists. In 2015, I received internal funding to pilot a condensed Indie100 at Earthsync’s Xchange conference and tradeshow in Chennai, India. The following year we received further funding through the Australia-India Council to expand the project, and include an Indian higher education (H.E.) institution, the KM Music Conservatory. Since 2018 the project is now sustainable, and predominantly run by staff and students in the guise of a study tour.

The project (Indie100 India) centres around an intensive, publicly visible, music recording program held over four days. Each year, twelve independent artists/bands are selected through an application process and invited to participate in the project in Chennai. These artists work with

professional producers from both Australia and India to record a compilation album. The album and artists are promoted by both QUT and KM music business students, and distributed on major streaming platforms to an international audience (Indie 100 India, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018). Indie 100 India, brings together knowledge and experience from industry partners, professional producers, students, academics, teachers, higher education institutions and local musicians. Insights into what it means to be an independent musician in India, has been gleaned through interviews each year with project participants. These insights make a contribution to a very emergent field of research, and raise questions around the role that higher education institutions, and inter-cultural collaborations may play in the lives of local musicians.

## **Discussion**

The music industry of economically emergent nations is more fraught, less developed, and more insecure than in the West (Arli et al., 2015; Dumlavwalla, 2019; Fink et al., 2016; Mascus, 2001; Olugbenga, 2017). This is often seen as a risky investment by parents of aspiring musicians, who may steer them towards more lucrative career choices such as engineering or business. One of our participants explained:

the general tendency from our parents is, do your degree before going into music, because music is not a career, music cannot be a profession. Basically, it's like your hobby or something. Like part time.

However, in many of our interviews, there seems to be a shift in mindset, and this could largely be attributed to a growing, young population. In 2007, 65% of the Indian population were under

the age of 35, and by 2020 it is anticipated that the average age will be 29 years (Basu, 2007).

One participant noted:

the best thing about India is that we have a fairly young population of people – around the age of 25, is very large right now. A lot of people are trying new stuff, getting into arts a lot more. Moving away from what was conventional, in India, which was lawyer, doctor, or becoming an engineer or something like that. So, it's like blooming right now. I think it's just going to get better.

Many of our participants shared a general optimism and strong sense of dedication to the pursuit of music as a full time career. At great expense, one band travelled from the north of India to participate in our project, emphasising, “it's very difficult to be in India, like in this position, we'd love to live our life with music, that's what we came here for”. Another musician-trained architect also shared his vision, “more than being an architect and a part time musician, I want to be a part time architect and a full time musician”.

The Indian popular music scene falls into this category. Bonny Wade (1999) once said that India is such a vast and teeming country that, for any statement one makes of it, the opposite will be true in another part of the country. The music of India includes such varied traditions as the Carnatic and Hindustani classical styles, the dominant popular music of Bollywood, wedding music, Hindi EDM, Sufi rock and Western-influenced rock to name just a few. The singer/songwriter rock tradition more closely aligned with the Western music industry, is still in its infancy, perhaps only 30 years old. As this sector was emerging, India did not have the same industry scaffolding or support structures. There were only a few popular music record labels, no industry press, and no music colleges that catered for popular music traditions. However, an

underground scene emerged and gained traction in the first part of the 90s. Small venues opened, and festivals began to evolve. Bands began to play and record, but with no established industry, the musicians were left to work out the industry on their own.

In our interviews, we were curious to find out how our participants learned to play and write music; how they formed bands; and how they went about situating themselves in an industry with very little support and scaffolding. We found that the majority of our participants learned about popular music and music industry through engagement in their own informal communities of practice in the college years, culminating in performances at college rock competitions. Our first participant introduced us to the role of Indian colleges, “the cool thing is, a lot of the bands I’ve met, are meeting at college when they’re studying engineering or architecture, and they form their band at college, and they get a lot of fans and audience through college”.

Popular music education in India is very new, with only a few private colleges offering costly diplomas. Despite the lack of formal offerings in rock music, Indian tertiary institutions, like their counterparts in the West, have always been hotbeds of student rock bands and amateur performance. From the mid-1990s universities began to organise college festivals specifically focused on Western-style rock, and this was largely in response to limited performance opportunities and venues.

Campus festivals have been pivotal to the formation of rock bands and their survival during the nineties, when Independence Rock was the biggest event on the gig calendar and when the idea of a music festival was entirely implausible for both bands and their audience. Almost two decades on, campus festivals continue to hold a significant place in an Indian band’s career graph. (Miranda, 2014)

The college festival offers emerging musicians an opportunity to learn about performance and stagecraft, and song-writing and arranging. One veteran of the college festival circuit told us:

I have been playing at college fests across the country right from when I was an engineering student, for about eleven years now. College fests are a great platform for young and upcoming bands to showcase their music, and performing for a larger crowd definitely helps you shape up your performance and helps you grow as a performer. Playing as a band from college is like a starting point for many full-time music professionals like me.

This environment also enables musicians to develop an understanding of marketing, promotion, and audience development. A well-known indie musician from Chennai reflected on the importance of the college festival for exposure, “you get to play instantly for a few hundred to even thousands of people sometimes”. He also explained the added value of sponsorship, “a few popular brands that are regularly associated with college fests are Pepsi, Coke, Red Bull, Vodafone, Monster, and they keep investing on college fests year after year, and that shows they are able to achieve the numbers”.

Many of our participants acknowledged that the bar or club scene is not a tradition in India, adding another layer of difficulty for indie musicians to earn money from live performances. College festival competitions are lucrative as one of our participants pointed out, “they have huge sums going on there, like a lot of money going on as prize money”. Two musicians discussed how prize money has enabled them to both record and tour:

So, we saved up around 2 Lakhs in rupees, and then we were like, okay, what's the next move. How are we going to progress from here? At that time in 2011, not many, over here at least there weren't like bands which were bringing out EPs and recording their material. It's like very rare, like hardly, actually no independent band did it.

While college festivals are guaranteed audiences, our musicians expressed concern that there is no audience for independent music with a culture so deeply attached to commercial film music. Not unlike independent musicians in the west, little income is made from music sales and our Indian artists recognised the importance of building a live music culture, as one young musician explained, "no one streams our music, so our chance of getting, of building, an audience is to capitalise on our live show". Probing a little further, he enlightened us on a typical day for an Indian:

There are so many things to do, and so many things happening around them, imagine the 8am - 9pm job, to find time for family, for all the other leisure activities, and then that one single weekend to do what he wants to do, there's so much going on in life," how is this overcome"?

This musician's bandmate added, "if someone is going to invest their time in a live show on their rare free day, it is because they strongly want to attend, we have to give people a reason to attend". A young musician from Bangalore explained,

the live culture for it to happen, you need acts that are really interesting live, because, like I said, it's a pretty conservative society, like, you don't have performers, like most popular singers, they just stand there and they sing.

This led me to ask participants about the value of collaboration in contexts such as Indie100 India. One musician explained, “I met a few interesting people that really changed the way I was thinking.” Another commented on how the experience working with an international producer changed their song writing:

So people don't know who producers are, like for me a music producer is someone who helps you arrange, helps you design your music, and I think that's common abroad but not in India. Like for an Indian musician in general, if he's not in the field for a while he thinks a producer is an engineer which is totally wrong. When you work with a producer you learn a lot of things. You have long intros and maybe you should cut them down because in general if you listen to pop music you don't listen to an intro that is longer than 10 - 15 seconds, because our listening span is very short, we want to listen to the voice, we want to listen to something that is interesting

According to Wenger (1998) new relationships can create a ripple of new opportunities, awaken new interests that can spark a renegotiation of practice, and provide an experience that opens our eyes to a new way of looking at the world. This musician continued to explain:

I think first of all you should be very open to ideas from others. I think that is a skill that is lacking in India in general, we have an attitude that keeps coming through a lot, you're not open to critics which I think is a skill to have...if you don't take the wrongs then you'll never get everything right. So that is a very important skill to have.

During our project, our participants were very enthusiastic and eager to share their experiences, and to garner as many new ideas as possible from the new relationships they made with producers, industry professionals, educators and graduating students from both Australia and

India. Using Wenger's (1998) concept of communities of practice, college festivals and international collaborations such as Indie100 India provide bands with new knowledge and perspectives which can spur their own practice in new directions, helping them to become less insular, defensive, and closed.

## **Conclusion**

The project is founded on the belief that the future of music education in the H.E Sector relies on a system of experiential facilitations that lead to the development of sustainable communities of practice among teachers, students, local musicians and industry. The unique coming together of educational institutions with the local music industry is supported by Cohendet et al. (2014) who state that the dynamics of creative ideas in a given agglomeration rely on an institutional process that connects an informal "underground" of creative individuals with formal institutions of the "upperground". They go on to explain that these two layers of a city or region rarely interact, which is why the local process of knowledge creation often relies on what can be referred to as a "middleground" that links the informal underground with the formal organisations and institutions of the upperground (p. 930). Graham et al., (2015) propose that the Indie100 was initially set up to be a "middleground" - an intermediary platform (p. 122).

In the case of Indie100 India, there were several realisations which gave us the impetus to drive and expand the project over the last five years. For example, the project responds to the HE sector's 'internationalisation' agenda which recognises that globally focused experiences and literacies are central to developing culturally competent professionals, capable of operating in diverse communities and environments (Goldstein et al., 2006). The collaboration exposes

musicians to new practices, new audiences and new knowledge, and the high intensity environment gives students a real-world experience that will hopefully make them work-ready, entrepreneurial and resilient. Most importantly, establishing a middleground platform (Indie100 India) that connects the resources and knowledge of the formal upperground (HE sector) with the experiences and knowledge of the informal underground (local musicians), unearths musicians, industry workers, venues, and festivals, and provides a living history of local talent that might otherwise have gone uncaptured.

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# **From Lullaby Land to ethical learning**

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## **Abstract**

It is important that the philosophies of equitable co-existence that emerge in the lived contexts of music-making by professional musicians be applied into music education, not least due to today's prevailing worldviews that are increasingly favouring an uncomfortable opposition of nature and reason. In this article, I draw on the philosophies of Zygmunt Bauman that urge us to seek ways of being for one another before seeking to be with the other. I adopt a qualitative instrumental case study methodology with an aim to analyse a slice of musical life and experience from the careers of professional migrant musicians living in Brisbane, Australia. The study is undertaken in the context of *Lullaby Land*, a compact music ensemble of four members including myself.

Drawing on semi-structured interviews and rehearsal commentaries as well as my own reflexive insights as participant-researcher, I thematically analyse the data and derive implications for diversity and inclusivity in musicmaking from the professional context of *Lullaby Land*. The analysis revealed patterns of meaning across three key themes: Culturally contingent differences are central to musicians' identity and are to be celebrated; learning stems from qualities of respect and empathy; music is a powerful language of belonging and a means of active self-

representation in a foreign land. I then extrapolate the above themes that have been identified from a professional musicmaking context into a model for intercultural higher music education.

The model proposed here is grounded on understanding how we, as a collective humanity that today grapples with issues of ethics and politics in diversity in multifarious ways, can adopt a philosophy of being for one another before being with one another. The theorised model is predicated on action and features a series of verbs—narrate, empathise, celebrate, explore, connect, and crystallise—that culminate in ethical learning. I offer this model as a counter-narrative to the widespread ethos of inaction on the one hand, and of oversimplification of subtle differences that constitute the bedrock of diversity, on the other. Theoretically, the model presents a recontextualisation of professional musicians’ lived experiences within the systematic constructs of higher music education, thereby calling for meaningful correspondences between these two entangled spheres of operation in the broader field of music research. The model is yet to be trialled in a pedagogical context, however, I propose that it would hold relevance for both music educators and music professionals who engage with cultural diversity in their practices

### **Keywords**

cultural diversity, migration, empathy, belonging, ethical learning.

### **Background**

When Sidsel Karlsen (2013) wrote their milestone article on meanings that immigrant students ascribed to their homeland music in their new homes across Scandinavian countries it was in the wake of a huge wave of migration into those countries that were “previously relatively

homogeneous” (p. 161). Six years hence, we stand at the precipice of superdiversity in societies, wherein the ethics and politics of subtleties in difference are overlooked in the light of overt similarities (Westerlund, 2019). Further, Karlsen (2013) has observed that scholarly debates have marked the negotiations between cultural and musical identities in multicultural education over the last few decades. While there have been scholars who have argued that a simplistic approach to connecting students’ national–geographical, ethnic or cultural backgrounds and their musical identities is not always a viable solution (Lum & Marsh, 2012; Marsh, 2013; Sæther, 2008; Schippers, 2009), there are those whose ideas have evolved into believing that this connection does deserve consideration (Hebert & Sæther, 2014; Strand & Rinehimer, 2018; Westerlund & Karlsen, 2017). Overall, Karlsen (2013) observed then that migrant students ascribed rich and complex meanings associated with their homeland music and that music teachers might benefit from recognising this complexity and accessing ways to incorporate cultural recognition into their curricula. Today, in a world where human values and natural resources are both taken for granted and exploited at the altar of homogeneity and imagined growth, we are faced with cultural plurality that is caught in a ‘post-truth’ limbo. As such, we, as music educators, are faced with a need “to rethink professional epistemologies in relation to societal challenges” (Westerlund, 2019, p. 2). On looking beyond our prevailing vacillations between a sense of utopia and dystopia, futurist Kevin Kelly’s (2017) idea of “protopia,” an ethical future that is attainable as small, mindful and gradual steps, seems to present itself as an approachable middle-path to aspire towards.

In parallel, the gap between music careers and music education has been closing in over the last decade. As Bartleet et al. (2019) have noted in the context of Australia, most musicians maintain

portfolio careers (comprising performance, recording, creation, music direction, teaching) to sustain their professional lives. Further, building on Throsby (2008, 2010) Bartleet et al. (2019) have called for further research and consideration in the context of higher education on the following five issues: enterprise and entrepreneurship, mobility, digitisation, gender parity, and health and wellbeing. Of these five parameters, it is interesting that at least three explicitly link to issues of inclusivity and diversity through the complimentary lenses of professional musical careers and music education. The parameter of mobility directly links to the globalisation of the arts sector today and hinges on cultural sensitivity in such artmaking both outside and inside the classroom. Gender parity and health and wellbeing also align closely with challenges encountered in the issues of human connectedness in music education and yoke also to equity and ethics in dealing with diversity and inclusivity. As such, complexities encountered in the real world bring to bear significantly on both musicians' careers and to the field of higher education in music, begging not for a resolution to utopian perfection, but for a global reconciliation into protopian manageability.

It must be acknowledged that musicians often constitute a unique student body in that many of them skilfully navigate and learn from the thrills and pains of a portfolio career even while they continue their institutionalised higher education in music. It is therefore vital that analyses of musicians' real-world professional experiences find their way into models for education that both informs and derives from the profession (Mani, 2018; Bartleet, Grant, Mani & Tomlinson, 2020). The pathway from career to classroom assumes even greater significance in contexts involving an active participation of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, privileges, power structures, and beliefs - both musically and extra-musically, as it represents the organically

unfolding microcosms that could confront the macro-level hegemony of master narratives that we as a humanity are faced with today.

## **Project, Rationale and Aim**

In this article, I begin from an analysis of a slice of musical life from the careers of professional migrant musicians living in Brisbane Australia in the context of a compact “diversity ensemble,” *Lullaby Land* (2020) of which I am the Artistic Director. I derive implications for diversity in music-making and education, and conclude by theorising a model for intercultural music education. I draw on the musicmaking experiences of four musicians of diverse cultural backgrounds who constitute the current core team of *Lullaby Land*, including myself, a migrant female performer of Karnatik music of South India now residing in Brisbane, Australia. *Lullaby Land* foregrounds the ideas of belonging, identity, and self-determination in migrants using songs and stories from childhood as a tool of connection to homeland, to the settled land, and of comfortable coexistence with others. Using the concept of ‘comfort’ as the central lens, in the performance that unfolded on October 13, 2019, at the MOSAIC Festival hosted by Multicultural Australia in Roma Street Parklands, Brisbane, each of us told a story from our childhood in our native land and followed what was envisaged as a sensorial narrative by a lullaby in our language, with active participation of one another. The matter of interest in this paper, however, is not so much of the performance itself as of the series of three workshops that led to this final performative outcome and the learnings and implications for intercultural education contexts that emerged thereof. Notably, a medium of verbal-musico-poetic communication was activated during the workshops and later during performance in front of an audience through a formidable

storytelling–song combination that propagated empathy from a personal space to the public sphere.

I draw from our learnings and experiences of music-making in *Lullaby Land* and extrapolate this analysis into a model for intercultural music education that is grounded on understanding how we can first be for one another before being with one another – as a collective humanity that today grapples with issues of sensitivity and ethics in diversity and complexity in multifarious ways, as Westerlund (2019), drawing on Zygmunt Bauman (1993), has convincingly argued for. Such an approach is vital, not least in today’s superdiverse societies wherein the broader sense of community is shifting from the ethnocentric to divergent, and a plurality of stories and voices assume the contentious roles of both interrogators and moderators in the music industry and in music education as I have argued for in Mani (2020a, 2020b).

Also, as Westerlund (2019) has observed, we hold an ethical responsibility to problematise the seemingly simple silos of identity, culture and belonging that have come to underpin the societies that we inhabit. This responsibility permeates into the ways in which we model teaching and research in music education. Reflecting on Westerlund’s (2019) pertinent call, I have attempted to offer a response. I derive and propose a theoretical model for intercultural music education from a thematic analysis of the data collected from the Lullaby Land Project. In doing so, I offer a linkage pathway between the ethics and politics in society and the role of music thereof, and also a way to ensure relevance of real-world experience in theorising communication models for the culturally diverse classroom that we as musician/educators often handle. It is noteworthy that *Lullaby Land*’s broader mission responds directly to the Call for

Papers from CEPROM (2019, para. 3) in that it was aimed at “cultivating sensitivity between cultures and human beings in and through music,” while also providing an opportunity for “people from different communities and cultures to collaborate through music.”

## Data Collection and Analysis

The research design was conceived as a qualitative instrumental case study, drawing on a comparable model in Westerlund et al. (2015). The data for this study was collected as semi-structured interviews of the three team members with myself as interlocutor/interviewer over the three workshops (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The members of Lullaby Land include myself ([name removed] aged 38, F); Phoebe Huang (22, F), a Pipa player and composer from China, Tichawona Mashawa (39, M), a Mbira player and percussionist from Zimbabwe, and Greta Kelly (46, F), an Australian Shah Kaman player who has spent a substantial period of her life in Iran learning and performing Persian music. Figure 1 shows the ensemble in performance.



*Figure 1. Lullaby Land ensemble performing at MOSAIC Festival, Brisbane, 2019. L to R: Greta Kelly, Charulatha Mani, Tichawona Mashawa, and Phoebe Huang.*

As participant-researcher, my voice was at constant interplay with those of the others and afforded a crucial layer of opinion/reflection. Explicit permissions for using the interview and rehearsal material in any way, shape or form were obtained from all the participants. Another layer of data included audio/video recordings of our repertoire development for Lullaby Land which happened over the workshops. Following the transcription of the interviews and our commentaries on the videos, I conducted a thematic analysis of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis was heuristic and inductive (Silverman, 2011). The team members were invited to read the article and their feedback was requested for revisions. Only the overarching patterns that emerged from the data have been shared here owing to the scope of this paper and are grouped under three key themes. Musicians of various cultures actively demonstrate the need to:

- Identify '*treasure points*' of *musical and cultural difference* that they personify as their key identity.
- *Explore and learn* musics of other cultures (including that of the West) out of empathy and a desire to co-exist ethically.
- *Connect* using music as a common *language of belonging* rather than a creative tool.

The patterns of meaning that yielded each of these themes are briefly expanded below:

### **1. Difference is central.**

In *Lullaby Land*, the storytelling component was pre-eminent and emerged from the central node of cultural difference rendering the cultural encrustation/affiliation of the musician and their ways of being inseparable from their music itself. The meaning that came through in from analysis within this theme was that our ways of being in the world (ontologies) have been key in informing our ways of knowing about our music (epistemologies). Together they inform the

ways in which we understand and absorb other musics in relation to ourselves. As Phoebe (Interview, 4 October, 2019) notes:

I love composing, so I just tried in my way to rewrite some of my original Chinese pieces and to compare the difference between this new one and the traditional one that I played when I was in China. That's how I differentiate between like cross-cultural music and the traditional Chinese music. The differences I found made my musical style special.

Greta (Interview, 27 September, 2019) noted:

I've worked with refugees and migrants. We've sometimes gone out to the detention centres played music from the refugees' culture and then also gotten them to join in and sing. For them and for me owning that difference has been a highlight.

These comments indicate that the sites of complexity and richness in the musics of various cultures are both located in the centrality of difference. Tichawona tells, "My performance clothes are colourful—traditional Zimbabwean. People love to see it and hear my language when I sing or teach. All this uniqueness is my soul."

## **2. Learning grows from empathy.**

The articulation of difference as a story-led narrative that moves into music is the process and tool in eliciting empathy as a key human quality. I found empathy to emerge as the bedrock of sharing of knowledge between the musicians and musical cultures. In our interview/conversation of 27 September 2019, when Greta observed:

Sometimes they [refugees in detention centres] talk about their homeland and share music that I don't know. I learn it [the music] because I care about them and what they care about. It is a point of activism for me to show that I care and that I am bothered with their problems.

I responded,

Sometimes I don't find the right words to talk. I find people judge me based on where I'm from, how I talk, how I dress or my skin colour. But when I start singing, I find that all else melts away. The world becomes perfect and loving in those moments.

Phoebe immediately chimed in:

I came here as a Chinese-born teacher to teach Mandarin in a University and everyone just defined me as a Chinese teacher. Then I started to play this instrument [pipa]. I started to introduce it to them with my stories. Then they were like, oh! Surprised. It's like they don't see you just as a Mandarin teacher; they see you as a musician, as a person who has feelings. They want to know more about that person.

Tichawona's statement seemed to summarise this thread of conversation and convey the theme effectively, "we learn and teach our students and children culturally sensitive behaviour. It is harder to be insensitive when we listen to each other's lived experiences and start caring." A collating of these ideas reveal that it was the idea of "care" that came up more than once in the conversations that was the seed that could grow into an ethical music learning paradigm.

### **3. Music is a language of belonging in the new land.**

The analysis revealed that while memories of homeland were the touchstones that musicians of various cultures inevitably turned to, their music reconfigured in their present environment and home became their beacon of belonging and identity.

This idea comes through strongly in my story from the interview dated October 9, 2019:

In 2015, when I moved to Brisbane from Chennai, it was really hard for me to make friends. In my kids' school, there was a multicultural day. I went up and introduced myself to the principal and said I am a mum; also a singer. Until then, they had seen me as an Indian mum, and when I said I was a singer, they said, oh, ok! Instantly some of the other mums googled me up and saw my profile. Many started saying hi! On 'Multicultural Day', I got five minutes to sing. I got up on stage and sang a Karnatik song. After that I made so many friends. I think friendship and belonging go hand in hand, and I felt that my music gave me that friendship in Brisbane.

On 4 October, 2019, when Phoebe said, "Sorry for my English," after a conversation with us, Greta said, "Please don't apologise! This is about the human experience that we bring. Not about the English. That is why you and I are sitting here." The powerful cementing that music provides in rather difficult social situations reinforces its position as an insignia of belonging in a community or social group. Overall, the analyses reveal that we, as culturally diverse musicians, believed that our unique musics and the ways in which we sought to integrate our musics with that of each other and of the West welded us firmly to our new homes. Our musical exchanges rewarded us with collaborators, friends, and unforeseen avenues of cultural recognition, self-expression, self-advocacy, and self-determination.

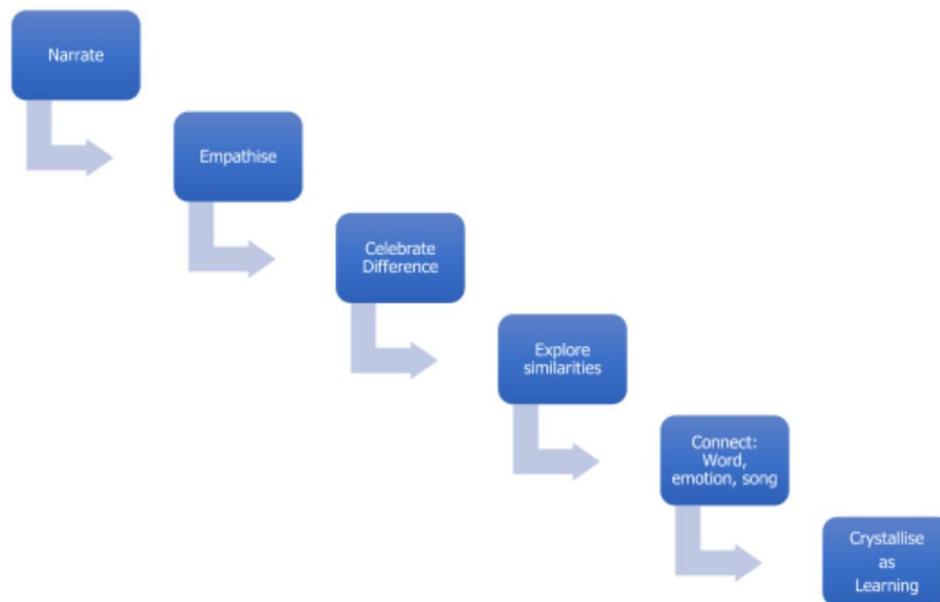
## **Results, limitations and future pathways**

The themes analysed above resonate strongly with the notions advanced in the literature on music education, as discussed in the earlier sections. Accordingly, I have created a model: 'Being for before being with the Other: An action pathway for ethical learning' (Figure 2), which I believe responds to Bauman (1993) and Westerlund (2019). This model is envisaged as an integrative processual pilot framework that recombines intercultural music education with the music professionals' experiences in the light of the patterns that emerged from this compact

study and focusses on verbs rather than nouns—on active doing. It constitutes the following actions/unfoldings to be undertaken and/or experienced by, both students and educators:

- **Narrate** a story from one’s own culture/land.
- **Empathise** and **humanise**.
- **Celebrate** differences.
- **Explore** similarities.
- **Connect** through word, emotion, and music.
- **Crystallise** into ethical learning.

The above pathway of occurrences demonstrates a possible trajectory towards ethical learning, as Figure 2 below illustrates.



*Figure 2. Being for before being with the Other: A pathway proposal for ethical learning.*

This study has its limitations. It is yet to be implemented in a music education context, however, plans are underway to roll-out an initial trial of this model in early 2021 in a tertiary education context in Australia. Also, the analysis presented in this paper is in the form of broad brushstrokes and denotes results from an initial consideration with a small number of participants. A detailed analysis with multiple nodes using NVivo and incorporating a larger participant pool is projected for 2020.

I believe that this model that derives from music professionals' experience will find application in the educational sphere not least because education was never and will never be dissociated from the problems that we are faced with as individuals and a collective humanity in the real-world. Further, it would be interesting to research further on the effects of this theorisation on music teachers' and students' classroom experiences, if only to identify alignments and divergences across the notionally discrete yet practically entangled contexts of musicianship and music education.

Today we find ourselves in a world where there seems to be a widespread disregard for human values and an ethos of inaction. A music education that foregrounds empathy and action is the need of the hour, now more than ever. The model presented here offers but one way to privilege those that lurk at the peripheries and give them equity of representation in music education. For, a reframing of master narratives of hegemony can only be carried out through a plurality of voices characterised by irregularities and imperfections, not by perfect clones. Rather than veering towards the perfect utopian dream, the ethical learning pathway proposed here holds out

the promise of being a plausible “protopia”—it foreshadows a tomorrow that could be marginally better than today.

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# **Embracing a learner identity: An Autoethnographic duet exploring disruptive critical incidents in instrumental music pedagogy**

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## **Abstract**

Curricular reforms in Western countries call for pedagogical practices that empower and transform students into professional musicians who have the capacity for deep critical thinking and engagement. For this, several pedagogical frameworks that place the student at the centre of learning have been considered during the last decades. This constructivist trend emphasises the need to work with students at deep levels (cognitively, emotionally, behaviourally) and recognises the need for teachers to be open to also learning and developing through processes of transformative pedagogies.

Moving beyond traditional forms of research in music education and music psychology, the authors explore autoethnography as catharsis for conceptual change. Through this process they explore disruptive critical incidents during their musicians-teachers-researchers-learners' trajectories that led to a transformation of their educational practices and teacher identities. After

recognising their own instrumental teachers often inhibited (however inadvertently) their learning, the authors recount the shock they felt in realising they were falling into the same traps in their teaching. Exploring their way through the ensuing chaos, both turned to research, to experimentation and insights from students in a quest to learn and embody pedagogical theories in their practice. They describe how clarity in teaching was found not through faulty identities as ‘expert teachers’, but by embracing their *learner identities*, enabling them to become ‘learners as facilitators’.

In embracing and sharing the discomfort of vulnerability the authors have aimed to create an engaging and evocative text in the hope that others will engage with their stories and find resonance in their own learning and teaching journeys. This article concludes with the authors’ visions for the future of instrumental music teaching and pedagogy. Recognising the need for dissemination of pedagogical insights and sharing of practice, they call for greater professional learning and sharing within instrumental music pedagogy at large, focusing on the importance of critical reflection and transformative teaching philosophies underpinned by scholarship. This, they argue, provides great potential for a much-needed paradigm shift, whereby every student learns their experiences, their voices and their individual goals and needs matter.

### **Keywords**

Autoethnography, instrumental music pedagogy, constructivism, learner identity, transformative pedagogy.

*By telling the stories, such as our own, we are able to reflect on those events and characteristics which have shaped our professional identities as well as our pedagogical culture and teaching strategies. (Schlinder, 1991, p. 181)*

Curricular reforms in Western countries call for pedagogical practices that develop professional musicians and empower and transform students. For this, several pedagogical frameworks that place the student at the centre of learning have been considered during the last decades. This constructivist trend acknowledges the importance of working with students at deep levels (cognitively, emotionally, behaviourally) and being open to learning from them through processes of transformative pedagogies. For transformative pedagogy to be fully realised in music settings, teachers need to be open and be willing to self-reflect and enquire into their practices so that they may continue to grow (Gaunt & Carey, 2016; McAllister, 2008). Thus, with this paper, we aim to explore the power of our journeys from supposed ‘expert teachers’ to ‘learners as facilitators’. This paper presents a journey of “becoming pedagogical” (Gouzouasis, 2011; Gouzouasis, Irwin, Miles, & Gordon, 2013); of becoming mindful of the changing landscape of our profession and of the implications for our teaching practices. With this work, we recognise the impact and complexity of the student-teacher relationship in one-on-one music education settings (e.g. Gaunt, 2011).

This article explores the question: How do disruptive critical incidents in musicians’ experiences as teachers and learners lead to transformation of educational practices? Through sharing our own journeys, we hope to empower other teachers to explore the potential of transformative,

student-centred approaches to learning; to have their own ‘aha’ moments through reflecting on disruptive critical incidents (e.g. Burnard, 2000, 2004; Denicolo & Pope, 1990; Woods, 1993) and to use these insights to enhance their own studio practices.

What follows is a narrative autoethnography built on introspection (e.g. Ellis & Bochner, 2000) as a form of pedagogy (Banks & Banks, 2000; in music, Gouzouasis & Ryu, 2015; Gouzouasis & Innatovych, 2016; Gouzouasis & Leggo, 2016) in which we have reflected upon critical incidents during our journeys as music educators and music learners in the search for ‘lost constructivism’ (paraphrasing Pérez-Echeverría, Mateos, Pozo & Scheuer, 2011). More specifically, our autoethnographic duet is framed within Creative Analytical Practice studies (e.g. Gouzouasis, 2019) that aim to bridge the theory-practice divide by placing personal experience at the service of research, knowledge and scrutiny. This autoethnography joins the “wave of self-reflexivity sweeping across the music profession” (Bartleet & Ellis, 2009, p. 6), including in the area of pedagogy, where “teachers are reflecting on themselves as learners and critiquing the values and relationships they embody in the classroom with their students and subject matter” (ibid).

We, the researchers and researched (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999), come from different parts of the world (Spain and Australia), and while we have taught and learnt in different contexts, we share similar teaching philosophies that have brought us together. We are both in our mid-thirties, identify as female, currently hold academic positions in higher music education institutions and hold a multi-professional profile as musicians-teachers-researchers-learners.

We met in August 2019 to discuss our teaching journeys, framing our conversations based on different critical phases that are most likely to occur at particular times in individuals' lives (Strauss, 1959). We recorded and transcribed our conversations to ensure the multifaceted aspects embedded in our experiences, such as the socioemotional (in line with Gouzouasis & Ihnatovych, 2016; Leggo, 2008), pedagogical and interpersonal factors could be captured and explored from multiple angles to construct thick descriptions and rich narratives. This process was only possible through a willingness to operate through a self-vulnerability that provided deeper insights than would otherwise not be possible (Behar, 1997).

While our stories are our own, it is understood by the educational community that much can be learned from the unique experiences of individuals (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Flyvbjerg 2006) and that the practical wisdom of teachers plays an important role in informing others' pedagogical strategies (Gelder, 2005, p. 41). While the themes below may provide reflective points for the reader to relate with their own story, our discoveries are not designed to be prescriptive; every individual's catalysts for reflection and change are, of course, unique to themselves.

### **Phase one – Retrospect: Teachers limiting learning**

Guadalupe and Leah, despite having vastly different childhood experiences with learning an instrument, faced challenges with their thirst for learning being thwarted (however inadvertently) by their teachers. Guadalupe learned in a formal music school, where her teachers limited her learning to what they considered to be ideal for beginners. She recalls having no choice in the music she played or what she learned: "I was learning technique without expression, dictation and history without connection to practice, and was forced to follow cello annotations not

suitable to my small hands. I felt like I was being punished through these restrictions, and I remember constantly thinking, ‘this system sucks!’ I was also constantly rewarded externally, and as I progressed rather quickly, competition was encouraged, and unhealthy pressure followed.”

Leah learned in less formal setting, having a variety of teachers with home studios. Starting keyboard lessons as a seven-year-old, she remembers annoying her teacher with endless questions of ‘why’, yearning to understand the theory behind the notes: “I think he thought I was too young to understand but his standard response of ‘you don’t need to know that’ wasn’t going to cut it. One day he relented, using one lesson to explain basic chord theory before returning to follow the method book. I was so happy in that lesson, and I hope he learned not to underestimate an inquisitive mind.” Later, Leah recalled her despair when being taught by a concert pianist: “It was an extreme example of just because you can play, doesn’t mean you can teach. He would demonstrate the sounds he wanted but didn’t (or couldn’t) explain how to create them. I was desperate to improve, but I wasn’t being taught technique and my questions were never answered adequately. I would be close to tears throughout my lessons, and cry in frustration straight after.”

Leah oscillated between being self-taught and recognising the need for a teacher but didn’t find a teacher who nurtured her as a learner until she was 27. Guadalupe learned how to fit in with her teachers’ expectations while also teaching herself ‘in secret’. She rebelliously wondered why teachers should have control over what was learned, and like Leah, found her musical identity outside the confines of traditional education settings.

## **Phase two – Shock: Early experiences as instrumental music teachers**

Like many new teachers, Guadalupe and Leah relied on method books, both recalling: “I had no idea what I was doing”. Guadalupe remembers hating teaching but continuing because she needed the money: “I found no joy teaching the same way I had hated, but it was the only way I knew. I was frustrated that while some students excelled, others weren’t improving. It wasn’t like I was teaching them any differently, and so I couldn’t understand what was going wrong.”

Then Guadalupe read a book called *Masters and Learners* (Poza, 2008) and started analysing the master-apprentice model, uncovering her first pedagogical insights: “I finally understood what had been wrong in my own learning. I felt renewed horror about my teachers’ approaches and mortified that I was falling into the same traps.”

Leah gained her first pedagogical insights during the final year of her Honours degree in 2009:

“Once I learned about student-centred pedagogy – eight years into my teaching – I prided myself on prioritising students’ needs. But despite this, students were still quitting. I still had trouble engaging them and instilling the importance of effective practice. I was still mostly dependent on method books and the exam syllabus and was inadvertently controlling students’ learning. It turns out I wasn’t the student-centred teacher I thought I was.” Leah remembers the day she discovered her understanding of student-centred pedagogy was flawed, half-way through her PhD which explored transformative pedagogy (Coutts, 2016): “I was mortified and started to question my teaching abilities. None of the transformative strategies I had been trialling were working, and I was pretty sure I’d been botching up my students’ learning – the exact opposite of my intentions. And worst still, if I’m completely honest, I’d been silently blaming them for any

resistance they displayed. My teaching world as I'd known it came crumbling down and I didn't know how to pick up the pieces.”

While the discomfort they both felt is not a pleasant headspace to be in to say the least, it is through this “inherent uncertainty” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 29) that new perspectives start to emerge, leading to further research and insights into challenges faced (Sandretto, 2009). There is a deep unease recognising that your pedagogical intentions and actions – or your espoused theories and implicit theories in action (Argyris & Schön, 1974, as cited in Eraut, 1994) – don't align. Addressing this issue is complex because translation of learning theory into action is a highly subjective process (Cleaver & Ballantyne, 2014) with no step-by-step process to follow.

### **Phase three – Chaos: Metamorphosis from ‘expert teacher’ to ‘learner as facilitator’**

Through Guadalupe and Leah's discussion, it became clear that their shock and despair was the catalyst for change, and that there was one commonality guiding them forward: learning from students, which enables teachers and students to transform through the learning process (Abrahams, 2005; Ettlign, 2006). For Guadalupe, this occurred through interviewing 60 children and their teachers as part of her PhD (i.e. López-Íñiguez & Pozo, 2014a, 2014b). Guadalupe recounted the heartbreak she experienced hearing students' experiences with traditional lessons and the revelations that appeared through discussions with students from constructivist lessons. The latter group of students expressed learning being rich, relaxed and expressive. From this point, Guadalupe committed to implementing these principles in her own teaching. She

remembers: “everybody started to play better. They started to come more enthusiastically to lessons; parents were thrilled – it was happy and so lovely.” Something had also changed within herself; her relationship with teaching evolved from one of hate to one of love.

But this wasn’t an overnight transition. Guadalupe described having to “build a Mary Poppins bag of constructivist strategies” to ensure students are engaged and progressing. Fuelled by the recognition that she had not only suffered herself, but had also caused great suffering in her first students, Guadalupe took a metacognitive approach to teaching (e.g. Borkowski & Muthukrishna, 1992), including sequential logic to pedagogically apply the principles one at a time to lessons in order to achieve conceptual change (in the line of Vosniadou, 2008). She quickly recognised that strategies are important, but they are not a magic bullet; they apply differently to every student, and there is a need to remain pedagogically agile (Carey & Grant 2016), adapting to the individual needs of the student at any given moment. Guadalupe evolved over a five-year period from “a perfectionist teacher wanting students to play perfectly to wanting students to own their learning”. As she described: “I’m not a teacher anymore; I’m more like a coach or a guide/facilitator” in line with that of “*We cannot teach another person; we can only facilitate his learning*” (Rogers, 1951, p. 389).

For Leah, learning from students was also a process catalysed through her PhD (Coutts, 2016), which took a teacher-researcher approach (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). Recognising her failed attempts to enhance student engagement, Leah deconstructed videos of her teaching (as recommended by Derry, 2007). In doing so, she noticed one student was naturally more engaged than others; she was more reflective and curious, and more forthcoming with her challenges and

questions. As a result, Leah realised she approached teaching differently and committed to developing this approach with her other students (see Coutts, 2019). The largest lesson learned was that modelling, instructing, questioning and guiding each have a place in an effective lesson, but without rapport, relevance and developing students' self-efficacy, their effectiveness remains limited (Coutts, 2018; 2019).

Through their metamorphosis Guadalupe and Leah became *transformative facilitators*, whereby changes not only occurred in their teaching practices, but in the ethos by which they approach teaching. They had developed teaching philosophies – something they had never considered in their early days of teaching – which helped to create a new way of being present with their students. Their focus became understanding students' experiences and nurturing their learning through mutual exploration. This was a far cry from focusing on the notes on the page and correcting students' mistakes.

#### **Phase four – Clarity: The essence of meaningful learning**

Clarity in Guadalupe and Leah's teaching came not only from understanding constructivist learning theories and respective strategies, nor from trialling new teaching approaches, nor from reflecting on their practices, but from each of these elements combined. They committed to taking risks, to never being complacent that they had arrived as 'expert teachers' and to challenge themselves to remain curious. In that regard, they recognise that as professional teachers, adopting a learner identity (Larsen, 2017) and identifying as continuous learners (Coll & Falsafi, 2010) is crucial to their ongoing development. This kind of identity, which has received very little attention to date, particularly in music studies, helps to build knowledge in

relation to “who we are” in a given domain, but also from that of “what we are not” (Reay, 2010, p. 2) – what we want to be and still need to achieve our goals and dreams, something of constant changing character. As Biggs and Tang (2011) explain:

When you stand in front of a mirror what you see is your reflection, what you *are*.

Transformative reflection is rather like the mirror in Snow White: it tells you what you *might be*. This mirror uses theory to enable the transformation from the unsatisfactory what-is to the more effective what-might-be. (p. 43)

While they can now view their teaching approaches with renewed clarity, this does not mean teaching is easy; on the contrary, approaching lessons in this way requires increased effort, deeper commitment and continual self-reflection. And even then, not all students are ready to step into a constructivist or transformative lesson regardless how much the teacher invites them. Leah recalls: “The hardest lesson I’ve had to learn as a teacher is that I can’t learn *for* them.” As with teacher transformation, student transformation takes time, and it is up to the teacher to continue to model effective learning, invite students to join them and to be patient and understanding along the way. While this is much easier said than done, as acknowledged by international research on the challenges of activating student-centeredness in the music classroom (Pozo, Pérez-Echeverría, Torrado & López-Íñiguez, 2020), Guadalupe and Leah have seen the joy, growth and commitment it can create in students and the increased engagement for students and teachers alike.

## **Phase five – Hope: Visions for the future**

Learning and teaching is not about the craft; it's about communication, empathy and rapport.

Until focus moves beyond *what* we teach to focus on *who* we teach (and *how* and *why*), pedagogy is being held to ransom, and the price is students' learning. Leah cautions, "while there's much focus in the literature about teaching how we were taught being part of the problem (in education more broadly, e.g. Oleson & Hora, 2014; and in music, e.g. López-Íñiguez & Pozo, 2014a), modelling of teaching is not the issue; what is being modelled is. Longitudinally, if we can shift to constructivist and transformative approaches, then this will become the model for future teachers. At that point, teaching how they were taught (through a constructivist and transformative approach) will become encouraged." Similarly, Guadalupe described her vision as this becoming the norm "so that from the very first lesson students develop not only musical skills, but interpersonal and critical thinking and reflection skills." Most importantly, Leah and Guadalupe share a vision of every instrumental music student learning that their experiences, their voices and their individual goals and needs matter.

But for teachers to adapt their teaching approaches, guidance, support and encouragement is required (Carey et al., 2017). To this end, Guadalupe created a guide (López-Íñiguez, 2017; extended version in López-Íñiguez, Pérez-Echeverría, Pozo & Torrado, 2020) that provides information about constructivist instrumental music teaching and learning and offers reflective considerations for putting constructivist theories into practice. As Guadalupe noted: "It took 10 years of terrible teaching and 10 years reflecting, studying and experimenting in my teaching. That's 20 years to change my teaching practice. I don't want others to have to waste so much time." Research into how transformative approaches such as the Critical Response Process are

being adapted for instrumental and vocal tuition (Carey & Coutts, 2018) and how transformative approaches to lessons might evolve (Coutts, 2018; 2019) is also being conducted and disseminated, but Guadalupe and Leah recognise this cannot wait for established teachers to seek solutions to challenges that could have been mitigated. Both Guadalupe and Leah feel a sense of responsibility for catalysing others' reflective journeys to becoming learners as facilitators, contributing to what they believe is a much-needed paradigm shift.

## **Final reflections**

Transforming our teaching practices and sharing our journeys has required us to embrace the uncertainty and courageous vulnerability that comes with taking risks (Brown, 2018). We recognise there is a growing number of music educators embracing a learner identity and operating through a constructivist and transformative instrumental music education paradigm. The more these educators share their stories with others, collaborate and embrace the messy chaos of authentic teaching, the quicker this paradigm shift will be widespread.

As we discovered, underpinning teaching practice with scholarship is also integral to this paradigm. Teachers have a responsibility to continue to develop professionally (Carey et al., 2017), to learn to reflect critically and to adapt their practice accordingly. This is integral to teachers and students alike to embrace their learner identities (Coll & Falsafi, 2010) and the necessary conceptual change (Vosniadou, 2008) required for that to happen. Or, in Senge's (1990) words,

People with a high level of personal mastery live in a continual learning mode. They never 'arrive'. Sometimes, language, such as the term 'personal mastery' creates a

misleading sense of definiteness, of black and white. But personal mastery is not something you possess. It is a process. It is a lifelong discipline. People with a high level of personal mastery are acutely aware of their ignorance, their incompetence, their growth areas. And they are deeply self-confident. Paradoxical? Only for those who do not see the ‘journey is the reward.’ (p. 142)

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**Asking the hard questions: Identifying barriers to inclusivity in  
Wilfrid Laurier University's Faculty of Music**

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**Abstract**

This paper discusses the impetus behind a project to decolonise and increase equity, diversity and inclusion in the Faculty of Music at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. The process, from identification to reform, from reflection to action, is examined through the lens of Laenui's five steps to decolonisation. Challenges to higher music education from equity-seeking groups, and ethical and other dilemmas encountered when conducting research – particularly involving Indigenous peoples in Canada – are interrogated.

This project is a result of many organic conversations that took place over the course of a year between the Dean and a student completing her Masters of Community Music. Relationships built with and between students, faculty, and community members at the University and regionally, provincially and nationally, form the backdrop to intense dialogue on issues of equity and inclusion. The intent is to spark a wider conversation about steps faculties of music can take

to move beyond compassion and empathy to true meaningful reform. The starting point is rediscovering and re-examining the current state of affairs, and how we got to where we are today, from the student application process and auditions, to curriculum and graduation requirements. There follows a qualitative study, the findings of which will be reported at the CEPROM conference in 2020. The present paper lays the groundwork and establishes the context for that study, which is currently underway. It is our hope that, with this paper and the subsequent study which will be presented at the CEPROM conference, we are able to construct a model of what it looks like to decolonise and transform a faculty of music to become a leader in equity-based higher music education.

### **Keywords**

indigeneity, inclusivity, diversity, equity, accessibility.

### **Introduction**

#### **Who we are and what the study is about.**

Niki – In the first week of September, 2018, I ran into Glen, who is the Dean of our Faculty of Music, in the halls of the music building. After excitedly sharing what my plans were for my Masters research, I was invited to arrange the first of what would be many meetings with the Dean. The conversations that evolved over time began to reshape the way that I've thought about and considered my experiences at Laurier, both in the undergraduate ('07) and Masters program ('19). I was thrilled to find a like-minded colleague in the Dean, and we have spent many hours discussing the need for change and the implications for both university-level and school-aged

music education. It has been an exciting, and terrifying journey, one I am happy to have started with Glen.

Glen – The first step in identifying ways to build a more equitable, diverse and inclusive music program at Laurier, is to acknowledge the deep and difficult work that needs to be done. I've written elsewhere and in detail of challenges facing higher music education, including topics as diverse as lifespan learning (2019a), leaders and leadership (2017; 2019b), curricular reform (2012; 2018a) and community music and the curricular core (2016; 2018b; Willingham & Carruthers, 2018). A theme common to these studies is that faculties of music are founded on principles, that have engendered policies, that aim to exclude a wide swath of musicians for whom our programs were not designed. Given that this exclusionary culture exists for white, cis-gender, straight men and women, it may be that students from equity-seeking groups will have an added layer to their experiences that may emphasise otherness. In Canada, this may be especially true of Indigenous peoples, who are underrepresented in higher education across all programs. The process of decolonising music schools is hugely complex, but this study posits tentative first steps.

### **Decolonisation.**

Laenui (2000) identifies five steps to decolonisation as follows:

1. Rediscovery and Recovery
2. Mourning
3. Dreaming
4. Commitment

## 5. Action

This study will lead us through each phase of this process, perhaps many times over. Laenui is clear that the phases he identifies and describes are not linear, but can be cyclical and/or simultaneous. The first phase involves “rediscovering one’s history and recovering one’s culture, language, identity, and so on [and] is fundamental to the movement for decolonisation. It forms the basis for the steps to follow.” (p. 153).

While Laenui’s four subsequent stages are meant to describe the decolonisation process for Indigenous peoples, there is a clear parallel with the (un)learning and uncovering that is necessary for researchers and institutions too. Laenui explains that “a natural outgrowth of the first phase is mourning – a time when a people are able to lament their victimisation. This is an essential phase of healing.” (p. 154). While we, as descendants of colonisers and non-Indigenous educators have not experienced the victimisation described here, we have a great deal to reconcile as students and leaders trained and working in colonial systems which we have, by our mere presence within them, upheld and defended. The mourning phase is a natural outcome of the conversations and learning that engendered this project in the first place. This learning isn’t, however, all negative. Laenui anticipates what we as researchers have experienced, which is that “the mourning stage can also accelerate the earlier stage of rediscovery and recovery. People in mourning often immerse themselves totally in the rediscovery of their history, making for an interesting interplay between these two phases, each feeding on one another” (p. 154). The more we meet, discuss, and read, the deeper our learning and more acute our realisations have become.

Coming to terms with the Eurocentric origins and practices of western music schools and the concomitant exclusion of large, often racialised groups of people, can be challenging. This study is unquestionably a difficult one, since faculty, administration, staff and students are deeply invested in western musical and academic traditions. Nonetheless, it is important to persevere through this long-term project, the “dreaming” phase of which is embodied by this paper. We are dreaming, quite simply, of a better faculty, that is inclusive and open to all who wish to enter, and that is safer and more welcoming for students now and in the future.

## **Literature Review**

In undertaking this work, it is important to consider what has been done to date. There is a sizeable literature on diversifying and decolonising educational spaces from Indigenous perspectives generally (Battiste, 2013; Dion, 2000, 2004, 2007; Kanu, 2011; Toulouse, 2013, 2016, 2017, 2018) and in the field music education specifically (Hess, 2019; Bartleet 2011, 2013). The literature on Indigenous research methodologies is also rich (Wilson, 2008; Denzin et al., 2008; Kovach, 2010; Absolon, 2011; Treloyn & Charles, 2014) and there is a fine style guide for writing about Indigenous peoples (Younging, 2018). A recent study in Newfoundland and Labrador helps identify the extent to which non-Indigenous young people are unaware of Indigenous peoples and their beliefs and values (Godlewska et al., 2017).

There are many gaps in the literature, however, particularly when looking at higher music education through an equity lens. While Hess (2019) writes about creating “Activist Music Education”, she does not discuss the experiences of Indigenous students in faculties of music, but looks more generally at ways music education should evolve at all levels. Bartleet (2011, 2013)

writes about her work in higher music education collaborating with Indigenous communities in Australia. Some of her findings can be applied to the Canadian context, but she doesn't deal with the unique culture within faculties of music that are the focus of the present study.

Within the Canadian context and higher music education, perhaps the most important source is the report, *Re-Sounding the Orchestra*, commissioned by Orchestras Canada (Peerbaye & Attariwala, 2019). While proposing sweeping changes for orchestras across the nation, many parallels can be identified between barriers to inclusivity in orchestras and in post-secondary music programs. The report explicitly states – accurately – that “it will not be possible to generate socially responsible change in Canadian orchestras without figuring our music education systems into the equation. Music faculties and conservatories hold a key to change.” (p. 42). While the report does include suggestions for reform in faculties of music, implementation processes and potential challenges and outcomes are not explored.

## **Challenges to HME**

There is no need to delve deeply into the exclusionary practices of higher music education, since this topic has been explored widely in recent years (Carruthers, 2016). There is, however, an aspect of this topic that is relevant here. While auditions and other entrance requirements intentionally include or exclude certain types of applicants, largely based on training and achievement to date, these practises have unintended outcomes; at least, one hopes they are unintended. For example, in requiring students to have achieved competency as singers or instrumentalists at the time of admission, the intention is to ensure students will be able to handle the curriculum and, ultimately, have a chance at a successful career in music. The unintended

consequence, is that young people who have not had opportunity to study privately with a competent teacher over a period of several years – perhaps for economic or geographical reasons – will be ineligible for admission to higher music education. In effect, an applicant of low socio-economic standing is less likely to be admitted than a student of high socio-economic standing.

Once admitted, students would find an entrenched instructional paradigm that is also based on the concept of insiders and outsiders. This has to do, in part, with the divide that is central to the relationship between teachers and students within the western academy. The students have questions and the teachers have answers. One premise of the present study is that this hierarchy is not necessarily the way things have to be, despite that they have been this way for a very long time.

Hess (2019), citing Abrahams (2005, 2006, 2009), asks four crucial questions when considering a culture of mutuality between teachers and students: “Who am I? Who are my students? What might they become? What might we become together? These questions center students in classroom pedagogy and indicate a commitment on the part of teachers to working alongside students towards common goals” (p. 24). There is no reason why this approach to teaching and learning cannot not be replicated at the post-secondary level.

Within the Faculty which Glen leads and in which Niki studied, there is appetite to develop more critical-thinking courses and entire programs that mirror Allsup’s

‘open’ philosophy of music education, in which teachers work alongside students as ‘fellow adventurers,’ in opposition to what he calls the Master-apprentice model that

remains pervasive in music education. The commitment to honor the lived experiences of students through culturally responsive pedagogy, simultaneously considering what it might mean to work collaboratively with youth both musically and on problems they identify, sets the conditions for critical pedagogy in music education. (Allsup, 2016, in Hess, 2019, p. 25)

In considering Indigenous students, there occurs another layer of complexity. “[P]artnership,’ ‘consultation’ and ‘collaboration’ require acknowledgement of power and privilege differentials, and meaningful actions towards reciprocity, at every point in the process” (Peerbaye & Attariwala, 2019, p. 20). The power differential between professor and student is exacerbated when the interaction is between a white professor and an Indigenous student, or an able professor and a disabled student, and so forth. An essential element of decolonising and diversifying higher music education would be developing additional courses, or rethinking existing courses, to encourage more critical dialogue on matters of Indigeneity and the experiences and perspectives of other equity-seeking groups.

### **The Laurier Context**

The Orchestras Canada report observes that “an individual working within the constraints of a structurally biased system may be pre-conditioned to accept inequities within their organisation. Our current challenge is to recognise the elements of structural inequity in our organisations and either remove or adapt them” (p. 32). These inequities pervade legacy institutions so that, in the case of orchestras, programming, and in the case of universities, curriculum, derive from the

dominant culture. “Curricular reform is key to how people in Canada learn to think about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples” (Godlewska et al., 2017, p. 593).

Wilfrid Laurier University’s Faculty of Music diversified its student body by introducing an undergraduate program in Community Music in 2016. A research centre – The Laurier Centre for Music in the Community (LCMC) – and graduate program in Community Music were already in place, so the undergraduate program was the next logical step, even if the order of these elements was opposite to what might be considered more usual. The program, which has been discussed elsewhere (Willingham & Carruthers, 2018), attracted students from a wide variety of backgrounds, musically and culturally, and has been fully subscribed since its inception. Forty students are admitted each year and, now that all four years of the program are operational, there are about 150 more music students in our Faculty than previously. The culture has shifted dramatically from primarily settler-based Euro-centric music to a mix of this with a wealth of diverse traditions, from Carnatic song to trance music and thrash metal. Indigenous peoples and their traditions are, despite these changes, still underrepresented. While there have been Indigenous instructors and guests lecturers in several classes, there are few self-identified Indigenous students in the program and those that are present have been absorbed into other musical traditions and practices.

## **Challenges to Research**

When assuming the monumental task of dreaming about what needs to change in higher music education, at Laurier and elsewhere, it seemed appropriate to focus on students and the student experience. While we intend to speak with many students representing the full diversity of the

Faculty as it currently exists, we recognise that there needs to be a slow and intentional plan for undertaking this research, particularly as it relates to Indigenous students, and that it must be rooted in positive relationships. While some observers may express concern that “there are other students here” (meaning other equity-seeking group), we would counter with an argument posited by St. Denis (2011): “Aboriginal people are not the only people here... This comment conveys a recurring sentiment that defends public education as a neutral multicultural space but also effectively tempers Aboriginal educational initiatives” (p. 27). St. Denis is clear that “Aboriginal people groups suggest that multiculturalism is a form of colonialism and works to distract from the recognition and redress of Indigenous Rights. Racism also impacts upon Aboriginal groups, and multiculturalism can justify public expressions of anti-Aboriginal sentiments” (p. 28). In order to address the particular needs of Indigenous students, they need to be considered separately as their own unique group, rather than combined with other equity-seeking students.

Undertaking this research as non-Indigenous persons can be fraught, but there are still comparatively few Indigenous researchers within the university system and those that do exist can experience isolation. As Shawn Wilson (2008) explains, the

... sense of alienation can be a powerful factor for a lot of us Indigenous people in a university setting. I think it is compounded by the fact that there just aren't that many of us being hired by universities, out doing what I would call “good” research. We start to feel removed from our relationships and our relational accountability when we are always having to deal with white academics, the white system of academia and get taken further and further from our community and intuitive way of doing things. Always having to

explain ourselves, fight for our way of doing things, fight off the inevitable attacks whenever we try something that is traditional for us but is “new” to them and therefore perceived as a challenge. (p. 104)

While it can be tempting to focus on how we can “help” Indigenous students and other racialised students in the Faculty of Music, it is important to recognise our own roles in perpetuating systemic barriers to equity. In the book *Unsettling the Settler Within* (2010), Paulette Regan discusses a settler’s responsibility when working with Indigenous peoples:

If we are to join survivors on a journey to recover from the residential school experience, what is our particular role and responsibility? Is it to “help” Indigenous people recover from the devastating impacts of prescriptive policies and programs that we claimed were supposed to help them? Given our dismal track record, this seems a dubious goal. Or is it to determine what we who carry the identity of the colonizer and have reaped the benefits and privileges of colonialism must do to help ourselves recover from its detrimental legacy? How will we do so in ways that speak to truth, repair broken trust, and set us on a transformative decolonizing pathway toward more just and peaceful relations with Indigenous people? (p. 2)

An aspect of conducting research concerning the Indigenous community, is that there is danger of re-traumatising or perpetuating colonial systems rather than disrupting or dismantling them. The first and fundamental step is to have at least one Indigenous collaborator on the research project. We are so grateful for the voice and input of Emily Daniel, Student Services Support Co-Ordinator at the Laurier Indigenous Student Centre, for her guidance, contributions, and input on

this project. Informally, Dr. Jean Becker, the Senior Advisor on Indigenous Initiatives, and Erin Hodson, the Indigenous Education Specialist at Laurier have both been involved in guiding the creation of the research proposal and the questions to be asked in the student interviews. This is a collaborative effort, where the work we do will inform how Emily and her colleagues at the Laurier Indigenous Student Centre are able to support Indigenous students in the Faculty of Music.

## **Conclusion**

A further challenge is that, “while educational administrators are introducing policy changes in secondary and university education across Canada, most educators have little understanding of the environment faced by Indigenous people in Canadian institutions, and, importantly, lack the data to track the impact of policy changes” (Godlewska et al., p. 508). That is why studies of the sort we have undertaken, with longitudinal assessment of impacts, are crucial to altering the course of higher music education. Possible outcomes of this study include changes in hiring practices – intentionally hiring racialised faculty members (as is a burgeoning practice elsewhere), altering the student application and audition process to increase accessibility, providing further education for staff and faculty, and enacting purposeful and informed curricular reform. As the Faculty enters into a period of great change, including retirement of the current Dean in June 2021, numerous other faculty retirements, and major building renovations, this study inscribes the process for Laurier to become a vanguard in what higher music education could and should be. With deep reciprocal relationships, intentionality, and strong commitment, the course is set for reforms that embraces worldviews and musics that lie far beyond the current purview of higher music education in Canada.

## **Addendum: Preliminary Research Findings**

The following addendum shares some of the research outlined in the attached paper. Findings are preliminary and are representative of the first phase of what aims to be a long-term study.

### **Study overview.**

The research study, conducted in collaboration with the Indigenous Initiatives team at Laurier, involved interviews with three students in the Faculty of Music who self-identified as Indigenous. While it may seem like the pool of data is small, the participants represented approximately half of the students who self-identify as Indigenous in the Faculty of Music. In addition, the interviews generated a vast amount of highly impactful data. The interviews were conducted over a period of two weeks in March 2020 and while the formal interviews lasted approximately one hour, the time spent together was much longer. With this type of study, building relationships and allowing time for authentic and meaningful connections is essential (Wilson, 2008). It is important also to note that participation may have been higher were it not for the shutdown due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. With university facilities closed and many students returning home, in-person interviews were not possible so we opted to proceed with the data from the three previously conducted. Participants represented different years of study, and it is notable to share that there was a great deal of intersectionality amongst the three students. Between the participants, there were experiences of being queer, struggles with physical and learning accessibility, and struggles with mental health. These intersectionalities are of note because it is often forgotten that just because someone identifies as part of a racialised group, they can also experience other levels of marginalisation due to their circumstances or abilities that are unrelated to their Indigenous identity.

The data generated by the three interviews was vast and included many topics to consider. By coding the interviews, several themes emerged:

**The sense of community in the Faculty.**

Participants noted several times that they “did not feel like a number”, that they felt their professors and fellow students knew who they were and they felt seen and known, for the most part.

**Community Music program mentions.**

While all participants were in the common year program (what many know as the more traditional western-european music program), each one mentioned interest in the Community Music program and saw that as a more likely place of change and inclusion of Indigenous themes and content. This corroborates with Glen’s (2016; 2018b) prior writing on the place and value of Community Music in the Faculty of Music and in music education more broadly.

**The Indigenous Student Centre and Emily specifically.**

Each student emphasised the importance of Laurier’s Indigenous student centre, the activities on campus, and specifically Emily’s role as Indigenous Student Centre Support Coordinator in supporting them as essential and pivotal to their learning. Due to the time constraints and heavy course load of the music program, all three spoke about their desire to be involved in off-campus events but that barriers existed. They each mentioned how the student centre was an important gathering place for them, where they were finding their community and even each other. Emily

has mentioned in the past that the students often didn't realise each other identified as Indigenous until they met each other at events in the student centre.

### **Family Acceptance and Indigenous Identity.**

All three students spoke about their family's struggle to support them in learning about their identity and culture. Because of a history of trauma which is prevalent in Indigenous families in Canada due to generations of policies and practices that deny or forcibly remove children from their cultures, all three students were just now, at university, beginning to explore their Indigenous identities. Students self-identify to be on mailing lists/funding purposes.

### **Competition.**

The students mentioned competition as a negative aspect of their time at Laurier. While the students initially felt that they were 'in it together' as their time went on at Laurier they felt that they were placed in direct competition with their peers, sometimes causing tension or animosity. The admissions procedures for the voice studio were specifically mentioned as barriers to student success. Students were required to audition for studios, with instructors picking which students they would accept into their studio, implying a clear hierarchy.

### **Time Constraints, Barriers.**

In the interviews, all three mentioned difficulties with the rigidity of deadlines and timelines in coursework. In comparison with the students' experience in other faculties, the music program did not allow for accommodations in completing assignments and deadlines were rarely flexible, even when implemented by the accessible learning centre at the university. This led the students

to feel as though they were being forced to choose between their own well-being and completing an assignment on time.

In addition to struggles with timelines for course work, the participants also mentioned on several occasions that their course loads acted as a barrier for participating in Indigenous community events/ceremonies. The timing of courses, ensembles and lessons often interfered with their ability to participate in scheduled cultural activities and teachings.

The participants also shared a desire for better inter-faculty communication. Students feel that their courses outside of the faculty are not aware of the realities facing a music student, such as hours of practicing, ensemble, and masterclasses outside of their already heavy course loads. Finally, two of the participants mentioned their frustration with the concert reports that were required as part of their studio learning expectations. They were unhappy with the heavy restrictions on what was acceptable for the type of concert they attended, and also that there wasn't enough flexibility to use one concert for several courses. This contributed significantly to their lack of time as they were then required to fulfill multiple concert commitments, further restricting the time available to them to make connections within the Indigenous community at Laurier.

### **Faculty suggestions**

At several points, the students called for the hiring of an Indigenous faculty member, or at bare minimum, a requirement for Indigenous perspectives to be woven into the curriculum.

Awareness and training was also mentioned several times as a need. Participants felt that even if professors were aware of their Indigeneity, they did not know what it meant and therefore their understanding around ceremony, cultural practices, etc. was low.

### **Curriculum suggestions.**

Music in Context, a first year course, was repeatedly named as one of the favourites and a place they finally saw a small representation of First Nations cultures in their curriculum.

### **Summary**

While the data is extensive, and there is still work to be done as far as synthesising it, some of the most important and fundamental suggestions made by the students are listed below. This list is by no means exhaustive, and should only act as a starting point in a much longer journey.

- Flexible deadlines and a greater understanding of the enormous requirements being placed upon Faculty of Music students specifically.
- Exceptions for attending ceremonies, community events both on and off campus
- Hiring of Indigenous/racialised course instructors/faculty
- Training around Indigenous cultures and racism/white supremacy/microaggressions suggested at various points.
- Indigenous content woven into more courses-comparisons including Indigenous authors in English courses to including Indigenous composers/musics in Western-European music programs.
- Admissions requirements and procedures re-evaluated and redesigned to allow for greater success and inclusion for Indigenous populations specifically.

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# **Increasing motivation and ownership of learning through Students as Partners: The importance of transparency and belonging**

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## **Abstract**

As Higher Education institutions increasingly turn their attention to creating a culture of inclusivity and diversity the student voice is becoming progressively valued. Thus, the increased attention in *Students as Partners* over the last five years is timely, whereby students and educators collaborate in curriculum design. This article explores Bachelor of Music (Honours) students' perspectives of a recent initiative where they collaborated in enhancing one of their research courses with their educator (the author) and two Honours graduates.

With the aim of creating assessments that were relevant, timely and interesting, students and graduates were invited to participate in a planning meeting where they undertook SWOT analyses of assessment items. Potential due dates and potential new assessment tasks were also explored. Two focus groups were then conducted: one after the planning meeting and prior to the course commencing; the other upon completion of the course. These explored any perceived benefits of the partnership and students' experiences within the course.

Co-creating the course with students and graduates resulted in a strongly relevant course design. Students indicated possessing deep ownership of their learning, an enhanced sense of belonging, and sustained motivation and engagement. Most notably, transparency around the *process*, and not only the *product* was most valued by students, as well as involvement in the decision-making process and transparency around expected student experiences. Graduate involvement was welcomed, with their recent experience of the course contributing to achieving consensus in the decisions made. Horizontal alignment of workload across the Honours program was also appreciated. Students' engagement was enhanced by the existing strong rapport between the educator and students, with students being accustomed to active learning and providing feedback in an earlier research course.

This initiative highlights that curriculum design is less about the educator and more about the students, and that feelings of involvement, belonging and ownership should not be underestimated. Questions remain about how such an approach to partnerships might unfold with earlier undergraduate courses, especially when cohorts are larger or there is no pre-existing student-teacher relationship. How to create such strong ownership where partnerships might not be appropriate also requires further attention. Given participants' unfavourable perspectives on their previous undergraduate course plans, insights into undergraduate music students' understanding of their courses more broadly and any consequent impact on their engagement would be useful. This could inform a more inclusive approach to curriculum and program design.

**Keywords:** curriculum design; higher music education; student engagement; students as partners; transparency

*“Academic staff should not only consult students but also explore ways for students to become full participants in the design of teaching approaches, courses and curricula.”*

*Bovill, Cook-Sather., & Felten, 2011, p. 133*

As Higher Education institutions increasingly turn their attention to creating a culture of inclusivity and diversity the student voice is becoming progressively valued. Thus, the increased attention in *Students as Partners* over the last five years (Healey & Healey, 2018) is timely, where partnership “is framed as a process of student engagement, understood as staff and students learning and working together to foster engaged student learning and engaging learning and teaching enhancement” (Healey, Flint., & Harrington, 2014, p. 7).

Healey and Healey (2018) describe *Students as Partners* as a “lens through which to reconsider the nature of higher education” (p. 6). Rather than viewing students as customers, this lens is “the radical antithesis of the consumerist mind-set in higher education” (Healey, Healey, & Cliffe, 2018, para 3), placing “reciprocal learning at the heart of the relationship” (Healey, Flint & Harrington, 2014, p. 17). *Students as Partners* thus challenges established hierarchies such as who is responsible for decision-making and whose knowledge is important. As Bovill, Cook-Sather and Felten (2011) explain, this “challenges conventional conceptions of learners as subordinate to the expert tutor/faculty in engaging with what is taught and ... calls for ‘radical collegiality’ in which students are ‘agents in the process of transformative learning’ (Fielding, 1999, p. 22)” (p. 133).

Fostering such agency in students has also been called for in higher music education (HME) (Carruthers, 2018), with much necessary focus being given to collaborative and transformative approaches to instrumental and vocal music tuition (e.g. Burwell, 2005; Carey & Grant, 2016; Carey et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2010; 2011; Gaunt & Westerlund, 2016). Minimal attention, however, has been given to collaborative partnerships within class-based tertiary music courses, with just two discrete case studies found to date (Cook-Sather, Bovill, & Felten, 2014, pp. 37-38; Coutts, 2019a). With its potential benefits, such as increased ownership of learning and sustained motivation and engagement (Mercer-Mapstone, et al., 2017), it is arguably time to explore Students as Partners further within the HME context.

Since completing research into transformative pedagogy within a piano studio, which highlighted student involvement and relevance in lesson planning as key to engaged student learning (Coutts, 2018; 2019b), I have been intrigued by how student-informed approaches to course design might unfold within HME class-based courses. This article explores students' experiences with and perceptions of a recent initiative where I collaborated with Bachelor of Music (Honours) students and graduates to enhance one of their research courses.

### **Context: Music Research Design 2**

During their Bachelor of Music (Honours) program fourth-year students undertake an independent research project which culminates in a 10,000 to 15,000-word dissertation. Students are supported by two compulsory *Music Research Design* courses (MRD1; MRD2) that run concurrently with their research projects (semester 1 and 2 respectively). The aim of these courses is to develop in students the research skills they need to implement their projects and

complete their dissertations. The Students as Partners initiative in this study relates to the 2019 iteration of MRD2.

### **Study Design: Co-creation of curriculum**

With the aim of creating assessments that were relevant, timely and interesting to students, I invited current 2019 students to collaborate in re-designing MRD2. Eight of the 11 students accepted (names used in this article are pseudonyms in line with ethics):

- Four females: Three classical music majors; one composition major
- Four males: One classical music major; three popular music majors

I also invited the previous year's (2018) cohort to be involved to share their unique perspectives. Two of the eight graduates contacted accepted: one female classical music major; and one female popular music major.

Each participant brought with them “different but equal” (Matthews, 2017) forms of expertise to inform the course design:

- Current students: Experts in being students, in their own situations, interests, goals, perspectives and challenges;
- Graduates: Experts in their recent experiences of having completed the course and assessment tasks;
- Course convenor and educator (female, early career academic): Expert in course design and experience in delivering the course since 2017, possesses insights into the broader functioning of the Honours degree program.

### **Planning meetings.**

We met prior to semester 2 to plan the design of *MRD2*. While I initially intended to hold three planning meetings, focusing on assessment, class activities and final approvals respectively, due to a range of factors only one was possible, and so this lasted two-and-a-half hours and was inclusive of assessments and approaches to classroom learning. During the planning meeting we undertook SWOT analyses (Gürel & Tat, 2017) of *MRD2* assessment items, identifying strengths and weaknesses, opportunities for enhancements and threats to students' engagement. We also explored potential due dates and new assessment tasks.

Recognising the importance of listening as a first step (Mihans, Long, & Felten, 2008) and ensuring I was guided by student interests and concerns (Hudd, 2003) I acted as facilitator, asking questions to seek clarity and to prompt different perspectives, ensuring all views were heard before sharing my own. In doing so I aspired to share power with all those involved (Matthews, 2017). I also stayed keenly aware of ethics, not only in formal ethics approvals (which was granted by the host institution), but also “an ethic of reciprocity” (Cook-Sather & Felten, 2017). This includes respect and shared responsibility “premised on dialogue, negotiation, and exchange of ideas between partners” (Mercer-Mapstone, et al., 2017, p. 14).

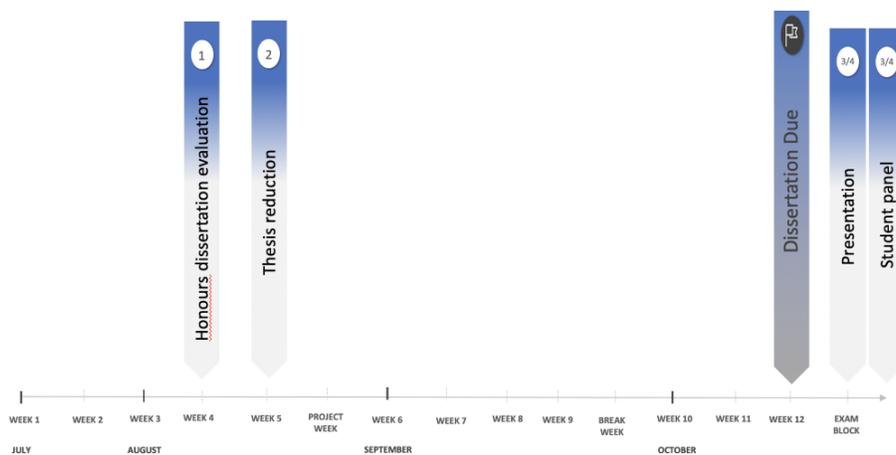
### **Data generation and analysis.**

Following the planning meeting a semi-structured (Roulston & Choi, 2018) focus group (n=8) was conducted to uncover students' experiences with and perceptions of the planning process and the consequent course and assessment plan. A second focus group (n=6) was conducted upon completion of the course using a general interview guide (Edwards & Hollan, 2013) to

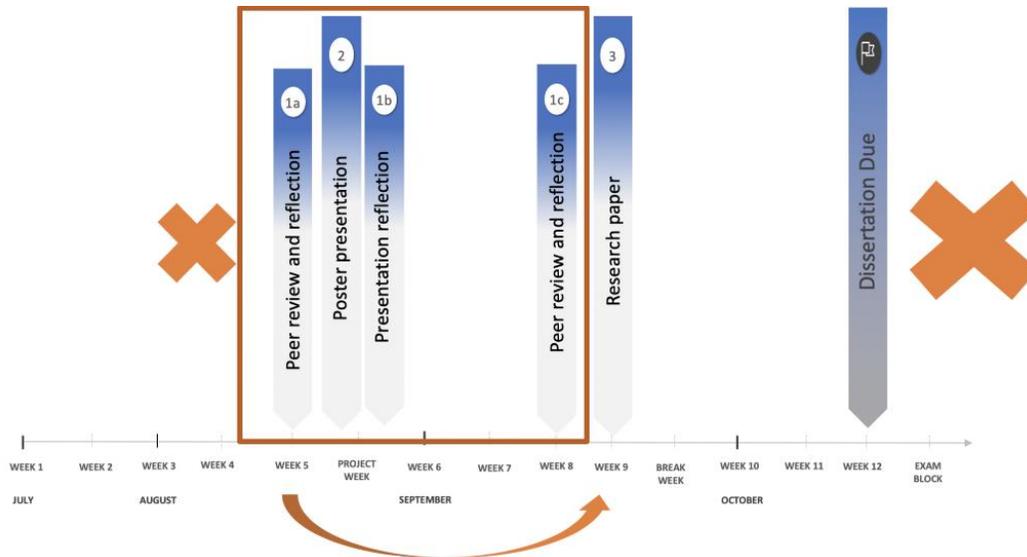
investigate students' experiences within the course itself and to ascertain whether their initial motivation was sustained. Focus groups were transcribed and coded using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Descriptive themes aligning with student engagement such as relevance, transparency, motivation and ownership of learning served as a starting point while allowing inductive themes to emerge.

## Creating relevant assessments

One aim of the planning meeting was to create relevant and interesting assessment items (Biggs & Tang, 2011). This resulted in the removal of two assessment items and the development of two new ones, with a complete overhaul of due dates (illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 below).



*Figure 1:* 2018 assessment item, where the first item was deemed more valuable as an in-class activity, and any assessments due after the dissertation were redundant.



*Figure 2:* 2019 assessment items, where the crosses signify removed assessment items, the items in the box are new items, and the arrow signifies a later due date. 1a, b and c together form a reflective portfolio submitted upon completion of all three parts.

Students highlighted three areas of relevance this new assessment plan achieved: alignment with their dissertations; preparing for postgraduate study; and relevance for their careers more broadly, each agreeing these were important (FG1). Luke saw my empathy towards their holistic student experience as integral to achieving this, while several others linked this to enhancing their learning and engagement (FG1). This perceived relevance continued throughout the course for all involved. As Elaine summarised, “Every single assessment that we did and everything we learned in the class was relevant and useful” (FG2).

Graduate input was valued highly through this process (n=5), with Tom describing their insights as integral to transforming his perspectives: “... Because what we thought were strengths and what [graduates] thought were strengths were pretty different a lot of the time” (FG1). While

there were a range of preferences relating to assessment tasks early in the meeting, consensus was achieved as differing perspectives shone new light on advantages and disadvantages of each task and due date, indicating a presence of critical thinking and reflection skills.

### **Creating timely assessments**

Another aim of the meeting was to choose assessment due dates that avoided students' major performance schedules and other competing priorities, which placed undue pressure on students in previous years. Students appreciated the opportunity for holistic thinking, noting how different this was to other courses. Several students compared this unfavourably to their other undergraduate courses, where Tom perceived there to be "no foresight or planning" (FG1). Rachael expanded: "[Course convenors] don't look at anything else that's happening in the building and it all comes at once" (FG1). While curriculum mapping (Jacobs, 1997) and creating horizontal alignment (Howard, 2007) typically focuses on course content, this project highlights the value in aligning schedules so as to create more appropriate workload allocations, and indicates that traditional approaches to course design may fail to provide students adequate insights into the curriculum design process.

Due dates also needed to afford students adequate time to incorporate feedback into their dissertations, due on the final day of class (week 12). Thus, assessment items were restricted to the first eight weeks, with flexibility to extend by another week if required. Students' first reactions upon seeing this in the plan was overwhelm: "Eight weeks seems fast to do that much assessment." (Tom, FG1); "I was stressed about [the timeline] ... It looks daunting" (Rachael, FG1); "I was like, 'holy crap, that's a lot of work'" (Luke, FG1). When this was discussed,

however, including reminders of the discussions that led to these decisions and the implications for their broader dissertation, students were satisfied this was the most appropriate plan: "... but looking at where we should be in our actual dissertation, it couldn't really be moved." (Rachael, FG1); "... but it connects to the overall dissertation" (Luke, FG1). Despite their initial concerns, students recognised this plan "align[s] with a lot of our personal thoughts of needing a reasonable timeframe and workload" (Jai, FG1). Flexibility was also appreciated: "Leah was okay with being flexible with deadlines. And she still is. It's good that she's willing to push things based on our feedback ... we always get to make our own decisions" (Toni, FG1).

Jai appreciated the transparency afforded to them through their involvement:

You could see what was going on behind the scenes, and you could see the sacrifices needed when shifting dates around. It's spinning plates. It's really good to feel like you have control over that but you're also realistic about how things affect each other and what's just impossible. (FG2)

Tom explained he wasn't used to such "bigger picture thinking" and was reliant on me to provide these insights (FG1). This transparency led to strong consensus for due dates. While advice in the literature surrounding transparency focuses on the benefits of using a marking rubric (Jonsson, 2014) or creating detailed frameworks outlining assessment plans (e.g. NILOA, 2011), these focus on the product rather than the process. As evidenced throughout this initiative, understanding the process was most beneficial. Once again, Luke mentioned empathy in relation to this process, this time relating to the mutual empathy and understanding reached to achieve the best outcome for the course and students.

## **Increased motivation and ownership of learning**

Despite everyone's initial concerns about workload, involvement in the planning process created deep motivation in the lead-up to the course. Elaine felt "excited", Tom felt "pumped to get started" and Jai "look[ed] forward to getting stuck into it", describing the assessment as "exhilarating" and "stimulating" (FG1). This was achieved, it seems, through students possessing a level of control over their learning: "I feel like having some control over the decisions and where we go next and what we talk about in class makes me more engaged with it" (Toni, FG1). The group agreed. Students also felt more invested in their learning. As Rachael articulated: "Your assessment is more on your shoulders, I feel, because they were clearly assessment items I chose and wanted to do" (FG1). Once more, there were nods all around. As Elaine summarised: "We were all so much more involved in the course by being involved in the planning" (FG2). Students' comments highlight a democratisation of the course (Deeley & Bovill, 2017) was integral to their motivation.

The second focus group confirmed the assessment plan was successful. Students agreed that the assessment "lined up really well" (Jessie), guiding them through each required step (Jai).

Relevance also meant they were excited to go to lectures each week: "I'm usually like, I could just skip this and learn the content at home, but I always wanted to come" (Toni); "I never felt bored or that I couldn't be bothered or didn't want to do it. I was interested because I was curious about what we're going to learn" (Elaine).

Being involved in the decision-making process also increased students' sense of ownership. As Elaine explained, "It definitely helps knowing you had a say in when assessments were due. You

can't be annoyed at that" (FG2). Samantha agreed: "Because we had a say I didn't feel a grudge about it being inconvenient. We chose this. This was the best for everyone". Tom and Samantha described this lack of resentment towards assessments as "odd" and "a strange feeling." Jai brought it back to transparency: "While I'm doing assessments I'm not grumbling because I know if it was another time, it would be affecting other things" (FG2).

Elaine referred to the cohort to further explain her increase in motivation: "Because it was planned to suit everyone it made you want to put in that extra effort. Feeling like you're more a part of the course than 'here's the course, and there you go, do it.'" (Elaine, FG2). This sense of belonging and shared endeavour is an aspect of motivation linked to social constructivism (Powell & Kalina, 2009), whereby a community of learning is created. This was important for students, which was not only reflected in their appreciation for group discussions within the planning meeting, but also in the resultant class activities, which focussed heavily on group activities and peer feedback. Having planned the course together, students collaborated wholeheartedly throughout the semester and were interested in "benchmarking" (Elaine, FG2) and "staying in the same headspace" (Tom, FG2) as their peers.

### **Levels of influence**

Most students felt like they played a large role in shaping MRD2 and described feeling "very involved" (Elaine, FG2) in the process. As Rachael and Toni explained, the assessment plan changed substantially based on students' input in the meeting. Elaine, however, felt she had less input than the other participants: "I mostly listened to my peers' ideas and like what they had to say. I didn't contribute as many ideas. Perhaps this is due to my quieter personality" (FG1).

Despite this, she described having high levels of involvement in the process and felt the same sense of motivation and ownership as her peers. This highlights active listening and inclusion as a valid form of engagement regardless of how ‘active’ a student might appear to be.

Interestingly, while the majority of students agreed their involvement in decision-making was “crucial” (Tom) because they felt they had more of a choice (Samantha) which increased their investment in the course (n=5, FG2), Jessie provided a different perspective: “It wasn’t so much the ownership in the planning session, but more just being explained the entire picture. As long as you’re shown and informed, it lets you become more aware of what’s happening” (FG2).

While the other students disagreed with this, Jessie’s perspective highlights how important transparency is – not only in relation to the course itself, but also in relation to the student experience: “Even if we had no choice what the assessment was, if it was explained - 'you're going to be stressed out at this point' - as long as you know going forward, it really helps”. This also emphasises the importance of educators understanding and considering student experiences, factoring these into decisions made and communicating them explicitly to students.

## **Summary of findings**

Co-creating MRD2 with students and graduates resulted in a course design that was perceived as relevant, which was integral to students’ increased motivation (Keller, 1987; Kember, Ho., & Hong, 2008). Students indicated possessing deep ownership of their learning, an enhanced sense of belonging, and sustained motivation and engagement, which Mercer-Mapstone and colleagues note are common benefits in Students as Partners initiatives (2017). Most notably, transparency around the *process*, and not only the *product* was most valued by students, as well as

involvement in the decision-making process and transparency around expected student experiences. Graduate involvement was welcomed here, with their first-hand and recent experience of the course enhancing these insights and contributing to achieving consensus in the decisions made. Horizontal alignment of workload across the Honours program was also appreciated, with students expressing sincere gratitude for the empathy and inclusivity provided within this initiative.

## **Reflections**

This initiative has highlighted that curriculum design is less about the educator and more about the students, and that feelings of involvement, inclusivity and ownership should not be underestimated. Its success was likely aided by Honours students arguably possessing well-developed levels of maturity and critical thinking skills, supported by the pre-existing student-educator rapport. Questions remain about how such an approach to partnerships might unfold with earlier undergraduate courses, especially when cohorts are larger or there is no such pre-existing relationship. Given students' unfavourable comparisons to undergraduate courses which lacked apparent transparency, insights into undergraduate music students' understanding of their courses' relevance and the consequent impact on their engagement would be useful. This could inform a more inclusive approach to curriculum and program design within HME more broadly.

I am also left questioning how to create such strong ownership of learning with future MRD2 cohorts when the class plan appears to need no further enhancements. Perhaps discussions regarding the course in relation to 2019 students' experiences and goals can be a gateway to increase rapport and transparency without the need for partnership, as Jordan suggested. Or

perhaps ongoing flexibility is a more subtle form of ownership which can unfold organically within the course itself. This does not negate the strength of partnerships; on the contrary, MRD2 would not have had such a strong design had it not been for the input of all those involved.

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**Construction of personal and social identities in performance  
practice: A didactic proposal for instrument courses**

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**Abstract**

As performers, we were most likely educated with a strong commitment towards bringing a music score to sound as faithfully as possible. The current view of performance studies, however, moves away from the centrality of the text to focus on the complex processes that, through music-making, allow the performer to construct her/his musical persona, rooted in a particular cultural scene. The trigger question of this study, carried out by a group of teacher/performers at an Argentinean university, is to what extent our teaching practices acknowledge this conceptual turn. The project was developed in two parts. In the first part, we sought to typify performance through in-depth interviews with renowned musicians. In the second part, adopting a Design-Based Research (DBR) methodology, we used those narratives as

reference for a critical reflection of our teaching practices and the design of a didactic proposal. We transformed the instrument courses format into modular learning environments that could better address both the diversity of learning styles of students and the ampleness of the concept of performance. While the last stages of this study are still in progress, partial results indicate that the articulation of different modules as learning spaces, with distinctive working dynamics with a strong accent in collaboration, helps agents to construct their musical identity while managing own and shared learning tools, and in closer contact with the social aspects of performance practice.

### **Keywords**

Performance teaching, instrumental pedagogy, collaborative learning, musical persona.

### **Introduction**

Research in performance has made notable progress in quantity and diversity from 1990 onwards, propelled not only by the increasing circulation of performance practices of diverse cultural roots, but especially by the broadening of the concept of performance itself. The idea of performativity stretches to reach different disciplines, inside and beyond the artistic realm, addressing a type of discourse that creates what it names (Geeves, 2014; López Cano, 2014; Pelinsky, 2005), firmly grounded in the body (Di Paolo & Thompson, 2014) and in constant dialogue with the cultural context (Auslander, 2006; Blau, 2009; Cook, 2001). As a musician declared, “You can’t be thinking about it, you just have to *be* it” (Geeves, 2014, p. 4). From gender studies to urban culture expressions, to different art forms, the common question that

arises is what these performance practices allow people to experience in their daily life and how these experiences relate to their perception of self and society.

As performers ourselves, it is most likely that we were educated with a strong commitment towards bringing a musical text to sound, striving for perfection in terms of technique and stylistic faithfulness. Likewise, several circumstances of our professional lives (auditions, contests, examinations, etc.) may have reinforced that idea. The centrality of the text as guardian of all musical meanings failed to consider several aspects of music-making, which are now brought to light by performance research: what happens when music takes place and how performers and audiences negotiate their shared experience.

Therefore, the current view of performance studies conceives music beyond the locus of performance and its constrictions: the concept broadens to embrace complex processes that, through music-making, allow the performer to develop a musical persona, rooted in a particular cultural scene (Gruhn, et al., 2017). Underlining this aspect of the performance potential, Philip Auslander (2006) states that “the direct object of the verb to perform need not to be something – it can also be *someone*, an identity rather than a text” (p. 101).

As educators of performers we need to ask ourselves to what extent our teaching practices acknowledge this conceptual turn. In the words of Alejandro Madrid (2009), “It is not that we have to forget the performatic aspects or the stage situation, but it can be a good idea to incorporate the performative perspective” (p. 10). That perspective implies a different way of taking on account production, reception and distribution of music, alongside with “the locations

and virtualities that permit those experiences to take place, and also in relation to technologies that allow the magnification of those experiences” (p. 10).

In adopting this scope, we should focus on the personal and social interactions that enable our students to construct her/his musical persona, and communicate it through performance in a broad sense of the word. This means not only the formal school recital situation, but varied social transactions around a sonic production, where listeners and producers negotiate a common ground for expression (Dubatti, 2007). “A musician, then, offers up much more than music; s/he also articulates an identity, a role, a place within the cultural-ideological landscape that surrounds that music” (Blau, 2009, p. 3).

## **Context and Method**

In order to connect pedagogy with fresh and situated data from the daily world of working performers, we designed a two-part qualitative research project. In the first part, ten professional musicians were individually interviewed with the purpose of exploring their personal processes around a public performance, involving the before – during – after the concert experiences. In the second part, this information was utilised to 1) serve as a reference for a critical review of our own teaching practices, and 2) design a didactic proposal to be tried out in a three year period, in three instrument studios.

### **First Part: Typifying the performance process**

We interviewed ten professional musicians actively involved in the cultural scene, popular and classical, men and women, in a balanced number. Data were analysed by the reflexive thematic

analysis method. The narratives we could construct with this information typify the three key moments of performance: before, when the process of appropriation of music takes place; during, when the social event unfolds; and after, when the experience is assimilated and redirected towards new opportunities for performance.

### **Before.**

Two instances emerged from the descriptions of musicians preparing a public presentation: a preliminary approach, when the technical work is mapped, sources are checked, and general decisions are made, and a second instance, in which an immersion in the selected music takes place. The perceived affordances of the material guide the interactions that build the performance step by step.

“First, you need to establish a clear connection with the patterns that condition the pace: swing, groove...”

“The music we play has a strong identity element in rhythm, is like an internal dance that we have in our bodies...”

“In the beginning, I try to connect with a general, spiritual-bodily sensation...”

At the same time, while bodily interactions with music strengthen the entrainment that allows its fluent technical execution, there is an emergence of meanings coming from the symbolic world of the performer that embed naturally in the musical result. Non-linear logics, such as analogies and metaphors, bring personal history elements to the fore, building a net of personal and social meanings that will accompany the fast, pre-reflexive, physical responses of the performance, in an inextricable whole.

“Imagination...as a baroque interpreter, I am obliged! I only have 60 % of what I am supposed to play, in the score”

“Yupanqui, Sampayo<sup>1</sup>...musicians that remain close to us in affection. Memories, anecdotes, pop up. Those are the triggers that put some order in our work.”

“I stop and try to remember what I enjoyed of music as a child. That ‘delivery meditation’ [laughs] puts me on focus again”.

### **During.**

There is a particular frame in the space, stage, type of audience, lights, acoustic of the venue that receives and reshapes the product the performer has prepared. Concepts like “control”, “responsibility”, “excitement”, “nervousness”, “joy”, dialogue intensely at performance time. Preparation provides a certain level of technical automatism so that control does not consume all the vital energy and enjoyment can take place.

“You are happy and euphoric, but at the same time, you think ‘How I will enjoy it when this ends!’. Happiness on stage is not relaxed, is an alert happiness”

“I am not there to get emotional. I have already gone through emotions while preparing the music. Now, I give it to you, the best I can, so that you can feel the emotion I already felt”

### **After.**

When you can finally release the control of the situation, euphoria and relaxation, energy and tiredness run alongside in a somewhat contradictory way, and time is needed for emotions to

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<sup>1</sup> Atahualpa Yupanqui (Argentina, 1908-1992) and Aníbal Sampayo (Uruguay, 1926-2007) are renowned South American folklore composers and interpreters.

cool down. Weighing of the results and motivation to continue or redirect projects take part in this moment.

“If I could possibly respect my feelings, I would do nothing for some days. I need the experience to decant and start over little by little”

“There are the typical jokes and comments about little things that didn’t go as expected, but before that, there is this emotion...different degrees of (sigh) *how beautiful*”

As a conclusion, we observe that while the concert is the convergent point of the paths of action of a musical project, it is evident that the multimodal richness of the preparation moment and the importance of the post-concert emotion recognition form a complex web that sustains and recycles performers’ motivation. The comprehensive descriptions gathered tie in with Auslander’s statement: “The object of musical performance is the successful presentation of an identity, a musical persona, in a defined social context, rather than the execution of a text” (2006, p. 118).

## **Second Part: Didactic proposal**

The studios involved in this project are flute, oboe and piano, at undergraduate level. We adopted a Design-Based Research (DBR) methodology, which “does not seek for causal explanations, but for a deeper understanding of the processes to be researched” (Rinaudo and Donolo, 2010, p. 17). The actions are carried out in their natural setting, by the protagonists of the detected problem, in iterative microcycles of action /reflection that allow periodic adjustments, validated through the observation and interchange with external professionals.

Our starting point was a group mirror-interview (Rinaudo & Donolo, 2010) that allowed us to gather team researchers' critical reflections about current teaching practices. We kept the *before-during-after* layout of the interviews in the construction of the base line of the problematic situation, as follows:

**Before.**

Students prepare repertoire in one-to-one weekly lessons, to be played mainly in studio recitals and exams. Much has been said about the potential problems and limitations of the individual lesson (Gaunt, 2010; Gaunt and Westerlund, 2013; Daniel and Parkes, 2017), but it is still the most common instrumental learning setting. The process remains mostly hidden (Burwell, Carey and Bennet, 2017) and the repertoire is only shared with others when it is supposedly ready.

Masterclasses usually reproduce the master-apprentice relationship, but in a group setting, with few interchange instances. Attendants generally seek for solutions for their own problems, whether they are active participants or listeners.

**During.**

Performance practice is mostly represented by the studio recital, commonly organised by the teacher, as far as date, place, repertoire to be played, players, players' order, etc. The audience is generally composed of classmates. The recitals usually take place in the same school, looking more like a mock recital or mock audition than a real social event, even a modest one. The major interest of the student performers seems to be to obtain the teacher's opinion in the first place and maybe the fellow students' comments; there is not much opportunity to deal with real public, meaning not specialised attendees.

**After.**

The evaluation of a recital performance is done back in the individual lesson context, mainly by the teacher. The studio schedule leaves little room for class interchange about recital results, and since general public is not usually invited, there is no audience feedback.

After going through the critical reflective discussion we conclude that, although all of us have tried out some innovative practices over the spotted problems, our individual efforts have collapsed several times under the school tradition pressure. The narratives collected through interviews in the first part of the project depict a rich, complex and highly personal process of immersion, deliverance and assimilation of the performance experience that goes far beyond the usual set of learning situations we provide our students.

**Modular learning environment**

The undergraduate instrument courses involved in the project were reshaped in the form of modular learning environments, consisting in five interrelated spaces: Personalised, Collaborative, Virtual, Performance Practices and Social Outreach Modules.

**Personalised Module.**

The weekly individual lesson, when surrounded by other learning instances, is a key place to develop interpretation expertise in fine detail. Nonetheless, it is worth to note that ecological conditions for the teacher –student relationship need to be guaranteed, after a long-dated tradition of closed and auto-preservative conservatory practices (Martínez and Holguin, 2017).

**Collaborative Module.**

It takes the form of a monthly gathering. Departing from the masterclass concept, the objective is to work collectively over a performance topic, with the teacher adopting the role of facilitator. Usually, material is provided a week in advance for exploration, and then, throughout the 2-hour long module, the group is given flexible directives for collaborative work. The goal is to create jointly an original product within the meeting time, which may be polished afterwards and posted in the virtual classroom for peer assessment.

### **Virtual Module.**

We conceive our virtual classrooms as a “prosumer” space (Schön and Hilzensauer, 2008), where students produce content, rather than only browse and use what the teacher attaches to them. The confinement due to the Covid -19 pandemic turned our blended-learning original design into an emergency fully virtual one, whose characteristics and outcomes would deserve a separate paper.

### **Performance Practices Module.**

This module encompasses formal and informal, live and virtual, of products and processes presentations. Our goal is to open up to diverse performance possibilities, mostly organised by students themselves, that may better accompany the different stages of students’ development, thus counteracting the typical meritocratic exclusion that usually happens in formal studio recitals (Elmgren, 2019).

### **Social Outreach Module.**

Due to the current mobility restrictions, we plan to participate in a community radio consortium that reaches people in isolated places called “Zumbido” (Buzz). The radio is their main

connection, and we have started to make some music for their radio programs through an initiative arranged by our College of Arts and Design.

We could carry out part of the original plan before confinement started, which was the development of the Collaborative Module with 2-hour live class meetings. During confinement, all four modules turned virtual, but we could still manage to get our project through, with adequate changes.

In the Collaborative Module each studio has freedom to choose its own contents. The effectiveness of each meeting is assessed considering the following categories:

- Relationships (peer relationships, teacher mediation)
- Use of body and space (an issue that is present in every performance but frequently overlooked in traditional teaching)
- Use of Materials (conventional and non-conventional)
- Collaborative learning (roles, social negotiations)
- Emergent learning (learning that emerges from interaction; not expected but contextually meaningful)
- Emotional environment (perceived motivation, engagement, enjoyment)

## **Partial results and discussion**

Data was collected in group conversational interchange between teachers and students, and surveys at the end of the semester. The trigger question focused on the differences perceived between old format and new modular framework. Participants reported to find it beneficial in several ways, as detailed below:

**Table 1.** Benefits of the Modular Framework, as perceived by students

Category	Code	Description
Technical Benefits	TB	Development of new technical resources in contact with peers
Emotional Benefits	EB	Development of expression and self-confidence
Metacognitive Tools	MT	Acquisition of problem-solving tools
Social Skills	SS	Acquisition of peer networking strategies, participation in real performance contexts, territorial working experiences.
Virtual Skills	VS	Management of virtual resources

Examples that illustrate categories:

TB: “I added new technical tools to approach a piece”; “In the ‘Bye, Paper’ session we learned new techniques to memorise a piece through games”

EB: “It was useful to develop the ludic side of the music I was playing”; “I naturalised playing for others frequently, I get less nervous now”;

MT: “While interchanging ideas, we see that there’s more than one way to tackle a problem”; “María’s idea of playing long notes as mantras was really cool”

SS: “You learn to listen”; “It is a great asset to know each other, thinking about the future”; “It is important to feel accompanied in this stage”

VS: “You don’t need to wait for your lesson...it is time-saving”; “You can observe and compare other people’s works”

Team teachers, on the other hand, observe a growing maturity in the group, as students assume more auto-regulated collaborative activities, among other outcomes that need to be worked more intensely throughout the remaining part of the project.

In relation to adjustments of the design, it became apparent that this kind of interrelated learning spaces format needs a much more carefully planned activity schedule, so as not to confuse or overload students with different types of assignments superposed. The idea of providing a varied learning environment, one that could promote the development of the musical persona both at an individual and a social level, calls for a perceptive, empathetic and creative leadership on the part of teachers.

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# **Do student perceptions reveal diverse and inclusive musical study in group piano classes?**

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## **Abstract**

Our previous study focused on the relevance and cultivation of piano skills for professional musicians in terms of curricula content and implementation and possible solutions to renovate, as well as innovate, the keyboard skills curriculum to prepare students for their intended music profession (Young, *et al*, 2016). Continuing the examination of the curricula and implementation of keyboard skills instruction in higher education, we test the inclusivity and diversity of these classes in terms of student perceptions regarding the skills learned, their difficulty, usefulness of the class compared to other classes in their music study and assessment of own skills.

Participants enrolled in keyboard skills classes from 20 universities in the US completed two surveys over two semesters: 455 students completed the questionnaire in the autumn, and 224

students were retained in the project and completed the survey in the spring. The results indicated that students coming into higher education may not be engaged with a diverse range of musical experiences or musicians from a diverse range of professions. There may be a lack of diversity of skills in the curriculum, while student perceptions of the reason for learning these skills was not related to how the application of the skills reflecting a shortage of diversity in teaching approaches. Student self-perceptions were found to be affected by their perception of the difficulty of the specific skills - or *vice versa*. The participants did not find the group piano classes as useful as other music courses.

### **Keywords**

group piano, keyboard class, curriculum, inclusion

Inclusion and diversity within music education have been examined in terms of culture, ability, marginalised populations, race, and class while calling for changes in music teacher education policy, practice, and research (Benedict, et al., 2015). We pose the question of whether our curricular choices and implementation of these choices foster socially just practices in terms of relevancy of and for what purpose skills are taught in relation to the conditions with which they encounter and engage in their musical studies (or not) including higher education. Through examination of tertiary music study in relation to the inclusiveness and diversity of the curriculum and its implementation, we aim to include not only the relevancy and purpose of skills and knowledge base of a music curriculum, but its relevancy and purpose for the situation and circumstances our students have and will be confronting in the music profession.

We have chosen to investigate collegiate keyboard skills classes (USA) as these courses are *inclusive* and required of all music students as indicated in the national standards. Professional musicians will embrace a number of skills, whether composing, improvising, performing, and teaching, along with musical knowledge and understanding. Many seek to become proficient at using the piano depending upon the role of piano skills in their specialty and are typically studied at the tertiary level. Discussions and investigations regarding the curriculum of keyboard skills, or group piano, classes and its implementation have established that clarity in what functional piano skills are needed by professional musicians and that the curriculum should reflect these (Christensen, 2000; Freeburne, 1952; Graff, 1984; Lyke, 1969; McWhirter, 2005; Rast, 1964; Spicer, 1992; Williams, 2000; Young, 2013a).

Although music theory, history, and aural skills may also bring together diverse musical backgrounds, group piano provides an opportunity to bring together not only the knowledge and skills of this discipline, but also the *diverse* knowledge and skills introduced and developed across tertiary music curricula. Piano learning can encompass music theory, history, practice, and aural skills as part of the teaching and learning process providing transferrable skills to other music study. Keyboard skills coursework lends itself to both the immediacy of understanding material or skills and has been found to relate to graduation rates, as well as with the long-term value of skill development and future application of knowledge and skills across a breadth of musical experiences/domains (Young, 2016). Although inclusive and diverse as a course offering *per se*, are these being echoed in the keyboard skills curriculum and its implementation? Is there diversity in terms of relevancy to various intended music professions or skills offered to meet the

diversity of student needs? Is there inclusivity of skills which are sensitive to student understanding of the role of these skills in their intended music career?

The purpose of this paper is to investigate and test the inclusiveness and diversity of the curriculum and its implementation of group piano classes through examination of the perceptions of university students enrolled in these courses. The overarching aim is to determine whether or not the curricula in piano skills classes respects the individual and takes into consideration inclusivity of the diverse musical experiences our students achieve and will achieve. Our research questions were:

1. What are the ways in which our students represent diversity as musicians?
2. What knowledge and skills do students perceive to be included in group piano curricula?
3. How do students perceive their skill development in piano classes?
4. How do the students perceive the application/relevance to their intended professions?

We identified universities and colleges in the USA that were representative of varying geographic regions, institution types, and student populations. In total, faculty members from 20 institutions agreed to provide access to the students enrolled in their keyboard skills classes. During the autumn term, a video outlining the scope of the project was shown to keyboard skills students and a notecard with QR code linked to the study was placed at their keyboard. The first questionnaire asked participants about their demographic information, precollege music experience, their intended degrees and professions, as well as their perceptions regarding the content of keyboard skill classes and the justification for the inclusion of a piano requirement for their degree program (See Appendix A). The same procedure was used during the start of spring

term, however the questions included within the survey changed. In lieu of repeating the precollege experiences and basic demographic information, students were asked to describe: how their keyboard skills were developing, the usefulness of varying classes to their intended degrees, the justification for the inclusion of a piano requirement, as well as their expectations for the second course within the keyboard skills curriculum and their intended degree and profession (See Appendix B). During the autumn, 455 students consented to participate and completed the questionnaire, and in the spring 224 students were retained in the project and completed the survey due to either course requirements, failure to pass to next semester, or cooperating faculty support.

The following discussion presents the results within the context of diversity and its “various understandings” as differences in students’ ethno-cultural backgrounds; educational opportunities, deeper understanding, and learning contexts including related entrepreneurial expectations (Ellefsen & Karlsen, 2020); as well as the context of inclusion which not only encompasses *whom* we provide access to music teaching and learning, but also to *what* and *how* our students are accessing this instruction (Powell, et al., 2020).

Demographics of the participants from the first survey found that there was an even split between genders of male and female, the average age was 18.7, 73% of the participants were freshmen (first year), and 73% were white. Musical instrument groups represented were voice (148), woodwinds (120), brass (88), strings (84), percussion (35), and piano (16), while the average time in applied study previous to higher education music study ranged from 4.4 years to 8.7 years. Although there were fewer participants in the second survey, the proportion of instruments remained the same. There were 67% of the participants having had prior piano study

of an average of 3.3 years. Various precollege music activities were indicated by the participants ranging from school ensembles to music camps with the top five mentioned being Band, Marching Band, All State Ensembles, Honors Band or Choir, Choir, and Summer Camps.

These findings seem to indicate that the participants surveyed had been provided opportunities to participate in pre-collegiate music activities, either through their secondary school and/or supporting music teacher organisations. The upper range of applied study was almost nine years and more than half of these students also had piano study prior to their tertiary study. This would indicate that inclusion into music activities was offered and accessible to these participants. It may be worth further investigating how this access was made possible and if there were any barriers to their pre-collegiate study in order to examine how access to music provision might be supported.

Questions regarding the participant's intended degree program and career were asked on both surveys. The highest percentages of degree programs indicated were Music Education (38%) and Music Performance (31%), therefore, intended professions that participants listed were education- and performance-related more often than the other music careers noted by the participants. This remained the same in the second survey.

These results would seem to show that students may not be presented with a diverse range of music professions before tertiary music study, therefore, not choosing degree programs or careers outside of music education or performance. Once again, further examination of why these participants chose the degree program and intended career may reveal a lack of engagement with a diverse range of music professionals. Or might it be that music programs are

not including musics and learning contexts relevant to a broader range of skills needed by young music professionals?

In both surveys, two questions were regarding what they thought they would learn in the class and why it was required of their degree program. In the first survey, statements regarding piano basics was given in response to what they thought they would learn, followed by proficiency level and improving reading. By the second semester, participants once again responded with basic skills, proficiency, and improving reading more often, however, statements regarding playing chord progressions were indicated more frequently than the first semester. When asked in both surveys why they thought this class was required of their degree program, the most frequent responses in the first and second survey were related to music theory, teaching, and piano skills themselves.

Student perceptions of what they will learn in the keyboard skills classes in the first survey before they had any experience with the course content did not significantly change in the second term of study. They perceived a diverse range of skills to be learned, although the most frequent skills to be learned as perceived by the students were concentrated on three to four skills at the most. Whether or not this would reveal a lack of diversity of skills in the curriculum warrants further questioning and examination. Student perceptions of the reason for these skills to be learned in their program demonstrated that they were not connecting these skills to how they would be applying these skills, with the exception 'teaching' response. This lack of linking keyboard skills to their application as a professional musician could indicate a deficiency in diverse teaching approaches which would allow students to experience keyboard skills in a more authentic learning context. Another point of discussion might be that these students were

engaged with the keyboard in music making which is not included in the curriculum implementation. In addition to authentic learning contexts, inclusion of student voice in keyboard class musicking could lead to improved links between the classroom learning and professional skills through acknowledgement of student music identity.

The additional questions on the second survey queried the participant perceptions of specific skills to be learned in class, their skill ability, difficulty of skills, and usefulness of the class compared to other classes in their music study. Figure 1 below provides summary of the participant responses to what skills they thought they would learn in the class when provided with a list of keyboard skills. Playing chord progressions, harmonising, sight-reading, and playing scales and other technical exercises were chosen most frequently by the participants, while least frequent skills chosen were composing and open score reading.

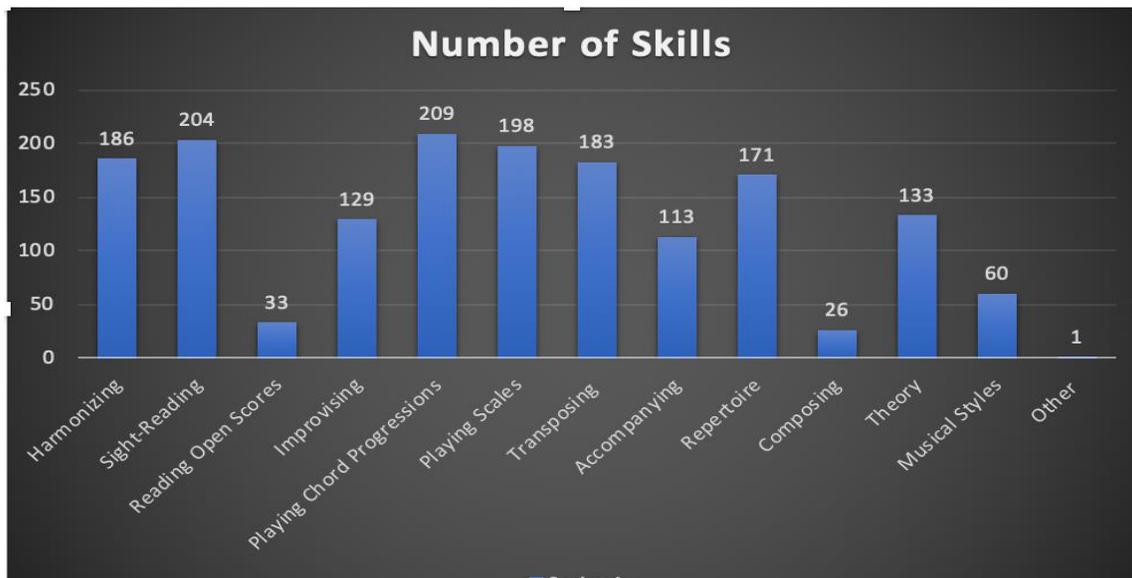


Figure 1. Participant response to what skills they perceived to learn in the class

The mean number of skills participants chose was 7.23 (out of 12) which might be viewed as a diverse range of skills offered through the curriculum, but not inclusive of all musical skills which may support development for the future professional musician. Should a broad and diverse range of keyboard skills be offered in the curriculum? The span of a diverse curriculum for keyboard skills and its relation to professional musician preparation could be further explored.

Participants were further asked to rank these skills in difficulty as well as their overall ability in performing these skills. Figure 2 shows the comparison of these responses indicating that participants' perceptions of the difficulty of the skills seemed inversely related to their self-perceptions in these skills. This is most notable in chord progressions and playing scales.

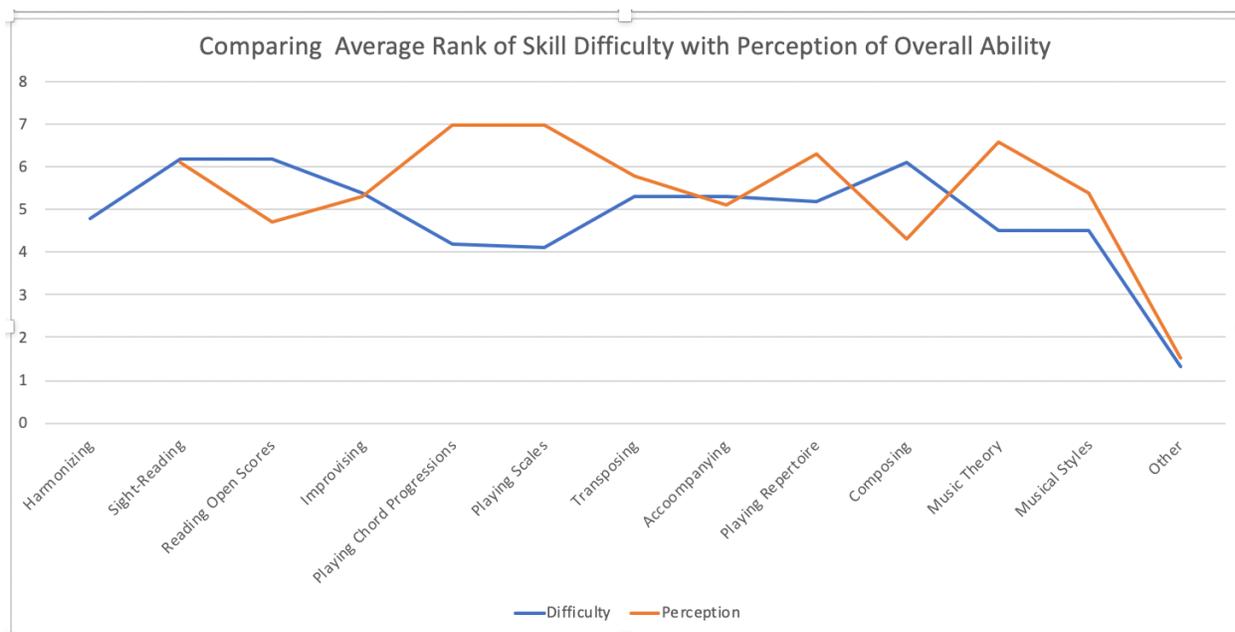


Figure 2. Participant responses to skill difficulty and perception of overall ability

Consideration of which emanated first – the perceived difficulty of the skill or the perceived overall ability – would be of interest to group piano teachers. In what ways that teaching and

learning of keyboard skills could support positive self-perceptions of ability and constructive assessment of skill difficulty should be examined further. Could the implementation of the curriculum be more inclusive of student self-assessment? Perhaps providing diverse opportunities for skill development as related to authentic contexts could also support student self-efficacy.

Compared to the other ten compulsory music classes, group piano classes were ranked sixth in usefulness with the participants finding music theory, aural skills, applied lessons, ensembles, and music education methods more useful to their music study. Why group piano classes were ranked six out of ten for its usefulness to their intended profession should be further studied not only in terms of the curriculum and its implementation, but also how it supports a diverse range of skills for professions which may call for a larger set of keyboard skills. Are the range of keyboard skills inclusive of all music professions, music making, and styles of music? Would the usefulness of these courses be more apparent to and inclusive of the participants if their individual musical identity were considered by their teachers? Exploration of these questions may reveal a more diverse and inclusive approach to keyboard skills teaching and learning.

In summary, our findings in scrutinising the keyboard skills curriculum through student perceptions found that there is a need for a more inclusive and diverse curriculum. Students coming into higher education may not be engaged with a diverse range of musical experiences or musicians from a diverse range of professions. There may be a lack of diversity of skills in the curriculum, while student perceptions of why to learn these skills was not related to how they would be applying them which may reflect a shortage of diversity in teaching approaches. Student self-perceptions were found to be affected by their perception of the difficulty of the

specific skills, or *vice versa*. Again, a diverse approach to teaching to include student self-assessment, for example, could facilitate positive student self-efficacy. The participants did not find the group piano classes as useful as other music courses indicating that the range of keyboard skills be inclusive of all music professions in order to provide the range of music skills needed by professional musicians.

Finally, we did not test our results within the context of equity. "...all students have the capacity to learn and grow [and] deficits in skill does not mean deficits in abilities..." (Carlow, 2019). Further questioning could examine whether the curriculum takes into account barriers or forms of oppression that students have encountered, presently encounter in our classroom, and will encounter professionally. Regardless of how inclusive or diverse our students, musics, curriculum implementation, and contexts are, we must approach our teaching with diverse and inclusive *perceptiveness* and equity to reveal the value of their perspectives, musics, and identity.

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# Appendix 1

## First Semester Questionnaire

What is your first name?

In which state are you pursuing your degree?

In what town/city were you born?

What is your age?

To which gender do you most identify?

Female Male

Transgender Female Transgender Male

Gender Variant/Non-conforming

Not listed

Prefer not to answer

What is your class rank?

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be:

White

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Hispanic or Latino

Other (please specify)

American Indian or Alaska Native

What is your primary instrument? First indicate the instrument family, then specify the instrument, and finally the years of study.

Brass

Woodwinds

Strings

Percussion

Voice

Piano

Please indicate any other instruments you have studied. For brass, woodwinds, and strings, please identify the type of instrument.

Brass

Woodwinds

Strings

Percussion

Voice

Piano

Have you had any previous piano experience?

Yes

No

If yes, please indicate your experiences.

For how many years did you study?

Piano Lessons

Class or Group Piano Self-Taught

In which of the following musical activities did you engage PRIOR to attending your university? (Check all that apply)

Band Orchestra Marching Band Choir

Summer Camps

Honors or All-State Ensembles

Other (please describe)

What is your intended degree program?

Why do you think this class is required of your degree program?

What type of music career are you pursuing?

What do you expect to learn in this piano class?

## Appendix B

### Second Semester Questionnaire

What is your first name?

In which state are you pursuing your degree?

In what town/city were you born?

What is your age?

What is your primary instrument? Please select the instrument family then identify your primary instrument in the box that follows.

Brass

Woodwinds

Strings

Percussion

Voice

Piano

What is your intended degree program?

Why do you think this class is required of your degree program?

What type of music career are you pursuing?

What do you expect to learn in this piano class?

What skills did you learn in your previous piano class? (check all that apply)

Musical styles and performance practices

Music Theory

Improvising

Playing Scales and Other Technical Exercises

Sight-Reading

Playing Repertoire Reading

Open Scores

Transposing Accompanying

Harmonising Composing

Playing Chord Progressions

Other (please specify)

On a scale of 1-10, how difficult do you consider the following piano skills to be? (1=extremely easy, 10 extremely difficult)

Playing Repertoire

Accompanying

Playing Chord Progressions

Music Theory

Composing

Reading Open Scores

Playing Scales and Other Technical Exercises

Transposing

Sight-Reading

Improvising

Harmonising

Musical styles and performance practices

Other (please specify)

How do you perceive your progress on the following skills?

Sight-Reading

Reading Open Scores

Improvising

Playing Chord Progressions

Playing Scales and Other Technical Exercises

Transposing Accompanying Playing Repertoire

Composing Music Theory

Musical Styles and performance Practices

Other, please specify

Rank your music courses in terms of their usefulness to your career goals with 1 as the most useful and 9 as the least useful.

Music Theory

Ear Training/Aural Skills Music History

Applied Lessons Group Piano

Music Education Methods Conducting

Ensembles Chamber Music

Other (please specify)

If you're comfortable sharing, what grade did you receive in piano last semester? We assure you that this information will remain confidential.

# **Peer learning through evaluation of stylistically diverse performing groups: Knowledge and inclusion**

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## **Abstract**

Within the idea of inclusive education for undergraduate students performing diverse musical styles, this study focuses on the responses of students to a peer performing improvisation group at an evaluation workshop modelled on the Critical Response Process (CRP) guidelines. The workshop sought to increase performing knowledge of the students through learning from peers and to be inclusive by drawing on comments of all students from four different performing groups. The study found that both extramusical and musical aspects raised by the students, after watching a video of the improvisation group and of their own groups, plus peer evaluation discussion in the feedback workshop, reflected an inclusive learning environment. This is a positive outcome in the light of Ahmed's (2012) warning of risks associated with the current favoring of the term 'diversity' by institutions and shows there are opportunities, through a CRP evaluation model, to be inclusive of opinions about what is important to individual group members while providing a strong opportunity for development of performance skills.

## **Keywords**

inclusion, performing knowledge, diversity.

## **Introduction**

Drawing on the thinking of Booth (2005), Polat (2011) describes inclusive education as “a philosophy based on values aiming to maximise the participation of all in society and education by minimising exclusionary and discriminatory practices” (p. 51). They acknowledge there is no universally agreed definition of inclusion and note that inclusive education can vary “between cultures and education systems” (p. 51). For my university, “Equality and Diversity work in partnership with staff, students and the wider community to promote inclusive practices across the University” (WSU website, 2019) and the website lists a range of areas where this promotion can occur including cultural diversity and gender diversity. Yet Ahmed (2012) warns how, within institutions, “the arrival of the term “diversity” involves the departure of other (perhaps more critical) terms, including “equality”, “equal opportunities,” and “social justice.”... We might want to be cautious about the appealing nature of diversity and ask whether the ease of its incorporation by institutions is a sign of the loss of its critical edge” (Ahmed, 2012, p. 1).

With the idea of inclusive education for undergraduate students performing diverse musical styles, this study focuses on the responses of students to a peer performing improvisation group at an evaluation workshop modelled on the Critical Response Process (CRP) guidelines. The workshop sought to increase performing knowledge of students through learning from peers and to be inclusive by drawing on comments of all students from four different performing groups. The study aim was to determine what knowledge is sought and gained, and how inclusion is enabled, in the peer learning that takes place within a CRP evaluation workshop for higher education music performance students in stylistically diverse ensembles.

## **Literature review**

Peer learning can mean different things in different contexts including one student tutoring another, students working cooperatively on joint projects, students assessing students, and the processes of interaction between peers (Reid & Duke, 2015). Peer learning, therefore, “has a variety of guises in higher education that emphasise different aspects of student learning” (p. 223). Three key outcomes from Riese, Samara and Lillejord’s (2012) comprehensive analysis of seven studies into peer relations in peer learning are: positive effects on student achievement; reduction of workload for teaching staff; and the development of generic skills linked to future employment which can be promoted by learning practices in which students work together. Their first key outcome is of particular interest to this study, but all are relevant.

For Hewitt (2009), both the musical and extramusical aspects of a style, that is “the normative practices of performance and creation that are associated with the style” (p. 330), are the elements of a community of practice. He identifies three aspects of the extramusical practices felt to have particular relevance to higher education music education. The first, pedagogical practices, is how learning and teaching have historically taken place within a musical style – informal learning in popular music, one-to-one teaching in classical music, for example. The second, performance practices, are a set of normative behaviours and practices within a musical style including approaches to public performance, audience response. And thirdly, practices of transmission whereby repertoire of a style is passed on to other musicians through a score in classical music, through repeated listening to gain familiarity in rock music. Hewitt argues that effective assessment draws its criteria from “those used to judge ‘quality’ in a performance by the stylistic community itself” (p. 334), that is, the aspects of a performance that are considered

important. When the assessment matches the requirements of the musical style then students will pay attention and this prepares them for a future performing career. He ends with two caveats – one, that students don't necessarily wish to belong to just one particular stylistic musical 'camp'; and two, that music students "learn to negotiate between different sets of normative practice, and that such stylistic flexibility may ... act as a stimulus to learning and development... and be an essential component of successful employment" (p. 335).

To accommodate peer learning within a group of performance students performing in stylistically diverse musical groups, and evaluating each other's group performances, this study adopted Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process (CRP) guidelines as a way to engage students in peer evaluation. CRP was developed to avoid the "teacher as sole authority" (Williams, 2002, p. 94) model, to lead students to seeing and thinking about their performing and that of their peers on a deeper level, "articulating their observations and aesthetic choices" (p. 94), and to move beyond the subjective nature of most criticism. CRP's process depends on "equal participation by the artist, a facilitator, and an unspecified number of responders" (p. 94). It has four steps – Meaningful Feedback which "provides the opportunity for positive feedback to the artist and recognition of the work's merit" (p. 95); Asking Questions focuses on "what the artist...questions about the work" (p. 95); Asking Neutral Questions requires the responders "to form their opinion into a neutral question" (p. 95); and Expression Opinions, where the responder asks the artist if they "would like to hear an opinion about something specific" (p. 96). Using CRP in a dance composition classroom, Williams participated as "a responder, either ignoring the role of facilitator or slipping in and out of it without identifying when I was one and when I was the other" (p. 97).

For Carey and Coutts (2019), CRP offered a way to create “meaningful dialogue aimed at strengthening [vocal pedagogy] students’ abilities to solve problems inherent in their own creative endeavours and in turn their autonomy” (p. 174). For them, CRP set out guidelines for a transformative approach to the learning of these higher education students by “building on students’ prior knowledge, providing students with a safe space to problem-solve, developing students’ abilities to learn, fostering students’ personal and artistic development, and adapting to the needs to each student” (p. 173). Here is inclusion, equity and an opportunity for diversity to be accommodated. Noting that Lerman acknowledges CRP “can take many forms depending on the context” (p. 175), Carey and Coutts began with the artist presenting work for feedback, the facilitator inviting statements of meaning from responders, the facilitator inviting the artist to request specific feedback from responders, and responders offering permissioned opinions on the artist’s work (p. 176). CRP helped break down a perception of hierarchy, “promoting a horizontal relationship” (p.182) which explored student and teacher possibilities and perspectives. By starting with student concerns, the teacher was more easily able to “direct students to focus on what they suggested required work” (p. 183). CRP was found to enhance a teacher’s ability to engage with such strategies as critical questioning, collaboration and placing the responsibility for learning with the student. In doing so, this helped teachers and institutions to “optimise students’ professional lifespan and career opportunities where self-direction and critical thinking are key” (p. 184).

## **Methodology**

Fifty-four students worked cooperatively on group performance projects (Reid & Duke, 2015) within eight ensembles – African marimbas, piano duet/trio, guitar ensemble, vocal group,

improvisation group and three pop/rock groups – meeting weekly for two hours over ten weeks. Within each group focus was on the practices of transmission whereby repertoire of the style is passed on to other musicians (Hewitt, 2009), for example a score for the piano duet/trio, repeated listening for the rock/pop groups, a combination of both for the African marimbas, and improvisation. The two teachers, both performers, adopted a semi-autonomous approach (McPhee, 2020) moving from ensemble to ensemble over the two-hour period. Situated between formal and informal learning, the semi-autonomous approach allows the pedagogical practices of each ensemble (Hewitt, 2009) to be accommodated and also gives the teacher an opportunity to observe the musical and personal interaction between students, to some degree (Reid & Duke, 2015). Two weeks of lecture blocks were on “issues inside collaborative performing, communication gestures and interpreting repertoire” (WSU Learning Guide, Music Group Performance, 2019), topics of interest to students’ rehearsing and performing and to their essay on “music group rehearsal and performance issues which you feel should be used to assess your ensemble” (WSU Learning Guide, Music Group Performance, 2019).

In week 10 of the 13-week semester, two two-hour video sessions of each group’s performance were held, peer evaluation discussion was facilitated modelled on the CRP guidelines. A video of the artist (improvisation group) presenting work for feedback was shown first then a paper questionnaire was given to the students to capture their thinking in writing. Questions were worded for the group being discussed (in this paper, the improvisation group) and for the peer responders (in this paper, 3 rock/pop groups), based largely on Carey and Coutts’ (2019) CRP but in this order: What was meaningful about your/this group’s performance for you?; What do you want to know about your group’s performance from others?/What does this group want to

know from others about their group's performance?; What did others say about your/this group's performance? Two final questions ended the survey – In what way was this feedback workshop useful to your group performing? What other feedback would you like to receive on your group performing?

Students were asked if their written responses could be used in this ethics approved study and 12 from the first CRP evaluation workshop gave signed permission (3 of 6 from the improvisation group, 9 of 18 from the 3 rock/pop groups). Analysis of the data focused around “assigning successive parts of the material to the categories of a coding frame” (Schreier, 2014, p. 170), the coding frame being, in this study, key themes of musical and extramusical issues drawn from the literature. Other themes were also sought and identified.

## **Outcomes**

The three questions drawn from CRP guidelines drew out responses related to Hewitt's (2009) extramusical and musical aspects (see Table 1). The three students from the improvisation group identified one extramusical aspect, communication, and four musical aspects as meaningful about their group's performance. For the rock/pop responders, communication between the improvisation group members was meaningful about their performance, plus other extramusical aspects of clothing and looking/sounding convincing. They named several meaningful musical aspects of the improvisers' performance including compositional (especially structural) issues, broad and specific performative roles and aesthetics.

The improvisation group wanted to know about extramusical aspects of communication between group members and presentation on stage, plus the musical aspect of the compositions themselves. The rock/pop responders recognised communication as being important to the improvisation group, but also other extramusical aspects including clothing, being convincing, and musical issues.

In relation to what the responders said about their group’s performance, the improvisers noted two types of communication – communication between players when performing, an extramusical aspect, and musical communication when moving from one section or texture to another, plus clarity with this musical move, both musical aspects. The rock/pop responders identified several extramusical aspects including movement and positioning on stage, plus musical aspects including textural roles.

**Table 1.** Responses of participants and the literature – student voices identified

<p><b>Improvisation group</b></p> <p>What was meaningful about your group’s performance for you?</p>	<p>Communication (extramusical - Hewitt, 2009)</p> <p>‘Interesting compositions’; ‘Contrast between different improvisatory pieces’; ‘Blend of varying styles’; Smooth transitions – structure (musical – Hewitt, 2009)</p>
<p><b>Responders from 3 Rock/Pop groups</b></p> <p>What was meaningful about this group’s</p>	<p>Communication x 3 – ‘nodding at each other’; Clothing (1 x positive; 1 x negative); Convincing (extramusical – Hewitt, 2009)</p>

<p>performance for you?</p>	<p>‘Well-rehearsed’ x 2; Arrangement x 2; Well-structured x 2;  Section transitions; Musical communication; Aesthetics;  Balance x 2; Instrument roles – ‘group...maintain a decent connection and melody when the individuals are doing the solo’;  Bass solo (from guitarist); ‘raw energy from the acoustic guitar’ (from kit player); ‘drum utilised kit well’ x 2 (from guitarists);  Dynamics x 2; Textural roles x 3 (musical – Hewitt, 2009)</p>
<p><b>Improvisation group</b></p> <p>What do you want to know about your group’s performance from others?</p>	<p>Communication between group members x 2; ‘how well represented we were on stage’ (extramusical – Hewitt, 2009)</p> <p>‘what they thought of the pieces’ - composition (musical – Hewitt, 2009)</p>
<p><b>Responders from 3 Rock/Pop groups</b></p> <p>What does this group want to know from others about their group’s performance?</p>	<p>Communication x 5 (extramusical – Hewitt, 2009)</p> <p>Arrangement; Well-structured x 6; Clothing x 3; Convincing (‘did it look like they knew what they were doing’ x 5;  Aesthetics; Textural roles x 3; Musical communication (musical Hewitt, 2009)</p>
<p><b>Improvisation group</b></p> <p>What did others say about your group’s performance</p>	<p>Communication when transitioning musically (negative);  Communication when performing (positive x 2) (extramusical – Hewitt, 2009)</p> <p>‘Clarity between sections’; ‘musical communication (positive);</p>

	(musical – Hewitt, 2009)
<b>Responders from 3 Rock/Pop groups</b>  What did others say about this group’s performance	Communication x 2; Clothing ‘dress code helps’ x 3; Movement on stage/positioning ‘the semi-circle meant that the performance felt ‘closed-off’ x 4 (extramusical – Hewitt, 2009)  Arrangement; Structure x 2; Musical communication; Clarity between performers x 3; Convincing; Textural roles ‘good movement from one texture to another’ x 2; Dynamics x 6; Solos (musical – Hewitt, 2009)

Student responses about how this feedback workshop had been useful to their group performing (see Table 2) related to their own group’s performing and the discussion which took place in the workshop. Four students sought areas of improvement for the group’s next performance, Carey & Coutts’s (2019) recognition of building on students’ prior knowledge, one noting the need to be more mobile on stage, Hewitt’s (2009) extramusical stylistic aspect. Four students felt the workshop had widened their perspectives, given insight and brought to attention things not usually noticed, reflecting Carey & Coutts (2019) and Williams’s (2002) deep thinking. The idea of a safe space (Carey & Coutts, 2019) in which to articulate observations (Williams, 2002) was noted by four students as they were able to healthily critique performance and receive it from peers and teachers.

Other feedback sought included how to improve, and finding any feedback helpful, indicating a positive effect on student achievement (Riese et al, 2012; Carey & Coutts, 2019) and meaningful

feedback (Williams, 2002). Also, how we can better engage an audience, improve stage presence, two extramusical aspects (Hewitt, 2009), and several musical aspects including experiment in an improvisation setting, group dynamics, sound quality, harmonic framework, feel and repertoire.

**Table 2.** Responses of participants and the literature (general questions about the workshop) – student voices identified

<p><b>All students</b></p> <p>In what way was this feedback workshop useful to your group performing?</p>	<p>‘Find areas of improvement’ for group’s next performance x 4 (building on students’ prior knowledge, Carey &amp; Coutts, 2019)</p> <p>Be ‘more mobile on stage’ (stylistic extramusical – Hewitt, 2009)</p> <p>‘Helped widen my perspective’, ‘gave me insight’, discuss things not noticeable x 4 (deep thinking – Williams, 2002; Carey &amp; Coutts, 2019)</p> <p>‘Healthily critical feedback’ on performance from peers/teachers x 4 (articulating observations – Williams, 2002; safe space, Carey &amp; Coutts, 2019)</p>
<p><b>All students</b></p> <p>What other feedback would you like to receive on your group performing?</p>	<p>‘Any and all feedback is helpful’ (meaningful feedback, Williams, 2002)</p> <p>How we can improve x 2 (positive effect on student achievement – Riese et al 2012; Carey &amp; Coutts, 2019)</p> <p>‘How to better engage audience’; Stage presence</p>

	(extramusical – Hewitt, 2009) ‘Experiment in an improvisation setting’; Group dynamics; Sound quality; Harmonic framework; Feel; Repertoire ‘if we should change the songs we’ve chosen’ (musical – Hewitt, 2009)
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As teacher, I found myself slipping in and out of role (Williams, 2002) and while avoiding the teacher as sole authority (Williams, 2002), being able to begin with student concerns to direct students (Carey & Coutts, 2019). I was better able to engage with such strategies as critical questioning (Carey & Coutts, 2019), better able to place the responsibility of learning with the student (Carey & Coutts, 2019) but noted no reduction in workload (Riese et al., 2012).

## Conclusions

The knowledge sought and gained in the peer learning that takes place within a CRP approach for higher education music performance students through evaluation of stylistically diverse ensembles strongly reflected Hewitt’s (2009) extramusical and musical aspects of a musical style as a community of practice. For the improvisers, it was extramusical communication between players and communication when transitioning musically, one extramusical, the latter musical, plus the sound of the improvised works themselves and clarity between sections. The rock/pop responders noted both types of communication but also identified clothing, movement/positioning on stage, being convincing and a range of musical aspects to do with improvisational composition (especially structure), performative aspects of energy, solos,

communication between players and musical communication, plus sound issues of balance and dynamics, repertoire and whether the music sounds convincing.

Many of these extramusical and musical aspects are concerned with inclusion, especially communication between players, musical communication, positioning on stage, balance of sound. And the response to the two questions about the feedback now and in the future identified inclusive issues of widening perspective, giving insight, receiving healthily critical feedback from peers and teachers, and how the group can improve. The feedback questions also drew out knowledge of interest about improving for the next performance, being more mobile on stage and how to better engage an audience, among other issues. For the teacher, almost all of the aspects noted were about inclusive education – the slipping role therefore not the sole authority and placing responsibility of learning with students, plus better critical questioning strategies.

Ahmed's (2012) warning suggests that with diversity can come inequality, less social justice, perhaps because institutions may struggle to handle a diverse student body, a diverse curriculum. Yet within stylistically diverse higher education performing groups, this study shows there are opportunities, through a CRP evaluation model, to be inclusive of opinions about what is important to individual group members. The model also provides a strong opportunity for development of performance knowledge because the diversity of responders creates a feedback eye broader than that of the single-focused artist, with both responder and artist learning stylistic flexibility as they negotiate within different sets of normative practice. In doing so, diversity is acting as a stimulus by drawing this thinking into more relevant and effective assessment criteria

giving students a critical edge (Ahmed, 2012) in their preparation for a future performing career (Hewitt, 2009).

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# **Harnessing the power of music to support humanity in an age of change: An Australian perspective**

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## **Abstract**

Our age is one of immense technological change more profound than any previous time with pursuant massive social change. Creating readiness for social change begins before a child commences school and develops and expands as a person moves through all levels of formal education and into life-long learning in the workforce. In response to rapidly changing conditions we have an opportunity to prepare emerging and experienced professional musicians to engage in vastly complex processes and guide outcomes for the better. Central to this change is the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Three revolutions have gone before: mechanisation, mass production, and simple digitisation/automation. The fourth revolution builds on the third and is characterised by a combination of technologies where the boundaries between the physical, digital, and biological spheres are now blurred. With the creation and performance of music as the main focal point, professional musicians can demonstrate that they are working across traditional boundaries for the benefit of humanity. Drawing on three musical exemplars from

Australia, this paper makes links with relevant elements of the fourth industrial revolution and the theme of the 23<sup>rd</sup> ISME Commission for the Education of the Professional Musician Pre-Conference Seminar illustrating how music (in combination with other artforms) has enormous potential to increase hope, tolerance and empathy in the world of wicked problems.

### **Keywords**

Industry 4.0, Fourth education revolution, humanity, employability skills.

### **Introduction**

The fourth industrial revolution is a term devised by Klaus Schwab, the founder and executive chairman of the World Economic Forum. He describes a world where individuals use connected technology to enable and manage their lives, moving between digital domains and off-line reality (Xu et al., 2018). The previous three revolutions can be described in the following way: The first industrial revolution started in 1760 with the invention of the steam engine; the second industrial revolution began in 1900 with the invention of the internal combustion engine; and the third industrial revolution started in 1960 and was characterised with the implementation of electronics and information technology to automate production (Xu et al., 2018).

Xu et al. (2018) comment that there are similarities between the four industrial revolutions and the five ages of civilisation: the hunter and gather age, the agricultural age, the industrial age, the information worker age, and the emerging age of wisdom. They remark that each subsequent age of civilisation destroys many of the jobs of the preceding age with a focus on the shift in the economy to knowledge worker. In the first three ages, manual workers produced most goods and

services with their body, but in the last two ages, knowledge workers produce most goods and services with their mind. For the employer, knowledge workers provide focus, creativity, and leverage in a company's investments with the goal of achieving the organisation's objectives more efficiently, through the main avenues of machines and capital.

The fourth industrial revolution presents the challenge of how businesses can motivate their knowledge workers to release their human potential. This challenge remains central to the vision of arts education institutions and individual musicians as they foster inclusion, sustainability and equity in and through their musical practices.

Sheldon (2018) argues that an important issue facing education, and humanity in general, is the fast approaching revolution of Artificial Intelligence (AI). He expresses a genuine concern that we embrace AI and mould it to be advantageous for humanity and the way in which humans interact with it. It is acknowledged that people will have no control over either technology or the disruption that comes with the fourth industrial revolution, but it will shape the impact on government and business.

## **Background/Context**

This paper positions the interaction of musicians, composers, commissioners of musical works, influencers of life's experiences and the resulting musical performances as the central pivot; within a larger setting of the fourth industrial revolution. Schwab (2015) remarks that "inequality represents the greatest societal concern" associated with this revolution and this comment represents a strong link with the theme for the CEPROM 2020 seminar: *Ethics and inclusion in the education of professional musicians*. He continues that "The largest

beneficiaries of innovation tend to be the providers of intellectual and physical capital—the innovators, shareholders, and investors—which explains the rising gap in wealth between those dependent on capital versus labor” (Schwab, 2015).

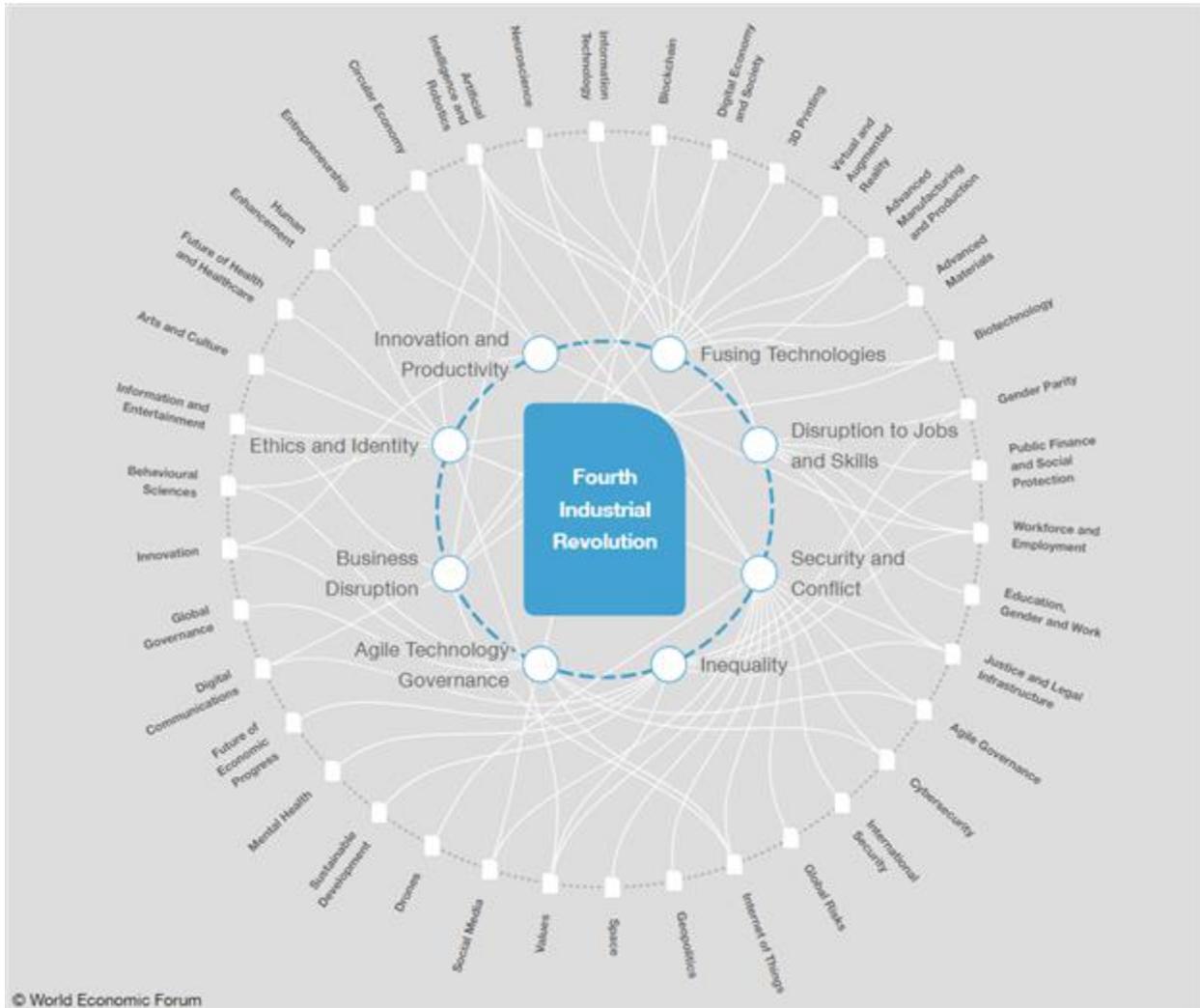


Figure 1. The Fourth Industrial Revolution ([https://a.c-dn.net/b/3Jep7M/Davos-2019-Multilateralism-Fourth-Industrial-Revolution-Debated\\_body\\_Picture\\_1.png.full.png](https://a.c-dn.net/b/3Jep7M/Davos-2019-Multilateralism-Fourth-Industrial-Revolution-Debated_body_Picture_1.png.full.png))

Linking with the theme of the seminar the inner circle illustrating the fourth industrial revolution shows the elements of ethics and identity and inequality. The outer circle shows other relevant

elements of mental health, values, arts and culture. These aspects fit comfortably with the career choice of being a musician and pursuing a career in the music industry. They fit within the potential curriculum of institutions educating future musicians. They have a place in the education of all children before entering the schooling system and in the formal school curriculum, with appropriate assessment activities.

Brynjolfsson, McAfee, and Spence (2014) suggest that people who can create new ideas and innovate will be the scarcest and most valuable resource in an era driven by digital technologies. What a great asset for any music educator! They forecast that talent, more than capital will be a critical factor for production and building the economic basis of an economy.

The *Future of Jobs Report 2018* makes a prediction of stable, new and redundant workforce roles in order to harness the transformative potential of the fourth industrial revolution. The arts are underrepresented in the examples provided, although People and Culture Specialists and Innovation Professionals are listed as new roles. The report features a comparison table of the top ten skills in demand between 2018 and 2022. These are classified as Today, 2018 (being current); Trending, 2022 (developing) and Declining, 2022 (redundant).

**Table 1.** Comparing skills demand, 2018 vs. 2022, top ten

Today, 2018	Trending, 2022	Declining, 2022
Analytical thinking and innovation	Analytical thinking and innovation	Manual dexterity, endurance and precision
Complex problem-solving	Active learning and learning strategies	Memory, verbal, auditory and spatial abilities
Critical thinking and analysis	Creativity, originality and initiative	Management of financial, material resources Technology installation and maintenance
Active learning and learning strategies	Technology design and programming Critical thinking and analysis	Reading, writing, math and active listening
Creativity, originality and initiative	Complex problem-solving	Management of personnel
Attention to detail, trustworthiness	Leadership and social influence	Quality control and safety awareness
Emotional intelligence	Emotional intelligence	Coordination and time management
Reasoning, problem-solving and ideation	Reasoning, problem-solving and ideation	Visual, auditory and speech abilities
Leadership and social influence	Systems analysis and evaluation	Technology use, monitoring and control
Coordination and time management		

(Source: Future of Jobs Survey 2018, World Economic Forum, 2018, p. 12)

Although the skills comparison has been developed to encapsulate as many jobs as possible, in relation to working in the arts and educating the professional musician, the skills in each category remain constant across the four-year time-frame. Those listed as Today, 2018 are just as vital as those listed as Declining 2022 for people pursuing a career as a musician. Another global report, the *OECD Learning Framework 2030* acknowledges that education is vital in developing knowledge (disciplinary, interdisciplinary, epistemic, procedural), skills (cognitive and meta-cognitive, social and emotional, physical and practical), and attitudes and values (personal, local, societal, global) (OECD, 2018, p. 4). In Appendix 2 of the *OECD Learning Framework 2030*, 36 constructs (a non-exhaustive list) are listed that are closely related to the key concepts underpinning the framework. Many of these replicate those identified in Figure 1 associated with educating for the fourth industrial revolution. However, contrasting with the skills demand of the *Future of Jobs* survey, where “manual dexterity, endurance and precision” are considered to be declining skills, the *OECD Learning Framework* highlights “Manual skills related to the arts and crafts, music, physical education skills [are] needed for the future” (OECD, 2018, p. 17).

## **Looking back – moving forward**

The fourth industrial revolution places a focus on transferable skills or capabilities, rather than subject content and knowledge as the dominant reason for learning. Explicit learning of a capability is different from learning it through a traditional subject and there is an expectation that capabilities will be taught as separate entities. New approaches to curriculum and teaching will emerge, combined with a change from modes of teaching to modes of learning. At the outset competence in literacy and numeracy are a given. Other capabilities are now more important than ever, and there is evidence that they were acknowledged in previous Australian school

curricula, education policies and specially funded programs from the early 1990s. While these are relatively old, they are now new and relevant again.

### **Mayer Key Competencies.**

In 1992 a set of seven generic skills, known as the Mayer Key Competencies, were identified as the basic transferable competencies that underpin employability. Mayer comments they were a means of “putting general education to work”, and as essential in enabling young people to participate effectively in work and adult life, including unpaid work and further education (Bryce et al., 1996, p. 2). At the time, they were collecting, analysing and organising information; communicating ideas and information; planning and organising activities; working with others in teams; solving problems; using mathematical ideas and techniques; and using technology. The Mayer Key Competencies were based on the work of the Finn Committee (1991) that resulted in a report which concluded that there were certain key areas that young people needed as a preparation for employment. These were language and communication; using mathematics; scientific and technological understanding; cultural understanding; problem solving; and personal and interpersonal (Bryce et al., 1996, p. 2). Despite being recognised by the Finn Committee, and having special relevance for arts educators, an eighth key competency 'using cultural understandings' was not included in the Mayer Report 1992, although it was considered and discussed.

### **Values Education.**

In 2005 the *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* was published, following on from the *Values Education Study* (2003). The values were identified as care and compassion; doing your best; fair go; freedom; honesty and trustworthiness; integrity; respect;

responsibility; and understanding, tolerance, and inclusion. The Australian Government provided \$29.7 million to make values education a core part of Australian schooling (DEST, 2005) and published the final Values Education report in 2010.

### **Employability skills.**

It is important to read these developments in line with the earlier *Employability Skills for the Future* report in 2002 (DEST, 2002). Employability skills are non-technical skills which play a significant part in contributing to an individual's effective and successful participation in the workforce. They are also sometimes referred to as generic skills, capabilities, enabling skills or key competencies. The report indicated that industry required a broader range of skills than identified in the Mayer Key Competencies. In Australia the employability skills are communication skills, teamwork skills, problem-solving skills, initiative and enterprise skills, planning and organising skills, self-management skills, learning skills, and technology skills (DEEWR, 2008, p. 25).

### **Australian Curriculum.**

A more current document is the *Australian Curriculum* (2013) which is implemented by the Australian States and Territories at a jurisdiction level in all schools. The *Australian Curriculum* has a three-dimensional design: discipline-based learning areas, general capabilities as essential 21st century skills, and contemporary cross-curriculum priorities. The general capabilities define knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that can be developed and applied across the curriculum to help students become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens. The general capabilities included in the *Australian Curriculum* are literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT) capability, critical and

creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding, and intercultural understanding (ACARA, 2013, pp. 15-16).

The cross-curriculum priorities included in the *Australian Curriculum* are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia, and Sustainability. These priorities provide students with the tools and language to engage with and better understand their world at a range of levels. They provide dimensions which enrich the curriculum through development of considered and focused content that fit naturally within the learning areas (ACARA, 2013, p. 18).

## **Exemplars**

In Melbourne Australia, a hospital, the national broadcaster and a symphony orchestra have initiated activities linking composers, performers, instrumental music tutors and commissioners of music compositions which illustrate aspects of the power of music and its value to humanity. They occur in the workplace and are associated with life-long learning for members of the community who earn their living in the music profession.

### **1. The Hush Foundation.**

The Hush Foundation was established in 2000 by renowned physician, Catherine Crock AM, in response to her work with children undergoing painful medical procedures at The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) Melbourne. 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. Additional research was undertaken to transform the environment of the operating theatre and recovery rooms through the commissioning of especially composed

music from some of Australia's foremost musicians and composers and recorded by professional ensembles. Initially professional musicians played solo or as a duo in a corner of a hospital ward. Historically, the Hush collection has focused on a classical music offering with Australia's most well-known and loved composers, conductors and orchestras donating their time and talent to produce the albums. There are now 19 volumes of music, and volume 18 is a National Composers in Residence project engaging with young patients at children's hospitals around Australia. The composed songs are inspired by the adolescent patients with chronic illness and mental health challenges who the composers worked with during hospital residencies. An expansion has been into healthcare plays where the topics encourage those employed in the sector to focus on the culture of the health care.

## **2. Choir of Hard Knocks.**

In 2005, homelessness was becoming more obvious on the streets of Melbourne's central business district. A television producer with the national broadcaster (the Australian Broadcasting Corporation) in association with a commercial media company (Fremantle Media) and a charity (RecLink) developed the idea of a series of television programs featuring a choir of members of this section of society. Jonathan Welch was invited to be the conductor. The choir members were users of alcohol, drugs, and had a range of mental health issues. Controlling the choir members' behaviour, caused by their medical and social problems overwhelmed the initial rehearsals. Jonathan Welch brought the individuals together through music and the choir performed 120 concerts in 18 months.

### **3. The Pizzicato Effect.**

Established in 2009 by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO), and initially funded by an anonymous benefactor, currently a twice weekly afterschool activity, *The Pizzicato Effect* involves free (beginner, intermediate, senior) group string instrumental (violin, viola and violincello) and musicianship (singing, music theory and music appreciation) tuition to 70 children from grade 3 in primary (elementary) school to year 9 in secondary school (8-16 years) who reside and attend school in the local government region of the City of Hume (in the north of Melbourne). This community music program with a strong focus on access and social inclusion and involves students from 28 schools, 12 different cultures and 14 different language groups. It operates in partnership with the City of Hume, Meadows Primary School, Second Bite and Spectrum and is closely aligned with the principles of *El Sistema*. The students pursue their passion for music and build cultural and social bridges within their community.

### **Discussion**

Education around understanding and implementing support for humanity begins in the home and continues through the compulsory years of schooling into life-long learning. Past activity in Australia such as the Mayer Key Competencies, leading to the Employability Skills and the well-resourced curriculum initiative to make values education a core part of Australian schooling forms a strong background to expand into educating for the fourth industrial revolution. The general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities detailed in the *Australian Curriculum* are the current drivers in schooling to make positive social change. Economic reports that document declining and proposed future skills may impact more immediately on humanity in the workforce. The exemplars in this paper focus on musical activity in the workplace and

strengthen the importance of life-long learning, where the participants have needed to adapt their skills as they grow in their careers. They target the Industry 4.0 elements of ethics and identity, inequality, mental health, values, arts and culture. They highlight the inaccuracy of the skills table listed in the *Future of Jobs Report 2018*. For the fledging musician preparing to enter the workplace, the leading question is, are higher education programs preparing the next generation of musicians to work and develop their careers in such environments?

Each of these examples involve marginalised members of society. Primarily the Hush Foundation was established to provide original music in an intense environment for seriously ill children at the Royal Children's Hospital as they underwent traumatic surgery. The music helped evoke a sense of calm and optimism for patients and their families. The Foundation has spread across all the specialist children's hospitals in Australia, with live performances taking place in suitable hospital spaces such as foyers and playrooms. The Hush Foundation has been the largest commissioner of independent music in Australia, winning awards and accolades for their contribution to the music industry. The outcome of the National Composers in Residence Project, *Collective Wisdom* features new and original works composed by six established and six emerging composers in Australia. In September 2018, the Australian Chamber Orchestra's critically acclaimed regional touring and education ensemble, the ACO Collective presented concerts of *Collective Wisdom* in their public concerts. The expansion into Hush healthcare plays encourage all those who engage in the health system to examine the behaviours, assumptions and habits that can inhibit patient safety and staff wellbeing.

The *Choir of Hard Knocks* had a clear focus from the beginning and was fortunate in having stable staffing through the conductor, manager and accompanist. Initially music and the purpose

of choir was totally subsumed by the medical/mental health/social/behavioural demands of the choir members – a challenge for the conductor and the choir members. They needed the skills to bring these people together – to understand their medical and health issues, while working with health professionals of many specialisms including medical doctors, psychologists, social workers, as well as the funding and support from the local and state governments and charities. While the experience was positive for the members and gave them a goal to attempt to seek help for their many ingrained health issues, the choir was thrust into the limelight performing 120 concerts in 18 months. The rough patch for the choir came when the donations that poured in from the community was not shared with the choir, as expected. RecLink used all the money to set up other choirs around Australia. The name, *Choir of Hard Knocks* was licensed to RecLink via Fremantle Media. The conductor resigned and all parties went their separate ways. The conductor established another choir (*Choir of Hope and Inspiration*) (financed by himself and his partner), the choir members moved on and after six years, the original name was returned to the choir (and now licensed to the choir) (Shea, 2019).

The accomplishments of this group demonstrate that community music groups (including guide dogs, assistance dogs, people with disabilities) can be successful in rehearsal and performance and may involve competitions and interstate travel. A conductor needs to consider the physical and social disabilities of the ensemble members and accommodate these with modifications to the accepted approach:

- In learning music (home practice) – provide a recording of their part or of the work where the part is clear.
- In rehearsal – visually impaired players may record the rehearsals (expect the replay button to pressed unexpectedly), give clear auditory sign posts.

- In performance (formal and informal) – a count in for the visually impaired player who opens with a solo.

*The Pizzicato Effect* has had a chequered history primarily through a lack of initial focus and planning for the program and financial constraints, including insecurity of funding (see Watson, 2016). Initially delivered and promoted as the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's flagship community music program it has had a number of iterations, including two pilot phases. When the program commenced all stringed instruments were taught, however double bass is no longer listed and restrictions are placed on what strings can be taught depending on availability, when students leave the program. Enrolments take place at the beginning of the school year, and sometimes in mid-year. Since 2016 it has been an afterschool activity and with reliance on the City of Hume and Meadows Primary School (venue) for its continuation. There have been yearly changes in Program Manager (employed by the MSO) since 2015 and a rotation of teaching artists, not all of whom have a teaching qualification. Teaching Artists vary in number, in the early years there was one Lead Teaching Artist and in 2019 there is a number classified in this position. Some have been permanent members of the MSO. Professional experience placements for graduate students undertaking Master of Music Performance Teaching at The University of Melbourne are available with *The Pizzicato Effect*.

## **Concluding comments**

Our society and our world are changing rapidly. With the immense technological change that surrounds our life we are confronted with ever changing and emerging ways of work, and ways of engaging with music and the arts. The three exemplars provide some insight into ways

musicians work with different aspects of engagement. While each draw on the expertise and training of professional musicians it does bring into question the issue of how these musicians were prepared for this work. In addition, it raises the stark point about how we are preparing future musicians, who on entering the workforce, will be able to adapt to these vastly different work (and musical) environments.

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**Determining effective strategies for an institutional approach to  
equity in music higher education**

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**Abstract**

The traditions in which much higher music education is steeped have resulted in a global prevalence of systemic discrimination. Students enter this environment with diverse musical and life experiences including family structure, socio-economic status, gender identity, sexual preference, religion, physical ability, ethnicity or race, and both musical and academic proficiency. It is the role of educators in higher music education to reach and support these students equitably, ensuring that each individual encounters a well-rounded, high-quality music program. This paper reports the strategies employed by the music school in a large, tertiary institution in Australia where matters of equity were of importance. Examples of the school's

equity programs provide readers with practical strategies with which issues of equity might be addressed. Working within the strategies espoused by our university we were able to secure academic and financial support that enabled us to focus our efforts on curriculum change, developing a new student cohort from low socio-economic areas and encouraging students and faculty to realise the personal benefit of the new programs.

### **Keywords**

equity, leadership, higher education, curriculum.

### **Background and context**

Higher education sectors across the world have never been so diversified at the systemic level or under so much pressure to meet economic objectives. Indeed, diversification has been driven by the widespread and bipartisan belief that transitioning from an elite to mass system of higher education will deliver social and economic gains for both individuals and the state. From the policy perspective, massification enhances societal access and relevance, creates greater responsiveness to labour market needs and ensures that a greater proportion of the population is equipped to drive the nation's economy. At the individual level and notwithstanding cyclical fluctuations in market demand, university graduates attract higher salaries and they are more likely than their peers to access full time, secure work.

Concomitant with policies designed to up-skill national workforces through increased access to higher education, many developed nation states have enacted complementary policies designed to ensure that individual benefits are distributed equitably across a nation's population. In most

developed nation states the overwhelming focus of equity policy and associated statistical reporting has been at the inputs side of higher education; that is increasing aspirations for, and access to, higher education (see Cahalan & Perna, 2015). Attainment is also considered, but to a lesser extent.

There is, however, growing acknowledgement that students from disadvantaged backgrounds do not achieve the same graduate outcomes as their peers (Hossain & Bloom, 2015; Milburn et al., 2013; Pitman et al., 2019). In an environment in which graduate employability is becoming an important yardstick against which to measure institutional effectiveness, this paper explores equity from the perspective of a curriculum, specifically the curriculum within a music conservatoire.

The tradition for music conservatoires is to select students from a very narrow social demographic. Crudely put, most potential students have had families which not only see the importance of music for their child's education but have the financial capacity to support their lessons over the duration of their childhood years. Young people who are in situations where long-term music tuition is not an option are therefore usually deemed unqualified to enter a conservatoire. In short, the level of skill to undertake tertiary music studies in a conservatoire is usually very high and is strongly related to the forms of music privileged by conservatoires that normally has its root in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century 'cult of the virtuoso' (Deaville, 2014).

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, contemporary music making is more egalitarian, cooperative, technologically enhanced, and socially aware. This presents opportunities for a modern conservatoire to foster

multiple genres of music that each require different forms of pre-tertiary preparation. There is also opportunity for the genres to commingle during tertiary studies. Against this background, the study reported here hypothesised that focussing on different forms of pre-tertiary student preparation and acknowledging the importance of different musical genres inside the conservatoire might provide a way of changing entrenched curriculum and selection habits so that learning experiences more suited to the complex issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century can start to flourish.

## **Rationale**

The music conservatoire that provides the cases for this paper is over 100 years old and not located in Europe. The conservatoire was established to provide a musical education that equalled that which could be experienced in Europe. As it commenced in 1915, the artistic focus of the conservatoire was on the music of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the consequent musical techniques associated with that music. Nearly all the original teachers were immigrants from Europe.

Keeping alive the traditions of its start, the conservatoire developed an elite and high-quality student body. However, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century these traditions of excellence also discriminated against students who might be highly musical but did not study the forms of music taught by the conservatoire. In an era of increasing awareness of the privilege of education and the social cost of education, we recognised that pre-tertiary music education focused on 19<sup>th</sup> century musical ideals tended to be found within high socio-economic schools including those which were private, whereas music of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (such as pop or electronic music) was often the priority

within less wealthy schools. Hence the majority of students entering the conservatoire were generally from wealthier backgrounds.

There were therefore two main ways in which our institution discriminated:

- The entrance requirements to study higher music education were based on an audition at a secondary school matriculation level (known as Music 2); and
- Our curriculum focussed on privileged western art music.

Our response was to develop curricula which would enable the study of contemporary, digital, pop, electronic and world musics. Entry into these courses would be possible with a more general secondary school music education pathway known as Music 1. Changing both the curriculum and the pre-requisite requirements dramatically changed the pool of students which entered the conservatoire. However, the conservatoire was still known to be elite. To combat this perception, we developed a ‘buddy’ program through which current students worked on music projects with pre-tertiary students, showing them that music study and a career in music were obtainable goals.

## **Situating our project within the literature**

### **1. Buddies: A curriculum initiative offered as an elective to undergraduate and post-graduate music students as an internship placement.**

A program of musical engagement between a city-based conservatoire and several smaller conservatoria located in regional centres of New South Wales (NSW), Australia, saw tertiary students travel to regional centres and work with regional conservatoria school-aged students

and staff on a variety of musical projects designed to increase student engagement (Rowley & Reid, 2014). These included acting as sectional tutors in rehearsals or at band camps; demonstrating instrumental techniques or performing at outlying schools; and participating in ensemble rehearsals and performances.

The project was innovative in its aims, its outreach and its tools, as well as in the impact it had on both the local regional music communities and the tertiary students' music studies. There were reciprocal benefits for staff and students at the conservatoire and regional conservatoria. For example, regional school students were able to see themselves continuing their musical studies post-school and they began to see what tertiary music study might look like. The tertiary conservatoire students found the mentoring of younger students to be important in the development of their musical identities, advancing the transition from music student to music professional (Brooks & Rowley, 2017).

## **2. Sound connections: Understanding where we were with equity programs.**

The background to the music faculty's curricular change came in 2010 when an audit of social inclusion activities was conducted. The main focus of the audit related to pre-tertiary education and the opportunities provided by the conservatoire to students from disadvantaged social settings, which enhance their sense of aspiration and attainment through education –specifically through music (Rowley & Mitchell, 2010). The audit was an invaluable exercise as it gave us an indication of the breadth and depth of current and previous social inclusion and community engagement activities. Evaluating the effectiveness of social inclusion programs highlighted the many sound practices already in place and led to a collaborative faculty approach to delivering music to the community. The purpose of this work was to enable institutional leaders to engage

in curriculum planning which would better articulate the conservatoire's current and future role in developing and implementing the university's social inclusion strategy.

### **3. Music learning through community service: An intentional equity curricular initiative.**

An intentional curriculum based strategy was devised to introduce music undergraduate students and staff to a service learning unit of study. The unit of study was implemented in 2012 and designed specifically in response to an institutional strategy to widen participation amongst school students from Low Socio Economic Status (LSES) by increasing familiarity with the higher music education culture (Rowley, 2014). Part of the community engagement of the program is for first year university students to work collaboratively with school students to raise their aspirations and awareness of studying tertiary level music. The program ran successfully in 2012 and 2013 and an expanded program ran in 2014.

### **4. Wingarra-Murra Burrabagu: A cultural equity strategy summer school.**

In this program, Australian Indigenous students in the secondary school years of 9-12 (aged 14 to 17) applied to undertake a program of song-writing and recording. School students from around Australia applied for these funded positions. The thirty successful students undertook a week-long program in Sydney where they were accommodated at the university, undertook cultural immersion programs and spent a week collaboratively writing songs and learning the skills of recording and editing. Many students came several years in succession and therefore experienced the teachers, students and facilities of the conservatoire on multiple occasions.

## **Our progress**

We are pleased to be able to report that through our strategic, targeted work we have been able to change the social fabric of our institution. However, there were many deliberate steps in this process. First, the faculty in the conservatoire had to believe that our goals were important and achievable. They also had to agree to teaching forms of music which differed to the classical traditions of the conservatoire. Faculty had to believe in the investment of time required to develop the new program and prepare for a novel student cohort. Initially, more traditional faculty members thought this was a ‘dumbing down’ of the music curriculum. As the selection of students was still based on the demonstration of high musical acuity, albeit in different forms, this fear proved unfounded. Indeed, many students in the new streams have achieved excellent outcomes and academic and musical accolades and have gone on to establish themselves in music careers.

The conservatoire is part of a large, research intensive university. Concurrent with our determination for change, new university leadership expressed a commitment to inclusive practice and Indigenous knowledge and generated a new policy and strategy for social change. We were therefore able to align our own strategic vision with that of the larger institution and to make use of associated funding and recruitment resources. In this way, we were not on our own in our desire to enact change. The importance of music for cognitive development, to influence ecological thinking, to make an impact on mental health and general wellbeing, to combat the perils of ageing, and simply to be an aesthetic that brings social cohesion, enabled us to affect our change within a whole-of-institution structure. Alignment with that structure gives us hope that the existing changes will endure and that our ongoing work will continue.

## **Concluding thoughts**

There has been little scholarly attention paid to systemic, whole-of-curriculum discrimination within higher music education. Our case study suggests that the curriculum and practices of similar higher music education institutions might be in need of revision if they are to meet the needs of a diverse student body. We end with practical strategies learned from our own experience of equity-based reform and the experiences relayed by Peters (2014) at the University of Wisconsin. Common to these recommendations is the need for aspiring musicians to learn how to “think” a living (Bennett, 2016) through their engagement with a mindful and inclusive curriculum that challenges them to conceptualise multiple and inclusive musical worlds.

The first practical strategy emerges from Peters’ (2014) 12-month student-faculty project. Peters’ student-faculty teams reviewed texts and set works, instigated specialised programming in the faculty’s concert programs to ensure gender and cultural inclusive programming, and adopted a deliberative inclusive approach to the recruitment of guest lecturers and performers. Peters’ project raised awareness of gendered practices among both faculty and students, leading to both institutional and individual change. Whilst Peters’ initiative was instigated by her faculty, we note that aligning equity initiatives with broader institutional goals is likely to enable such initiatives to attract broader institutional and other supports over the long term.

Second, and following Born and Devine (2015), music faculty might emphasise the need for ethnically or gender diverse role models in traditionally male, high socio-economic or culturally defined areas of music such as composition, jazz or music technology. This might involve

visiting staff and musicians-in-residence, guest speakers and internships hosts as well as targeted recruitment.

Third, we note the impact of the visual images and naming protocols which students encounter every day. It is important to be mindful of whether our lecture halls and studios are all named after musicians of one gender or cultural background; whether our marketing and other materials default to stereotypical images of the musician; and whether the images in student recruitment materials align with the inclusive institutions we seek to develop.

Our study confirms the benefits of engaging students in community internships and placements through which students begin to challenge the dominant narratives of work, career, and musician stereotypes. Removing the barriers to music education allows all students to create to share and this collaborative bond addresses differences and equity. Studying music enhances highly valued 21st-century capabilities such as the ability to be creative, to communicate effectively, to collaborate and to think critically, which are essential for success throughout life.

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# **Creating a socially responsive performing arts curriculum: A case study in higher education**

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## **Abstract**

This paper explores the notion of social responsiveness for the modern professional performing artist, and the role of the university to provide opportunities within the curriculum for higher education performing arts students to build awareness and capacity in the area of social responsibility.

Beginning with an overview of some of the key literature in the field, the paper examines a case study of a children's theatre project that is part of the performing arts curriculum of an Australian university. The children's theatre project has been created to address important social issues relevant to Australian eight-year-olds: safety on non-motorised wheeled transport; strategies to deal with bullying; and protective behaviours with adults. With reference to relevant research in the areas of road safety, bullying and child safety, it was written by university students and academics in conjunction with community stakeholders to create an entertaining piece of music theatre that also educates children in these three vital safety issues.

The focus of this paper is on the development and implementation of this project within the higher education institution. The paper examines the research that underpins the project and then

discusses the curriculum model that engages higher education performing arts students in this social innovation project.

The analysis leads to some preliminary findings that have implications for the training of professional performing arts students at the tertiary level to enable them to become citizens with a socially informed mind-set, while at the same time building their skills as professional performers.

### **Keywords**

Social innovation, higher education, performing arts curriculum, children's theatre.

### **Introduction**

Social responsiveness as a desired graduate attribute for students is not a new concept in higher education, but increasingly it is becoming recognised as forming a core element of the curriculum, regardless of the discipline or field of study. Some universities are looking at ways to introduce ethical thinking and social responsiveness into the core curriculum across all disciplines (Sanchez, Fulcher, Smith, Ames, & Hawk, 2017), and it is seen as desirable way of thinking for university graduates that should be cultivated during higher education courses (Lau, 2010). Lau affirms that while “ethics education did affect students’ ethical awareness and reasoning, the impact might be short-lived in the real world after the university” (Lau, 2010, p. 581). This level of impact presents challenges for curriculum developers in higher education, who desire to create programs that have a long-lasting effect beyond university study.

Additionally, while many Australian universities are seeking to develop a curriculum that acknowledges the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Franco et al., 2018), curriculum designers and leaders are looking at innovative ways to address a new way of thinking among higher education students – to develop a social innovation ‘mindset’ – that sees students understand their role as socially responsive citizens of the world (Kickul, Gundry, Mitra, & Berçot, 2018). Kickul *et al.* make the case that this type of social responsiveness encourages organisations to “strive to advance social change through innovative solutions” (Kickul et al., 2018, p. 205). Hence the application of this approach in the higher education environment presents educators with the challenge of adapting the curriculum to address these goals, while still meeting other core curriculum objectives as appropriate to the various disciplines.

### **Social innovation and the performing arts**

Where the higher education performing arts curriculum typically focuses on the individual development of the performer or teacher (Burwell, Carey, & Bennet, 2017; Carey & Lebler, 2012), the inclusion of social innovation projects within the higher education curriculum allows students to reimagine themselves beyond the identity of performer or teacher, and to see themselves as a global citizen (Lilley, Barker, & Harris, 2015), making a difference in their communities and beyond. Such projects can provide a springboard for higher education students to look outside of the traditional curriculum to embrace a social innovation mindset (Russo-Spena, Colurcio, & Melia, 2017) that sees them use their skills and knowledge to make a difference in their communities by addressing real social issues and community problems.

This paper examines the development and implementation of one such project within an Australian higher education performing arts institution. The paper examines the research that underpins the project and then discusses the curriculum model that engages tertiary performing arts students in this social innovation project while at the same time building their skills as professional performers.

### **The project: *The Safety Circus***

*The Safety Circus* is an original music theatre show that was developed in collaboration with the crime prevention unit of the state police service and a regional university in Australia. *The Safety Circus* has as its main aim the safety of children. Given the increasing challenges faced by all communities to keep children safe (Rose, 2004), this performing arts project was built on evidence-based research to create an original music theatre show that empowers children with simple, yet effective strategies to stay safe when interacting with adults; minimise the impact of bullies; and to stay safe when riding on bicycles and scooters.

*The Safety Circus*, written by a research student and an academic, in collaboration with community and government partners, is toured annually to regional Australian primary schools and has been performed to over 9000 students over the last seven years. The project partners have engaged with current research to ensure the messages contained within the show represent best practice in child safety, so that abuse of children can be prevented using protective behaviours strategies (Rose, 2004); road safety outcomes for children can be improved; and bullying can be addressed in practical and positive ways for each child. These safety issues, protective behaviours, bicycle safety and bullying, are of particular relevance to children in

Grade 3 as children of this age are starting to develop levels of independence that see them venturing out on the road on bicycles and scooters, encountering adults independently of their parents and dealing with bullies in the school yard. The engaging musical, set in a lively circus, with characters that relate to eight-year-old children, provides a means of delivering these safety messages effectively to this age group.

The ‘protective behaviours’ is a research-based strategy that aims to prevent abuse and reduce violence towards children (Rose, 2004; Walsh et al., 2013). Throughout *The Safety Circus* performance, children are affirmed in their right to feel safe; they are urged to listen to what their body tells them; and they are encouraged to seek assistance from other people as they identify their safety network. This is reinforced through several scenes and songs: *The Hand Song*, which teaches children how to identify their safety network; and *Stay Strong*, encouraging children to keep trying to find someone who will listen.

Teachers continue to identify bullying as one of the biggest safety challenges facing children in school and in the wider community (Bayer et al., 2018). The bystander strategies (Rock & Baird, 2012), modelled in *The Safety Circus*, teach children that even bystanders are able to stop bullying by standing up to the bullies or supporting the child being bullied in other ways that can make a real difference in the playground. The circus characters role-play scenes that demonstrate how bystanders can distract the bullies, while remaining safe themselves. Rock and Baird’s research (2012), which looked at how children used bystander strategies to deal with bullies (N = 104, 6 – 11 years), found that providing scenarios of successful bullying strategies for children assisted them in formulating their own tactics for dealing with bullies. “The present study highlights the fact that children as young as age of six but particularly at older ages, are capable

of generating intervention strategies” (Rock & Baird, 2012, p. 423). *The Safety Circus* strategy of modelling bystander strategies provides these eight-year-olds with ideas they can put into use in playground situations.

Promoting safe behaviours on non-motorised wheeled transport is incorporated by means of catchy songs and dances throughout *The Safety Circus*. In this area of Australia, practical bike courses are offered to Grade 4 students through the Police Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC) but many Grade 3 children are already venturing onto the road with various types of road transport toys: scooters, skate boards and bicycles. An Australian study by Daverio, Babl, Barker, Gregori, Da Dalt, and Bressan (2018) found that children under 18 years of age (N = 190, median age 9.4 years), when presenting to the paediatric emergency department with head trauma caused by accidents on non-motorised recreational vehicles (bicycles, scooters and skateboards), were less likely to present with acute concussive symptoms if they were wearing a helmet. *The Safety Circus* specifically includes messages about wearing safety helmets and safety gear when riding wheeled transport. The scenes, involving the clowns and the protagonist, Jessie, demonstrate to the children watching the show that to wear helmets and safety gear is a ‘cool’ thing to do. The aim is to ensure all children are wearing helmets and safety gear whenever they go out on bicycles and scooters.

### **Perspectives from teachers and parents**

As part of the ongoing development of the project, evaluations are collected each year from those key stakeholders within the schools: the parents and teachers. This data is in the form of an

anonymous questionnaire, completed at the conclusion of each performance (ethical clearance was approved). In 2018 a total of 244 participants completed the questionnaire.

**Table 1.** Evaluation questions and responses

Question	Teacher	Teacher	Parent	Parent
	Yes	No	Yes	No
In the performance today did you hear the messages about safety networks and early warning signs?	100%		100%	
In the performance today did you hear the messages about safety when using non-motorised transport?	100%		100%	
In the performance today did you hear the messages about bullying and bystander behavior?	100%		99.3%	0.6%
Do you think the messages presented were at the appropriate level for the children?	100%		98.7%	1.3%
Do you think the style of production was a good method to deliver the messages?	100%		100%	
Do you think these messages were relevant to children at this age?	100%		100%	
After watching the show today, do you think you will follow up these messages with your children/class?	100%		100%	
Do you think attending the performance was worthwhile?	100%		99.3%	0.6%

The data collected (see Table 1 above) indicated that these key stakeholders found this type of presentation to be a very effective tool to disseminate the key safety messages to these eight-year-old children. The teachers are also provided with a follow-up kit of resources that they can take back into the classroom to reinforce the messages of *The Safety Circus*. This kit includes a

CD of the songs, and teacher workbook with the lyrics and classroom activities that can be provided for the students.

The research, at this stage, has not extended to formally surveying the children who attend the performances, except that they are invited to draw a picture of their favourite *Safety Circus* character and submit this back to the teacher. A number of these pictures come back to the *Safety Circus* team each year, and these provide an insight into the impact some of the characters have on the children who are watching the show. Preliminary analysis of these drawings, and the characters represented by the drawings, indicate that the students love the vibrant costumes and often relate to those characters that had a strong story-line and dramatic journey within the show. The dramatic journeys of these characters are linked to the key safety messages.

### **The higher education curriculum model**

This curriculum model has been developed to address the increasing focus in Australian universities to provide higher education students with opportunities to be involved in social innovation projects based either locally, nationally or internationally. There is evidence from the research literature that applied theatre projects, such as *The Safety Circus* can have tangible benefits for communities (Quek et al., 2012) as this medium, applied theatre, is a powerful form of communication for all ages. Furthermore, there are also educational opportunities for those students involved in the performance of the project itself, particularly with regard to the development of leadership and entrepreneurial skills (Brown, 2019).

The university students participate in this project as an elective in their course of study. The project allows them to use their performing arts skills to address real issues in the community,

working with community and government partners to solve social problems. They rehearse the project intensively over one week and then take it on the road for a two-week tour. Typically, the tour consists of 35 performances that allows a reach to about 50 primary schools in total. At each performance, the students set up the circus tent, which is the central theatrical prop, and from which the characters appear and then interact with the audience, who consist of Grade 3 students, their teachers and interested parents.

The intensive nature of the rehearsal period, as well as the performance model of working directly in schools, forces the university students to re-think their own strengths and limitations as performers. The following extract from a student reflective journal highlights the way this type of performance tour builds their performance skills:

There were many different obstacles that the crew and I had to overcome during the two and a half week tour of *Safety Circus* including performing in small spaces with lowered roofs, performing in some unpredictable weather such high winds, rain and heat waves. We also had to learn to deal with all the different audiences and reaction of the kids. (Student M)

This realisation of the development of performance skills is also seen by student L: “I soon learnt that working with children would so unpredictable and I had to go into the rest of the tour being prepared for whatever audience I was put in front of.” Student S also provided a similar response in the reflective journal: “It was unlike any show I’ve ever experienced and I found it extremely beneficial as a performer.”

Another student comments on this same personal transformation as a performer, when working through positive and negative audience reactions:

These shows gave off great energies to the cast and therefore it was easy for us to bring a great show to the children. On the other hand, some students were quite rude and were difficult to engage. Doing shows like these were challenging, as you could only feel let down by how you are performing. This was a learning curve however, it taught me how to power through negative reactions without being affected or affecting the performance. No matter the situation, the show had to carry on at its full potential. Overall, I enjoyed the show too much to be saddened! (Student A)

The value of this particular curriculum model goes beyond that of training the performer. It allows the development of the social innovation ‘mind-set’ (Kickul et al., 2018; Russo - Spina, 2017) within these higher education students. The students indicated, through their reflective journals, that they were aware of the messages they were transmitting to the young audience.

During feedback of the performance, [I was told] about the effects of Lola’s song, *Be Strong* and what impact it had on one young audience member in a previous tour. The story was very emotional for me and I made it my duty to do this role justice, in the hopes of making the same impact. (Student L)

Another student also commented about the personal impact of performing in *The Safety Circus*:

I personally found great fulfillment in teaching these lessons to kids as my brother is around that age. But there was no argument that the best part of the show, and anyone who has ever done *Safety Circus* will say the same thing. Signing the flags of all the children who absolutely love and look up to you. One girl cried into my arms, sobbing that she

didn't want *The Safety Circus* to leave. Sure, I got fed up with the kids here and there and some schools were downright awful to be at. But the instances like this one and a when a group of boys ran up and gave me hugs asking how they can all be clown just like Buddy, that's when you remember the solid reason why we do and love *Safety Circus*. It was such an incredible ride and the kids who watched it left that hall safer and smarter. (Student J)

## **Conclusion**

*The Safety Circus* is a unique social innovation project for Australian higher education performing arts students who elect to engage in a challenging performance tour for primary school-age children. Based at one Australian university, *The Safety Circus* project has been part of the higher education curriculum for performing arts students for the last nine years. It was created in partnership with the crime prevention unit of the police service, and it uses theatre, music and dance to transmit key safety messages to eight-year-old children: safety on non-motorised wheeled transport, protective behaviours and bystander strategies for addressing bullies.

The higher education performing arts students develop their performance skills during an intensive rehearsal period and performance tour, while at the same time building a social innovation mindset that enables them to think differently about their community and the role they can play to address real social issues. The dangers facing students in Grade 3 continue to be troubling for parents, teachers and the crime prevention officers of the police service.

Universities are also grappling with the responsibility of producing graduates with broader skills that transcend the regular curriculum, creating employable and socially aware citizens who will

contribute meaningfully to their communities. *The Safety Circus* is just one project that brings together higher education students and their community in the joint resolve to keep eight-year-old students safe on the road, at school and in the community, while at the same time developing university students with a social innovation mindset that can transform their university years and graduate careers.

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# **The academic as artist: Inclusive artistic practice as pedagogical model**

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## **Abstract**

This paper examines the outcome of a project aimed at expanding the practice of music-making using multiple keyboards. The project (titled *Multiple Keyboards*) involved performing a program of new works collaboratively with multiple keyboardists, and exploring practice-led research implications for teaching. This work is situated within a framework called the Artistic practice-Research-Teaching-Employability nexus (ARTE), which emphasises a strong, multi-directional connection between arts practice, research, and teaching at undergraduate and graduate levels, extending these into student employability outcomes. The authors used a practice-based, reflective, and auto-ethnographic approach to make sense of their experiences through the project. This paper proposes that programming choice in an artistic context functions both as a learning experience for academic-artists, as well as a model that can inform subsequent pedagogical thought and practice, including potential employability foci.

## **Keywords**

pedagogical model, academic-artists, multiple keyboards, artistic research.

## **Background**

This paper examines the outcomes of a project aimed at expanding the practice of music-making using multiple keyboards. The project was enacted by two academic-artists—the authors of this paper—whose interests in the project included possible implications for teaching and pedagogy, particularly in relation to themes of diversity and inclusivity. The paper proposes that programming choice in an artistic context functions both as a learning experience for academic-artists, and as a model that informs subsequent pedagogical thought and practice, including a focus on employability. Here we focus on the experience and reflections of the authors as academic-artists, with further research required to incorporate the student voice.

The work of academics who are also artists has already received some scholarly attention, including, in particular, a focus on the ways in which arts practice can function as research (Bennett, Wright, & Blom, 2010; Blom, Bennett, & Wright, 2011; Wright, Bennett, & Blom, 2010). Less research, however, has focused on the academic as performing artist, and how inclusive performing practice and concert programming can serve as a model for undergraduate and post-graduate students under their guidance. The substantive focus of the project documented here is a program of new Australian works for multiple keyboards which was performed and recorded in December 2016 and released as a commercial CD in 2018. The program included:

- Works involving more than one performer at a single keyboard;

- Works involving a single performer at multiple keyboards; and
- Works involving multiple keyboards and multiple performers.

The program was constructed to be collaborative and inclusive, by employing multiple keyboards, players and diverse repertoire.

## **Context**

### **Situating the research.**

Both researchers are pianists, one also a composer, and repertoire choice is of particular interest to both in their teaching of pianists, especially in the development and modelling of professional capabilities. The work was contextualised within the framework of the Artistic practice-Research-Teaching-Employability nexus (ARTE, see Blom & Bennett, 2017), in which a strong, multi-directional connection exists between arts practice, research, teaching at undergraduate and graduate levels, which extends into student employability outcomes. The project also builds on the notion that the artistic practices associated with the performance of new music provide a strong foundation of knowledge and familiarity with new repertoire (Viney & Blom, 2014).

The authors interpret the *Multiple Keyboards* program as an artistic response to their own experiences in classical performance departments of higher education music institutions as predominantly individualist and exclusive, rather than collective and inclusive. This characterisation of institutional keyboard culture is manifest in the high degree of emphasis accorded the preparation and assessment of solo repertoire from a central canon of Western Art Music, as well as the secondary importance assigned to collaborative practices such as chamber music, accompaniment, and especially duet playing. This situation constitutes a challenge for

diverse and inclusive musical and social practices in cultures of piano pedagogy at higher education music institutions. This perspective is notwithstanding the many documented initiatives that aim to create more inclusive environments in music institutions (Bennett et al., 2019).

### **Perspectives from the literature.**

The literature on academic-artists' musical activities suggests that collaborative activities can be powerful learning experiences for students. Gyger's (2016) reflections on a new music program for young composers map the interactions and relationships between student composers, a (professional) composer-mentor, as well as professional performers. For Gyger, the interactions between professional musicians act as a model for the students "directly, as they observe the tutor at work in a professional setting, and implicitly, as they consider the importance of such relationships in building a career" (p. 45).

In a more collaborative vein, Lockwood's (1968) *Piano Burning* offers performers a different style of piano repertoire which raises questions beyond issues of practice, technique and interpretation (Blom & Strickland, 2020). A performance of the work by an undergraduate music student and a music academic drew a large community audience and student and teacher researched the experience together. In their discussion they placed the work in a historical and performance context, and engaged with questions such as what is music, what is performance, and for this work, what is the role of the performer. As a model, this work provides some guidance as to how piano repertoire can be explored while engaging the student in broader issues related to 20th and 21st century keyboard performance.

A third model is described by De Marinis and Cremaschi (2008) as a means of enabling advanced piano students “to develop interesting and promising professional careers in the performing and teaching fields” (p. 117), as well as gain significant experience in the professional recording studio. The teacher – in a collaboration with students – designed a program of music of little-known repertoire of four Argentinian composers. Much of the music was in archives and the teacher and students learned and memorised the works, studied them, played them to each other, and performed and recorded them. This prepared the piano students for professional concert programming, offered peer support and comment that could be taken into professional life, and helped launch the piano students in their performing careers. As with Blom and Strickland (2020), the significance of the teacher-student working relationship extended into research. The common feature of these accounts is in the scholarship, critical thinking, and reflexive practice which is inherent in the work of artist academics, and yet hidden from or not recognised by students. It is in this reflexivity that students can find their niche and begin to explore innovative practices and career pathways.

As a point of contrast with these three approaches, in this project the multiple keyboard program *Multiple Keyboards* focused on the academic-artists’ experiences as a performer, and the ways in which they developed diverse and inclusive possibilities for pedagogical application in keyboard contexts. Inclusivity as a guiding principle was evident in three main ways: consideration of repertoire and musical style, the number and type of keyboard instruments, and a diversity of performers.

## Approach

The commissioning, performing and recording of works for the program was deliberately a collaborative and inclusive process. A diverse group of participants was sought who would co-create, perform, and record a range of multiple keyboard works. The authors then shared with one another their perceptions of the process and outcomes, in an effort to articulate tacit artistic experiences, and discuss ways in which the project can inform pedagogical practices. The *Multiple Keyboards* project embraced a diversity of inclusive musical practices, including:

- improvisatory mobiles that employ a technique termed *comprovisation*;
- virtuosic minimalism with “combinatoriality as an organizational determinant”;
- minimalism as a textural device;
- lyrical tonality;
- extended techniques inside the piano;
- bitonal fugue;
- political themes related to the 9/11 attacks in the United States and the 1995 Tokyo subway sarin attack;
- folk borrowings (melodies and myths);
- environmental issues;
- Indigenous culture; and
- botanical drawings.

The diversity of these musical styles and influences is noteworthy as it supports the notion that there may be a connection between the potential musical complexity collaborative pianism offers (through the deployment of twenty or more fingers on multiple keyboards) and a propensity

toward stylistic diversity (Grinberg, 2017, p. 20). Openness to experimental approaches, other cultures, and environmental or political issues in music are artistic features that also feed into an enhanced employability nexus by modelling open-minded approaches to music-making for students.

The program included music for a range of multiple keyboard configurations, including music for two pianos, piano duet (on the keyboard and inside the piano), four pianos, two toy pianos with two players, two toy pianos with one player, piano and toy piano two players, piano and toy piano one player, multi-track harpsichord, 16 pianos in The Piano Mill, and a piece for 3 MIDI pianos. The pedagogical value of this creative diversity includes learning to adapt to new contexts and keyboard mechanisms, sounds, and techniques. A small community of (usually solitary) keyboard performers came together for the project, including a professional piano duo (academics), a professional pianist (school music teacher), high level amateur players (post-graduate, academics, studio piano teacher), medium level composer-pianists (academics), plus a community of keyboard players in The Piano Mill. The social and collaborative nature of the project speaks to the value keyboardists derive from interacting with other keyboardists. Unlike instrumental or vocal musicians, keyboardists work primarily in isolation. In modelling rewarding artistic collaboration, the project also models professional behaviour, connecting the process more directly to employability (ARTE).

## **Experiences and Outcomes**

Through consciously rejecting individualistic modes of keyboard practice the authors developed new awareness of the potential for keyboard music to promote diversity and attitudes of

solidarity between performers. The process led to new knowledge about specific repertoires that have been implemented in ongoing keyboard pedagogy practice.

Viney is a member of a long-standing piano duo, with experience in various forms of collaborative keyboard performance, including new works. This project demonstrated for him that new experiences are virtually guaranteed when working in a collaborative keyboard context, and provided him with new perspectives on the pedagogical value of this kind of work. Two works proved particularly challenging for Viney in terms of formulating an interpretive understanding of the music. In the first, the composer initially withheld the 9/11-themed imagery that informed the genesis and shape of the work. Subsequently, during the rehearsal and workshopping period, the composer shared the way in which particular images related to 9/11 informed the substance of the work. That new information proved to be the key ingredient for Viney, allowing shapes, textures, gestures, harmonies and rhythms to crystallise in his own aural image of the work.

The second work drew on the music of video game culture for inspiration as well as musical material. Both Viney and his duo partner were relatively unfamiliar with video game music, and found the angularity of the music difficult to navigate. They also struggled to shape phrases according to their own sense of linearity and musical progression across time, which contrasted with the music's stop/start and less traditionally-conceived teleology. Viney had to share and describe his limited video game experience with his duo partner in order to create a shared context for interpretive decisions. These challenges were accepted as a natural and normal facet of performing new music for two pianos, however, and Viney saw the absorption of these unfamiliar musical ideas as his responsibility as a performer. While Viney has performed two

piano works with students in the past (pre-dating this project), he now has plans to draw on the new repertoire explored in this project for future keyboard ensemble projects. The project has affirmed his belief in the artistic, pedagogical and social value of keyboardists collaborating, as well as provided intimate familiarity with a new pool of repertoire appropriate for pedagogical contexts.

For Blom, an experienced piano duet player, the program was an opportunity to play a piece for four pianos. This required the development of new ensemble skills in the unusual context of having to balance and voice lines against and with three other pianists. Blom found that conceiving of the piece as piano duet playing multiplied by two a useful method for working through performance issues. Two other works, one a improvisation (composed mobile modules which are played within improvisational parameters) for piano duo, and a musical mobile for two toy pianos, were less about ensemble precision, but required intense listening with effective and swift musical choices and decisions in the moment of performance – again a performative ability particular to the context created by this program. Blom has applied learnings from this project in a variety of settings. Four undergraduate keyboard students playing a movement of a Baroque concerti for multiple keyboards was an exercise in ensemble precision but also required an understanding of each instrument's changing role; soloist, accompaniment interlocking with another keyboard, then tutti player. Another performance required three pianists to play at one piano, again an exercise in ensemble, but also balance and shaping. Finally, two undergraduate keyboard students elected to prepare and perform a movement of a work for two toy pianos. The piece, of minimalist exactitude, required ensemble precision, a touch different from that on the piano - firm with even attack - plus managing the physical position at a small instrument. The students have reported a realisation that the toy piano can be a serious instrument, and have

benefited from learning to sit at the small instrument and to manage its distinctive touch and small range.

The examples of both authors model the ways in which the complexity of music for multiple keyboards requires openness to new ways of thinking, and negotiations around new musical understandings between multiple individuals (multiple performers as well as composers). The embodied way in which the artist-academic explores these issues in their own professional practice provides the basis for pedagogical application. These types of skills are modelled throughout this project, and point toward the research, teaching and employability nexus.

## **Conclusion**

Projects such as *Multiple Keyboards* provide a mechanism for academic-artists to feed artistic research into pedagogy. By consciously designing, performing, and recording a program that identifies an expanded conception of keyboard practice, the authors developed strong and intimate knowledge of new repertoire as well as new skills that now inform their teaching practices. As a model within the ARTE nexus, it constitutes a rich and complex network of artistic research and teaching possibilities. The broadening of artistic vision enabled and enacted by this project provides students with a model for broadening their own vision toward a more inclusive outlook, one that also enhances employability through increased collaborative ability, a more nuanced attitude to repertoire and audience connection, and a model for program development.

The ARTE nexus is, by its very nature, inclusive and for both authors, the project activated this aspect of the nexus, bringing their own Arts practice (performing) into their Teaching, undertaking Research into the project with each other and with students, and producing a public concert and commercial CD outcome demonstrating ongoing professional Employability. For students, the multiple keyboards program, through the Teaching which emerges from the ARTE nexus, illustrates and offers an inclusive model through a broadening of repertoire styles and keyboard ensemble experiences, opportunities for students at different levels to take part, a range of different keyboard instruments and valuable and rewarding experience as an ensemble player. These benefits are in addition to the sheer pleasure afforded keyboardists when performing together in social and collaborative settings.

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# **Developing more supportive approaches to training of music skills in higher education**

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## **Abstract**

This overview highlights the elevated incidence of music performance anxiety (MPA) symptoms in adolescent and higher education music students and documents several interventions to assist students in management of their symptoms. The continuing training focus on the depth of musical skills rather than the breadth of skills, remains a contentious issue for higher music education worldwide. One important skill for participation in a wide range of classical music activities is the ability to sight-read music notation efficiently. The recognition of the importance of this skill for future careers differs between countries and institutions. Little is known about the incidence of MPA symptoms outside of the solo performance setting. One recent pilot study documented physiological evidence of stress experienced by music undergraduates during sight-reading. This highlights the need for higher education institutions to consider providing more broadly based MPA interventions that include focus on a wider range of music skills in addition to solo playing. Gathering physiological and psychological MPA data in a variety of musical settings will provide the evidence to guide more supportive approaches to training of music skills in higher education.

## **Keywords**

music performance anxiety, skills for music careers, physiological evidence.

Musicians frequently experience some degree of nervousness when performing solo, making recordings or playing with fellow artists. Generic terms such as stage fright, performance anxiety and music performance anxiety are often used to label the symptoms that affect many performers. Kenny (2010) articulated the elements that constitute music performance anxiety precisely – she uses this term to refer to an anxiety that repeatedly occurs in a particular music performance setting and produces specific physiological and psychological symptoms, which are typically more acute when the performance outcomes are viewed as important.

Music performance anxiety (MPA) affects musicians of all ages and skill levels. Research has documented presence of MPA symptoms in young children (Britsch, 2005) and adolescents (Fehm & Schmidt, 2006; Osborne, Kenny & Holsomback, 2005). For example, Britsch (2005) reported that amongst 97 surveyed players aged 9–18 from four youth orchestras in a mid-western city in the USA the incidence of MPA was as high as 75%. This study detected even higher MPA of 85% amid the members of the Youth Symphony, a very competitive ensemble with aspiring high school students drawn from a wide geographical area. Similar results were found in Europe, where Fehm and Schmidt (2006) reported that 73% of surveyed students aged 15–19 in a German special music high school experienced difficulties in controlling their anxiety during performances, with 46% of respondents being critically handicapped by anxiety. The study showed that positive thinking and rehearsing were helpful short-term strategies employed by students to manage MPA, and that practising technique helped them in the long-term. In

Australia, Osborne, Kenny and Holsomback (2005) targeted selective high school students suffering from MPA with an intervention consisting of seven sessions of “psycho-education, goal setting, cognitive restructuring, relaxation training and behavioural exposure in the form of two solo performances with audience” (p. 53). Students actively engaged with this cognitive-behavioural treatment program and its techniques reported significant improvement in management of MPA symptoms in comparison to the control. These studies highlight the high incidence of MPA amongst adolescent musicians and the need for schools and music organisations such as youth orchestras to consider introducing interventions to help students manage MPA symptoms.

Many higher education institutions have recognised the negative impact of MPA on career trajectories of classical musicians (e.g., Araújo et al., 2017; Biasutti & Concina, 2014; Kokotsaki & Davidson, 2003; Pecun, Collins, & MacNamara, 2018). For example, a recent large international survey of undergraduate music students regarding their attitudes to health painted a worrying picture of poor stress management and limited use of coping strategies to deal with high expectations and a pressured study environment (Araújo et al., 2017). The researchers called for higher education institutions to provide more supportive settings, where wellbeing of students is considered in the design of music training programs. Similarly, Biasutti and Concina (2014) showed that advanced students in Italian conservatoriums experience higher anxiety and greater fear of negative evaluation when performing than professional musicians. This study called for music teachers to “promote the use of adaptive coping strategies during musical activity among their students” (p. 201), and for higher education instrumental curricula to include training in management of MPA symptoms and development of students’ meta-cognitive

abilities and psychological skills. In the UK, Pecun, Collins and MacNamara (2018) conducted 15 in-depth interviews with pre-elite, transitioning elite and established elite musicians, reporting “severe psychological challenges, disorders and trauma” during transition into higher education (p. 1). This paper emphasises the need for MPA interventions to target first year undergraduate students to ensure a positive start to their higher education journey. Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003) documented higher incidence of MPA amongst the female vocal students at a UK conservatory in comparison to the male students. The results showed that both anxiety as a personality trait and anxiety as a pre-performance condition were elevated in the females and interacted with each other. The findings highlight a more severe impact of MPA on female musicians and the need for teachers and administrators to be aware of this problem. These studies underline the continued struggle with MPA that many young musicians experience during their higher education studies and the urgent need for institutions to address this issue in all aspects of undergraduate training.

Higher education instrumental/vocal students often view their teachers as performance experts, and rely on MPA coping strategies that have worked for their teachers, but perhaps may not have been shown to be effective by research (for review, see Zhukov, 2019a). To address this issue, some higher education music institutions have introduced intervention programs to help students manage MPA symptoms. In Australia, a program of music psychology techniques for optimal performance was trialled with undergraduates at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music (Osborne, Greene, & Immel, 2014). After psycho-educational lectures and master classes, students worked through a workbook of strategies to improve their attitudes towards stress experienced during auditions and performances, and to manage the MPA symptoms. Topics

covered in the workbook included “channelling performance energy, developing confidence, improving self-talk, learning and memorising music, mental rehearsal, building courage, recovering from mistakes, dealing with adversity, and becoming mentally tough” (p.1). Pre-to-post surveys of 31 participants demonstrated a significant reduction in the severity of MPA symptoms and a greater use of positive strategies to challenge negative thinking. In Germany, a multi-modal intervention was developed to assist higher education string students with orchestral audition process (Spahn, Walther, & Nusseck, 2016). The intervention consisted of 14 weekly seminars that offered a range of approaches to coping with MPA and combined video feedback, cognitive strategies, body awareness and musical performance. The intervention resulted in perceived reduction on MPA symptoms such as trembling hands, which was assessed through self-reports and anxiety inventories, and also in higher evaluation of performances by independent judges when compared to control. This paper is one of the very few studies to report an improvement in quality of musical performance in addition to a decrease in the severity of MPA symptoms.

While solo performance continues to be strongly emphasised in the training of undergraduate classical musicians, in reality music careers post graduation will include few opportunities for solo recitals. In the UK, USA and Australia researchers have called upon the higher education institutions to re-assess the skills needed for music careers and to re-structure undergraduate programs to deliver relevant training (Bartleet et al., 2012; Burnard, 2014; Sarath et al., 2014). A recent international survey of creative industries by Hennekam and Bennett (2017) documented “the persistence of precarious work across the career lifespan” and criticised higher education for lack of training in skills needed to fulfil multiple professional roles over a lifetime career (p. 68).

Many music graduates will spend majority of their working time teaching in private studios or schools, with occasional performances in collaborative music settings (Zhukov, 2019b). Those lucky enough to obtain permanent orchestral positions will still continue to teach and perform in chamber ensembles and community orchestras (Ascenso, McCormick & Perkins, 2019). While many consider music technology as a promising career path for musicians in our globally connected world, even in this specialty area the graduates are not fully prepared for work. A recent mapping out of Australian music technology curriculum revealed a shortfall in employability skills, in particular in the area of collaboration (Klein & Lewandowski-Cox, 2019). These studies highlight an urgent need for higher institutions to re-assess the breadth of music skills taught during undergraduate music degrees to adequately prepare students for future careers.

One important skill for participation in a wide range of classical music activities is the ability to sight-read music notation efficiently. Good sight-reading skills facilitate quick learning of new repertoire, and therefore, free up time for more active involvement in a greater variety of music settings, such as playing/singing in small and large professional and/or amateur ensembles, collaborating with composers, recording studio sessions, community music-making, music therapy and gigs. A recent study comparing approaches to sight-reading training in the UK and Australia highlighted institutional differences in recognition of the importance of this skill for future careers (Zhukov & Ginsborg, in press). In the UK, the continual testing of sight-reading during practical grade examinations up to the Diploma level offered by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) has led to a strong national emphasis on the development of this skill in pre-tertiary music training. This focus continues in higher education, with at least

one UK conservatory teaching this skill explicitly during the first and second year of the undergraduate degree. In Australia, the sight-reading skills of young musicians are underdeveloped prior to their entry into higher education, and no formal training is provided to improve sight-reading during undergraduate study (Michalski, 2008; Zhukov, 2014). Zhukov and Ginsborg (in press) showed that different institutional attitudes and approaches to specific skill training do impact students' engagement with their broader music studies and may result in different employment outcomes in the future.

Little is known about whether music students experience MPA symptoms in relation to music skills outside of solo performance area. One recent pilot study considered the possibility of MPA occurring in other musical settings and gathered physiological data to examine whether music undergraduates experience stress during music sight-reading (Zhukov, 2019c). Participants' heart rate and skin conductance (indication of psychological and/or physiological arousal) were measured using a medical-grade wristband during sight-reading of music examples that were increasingly challenging. The results showed that the difficulty of testing materials was significantly correlated to the increased arousal, with only the very best sight-reader remaining calm throughout the experiment. The findings for heart rate were less clear and demonstrated unique coping strategies of each student. However, the best sight-reader demonstrated the most stable heart rate and the weakest sight-reader showed the most elevated heart rate as music examples became more difficult. This study shows that music undergraduates do experience stress in relation to music skills other than solo performance, and suggests the need for higher education institutions to consider providing more broadly based MPA interventions that include focus on a variety of music skills in addition to solo playing. Since music graduates are more

likely to utilise a wide range of skills in future careers, the focus on management of MPA symptoms exclusively in the solo performance setting may limit the participation in a variety of music activities and negatively impact future employment opportunities.

Another issue with the implementation of MPA interventions in higher education is that the effectiveness of various programs tends to be evaluated through surveys and self-reports.

Gathering physiological evidence pre- and post-intervention in addition to surveys could provide further hard evidence of reduction in MPA symptoms. For example, a study by Kim (2008) combined evidence gathered by a finger thermometer with standard survey instruments such as State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) and Music Performance Anxiety Questionnaire (MPAQ) to confirm the positive impact of a muscle relaxation intervention. Such studies are very rare, and research would benefit from developing future projects that combine physiological and psychological data collection for MPA interventions.

This brief overview has highlighted the elevated incidence of MPA symptoms in adolescent and higher education music students and documented some interventions trialled by higher education institutions to assist students in management of their symptoms. The enduring training focus on the depth of musical skills (i.e., instrumental/vocal mastery) and lack of training in the breadth of skills, both musical as well as employability skills, remain controversial issues for higher music education worldwide. While the need to imbed employability skills is increasingly being acknowledged and accepted by higher education music institutions, we are still a long way from recognising that MPA may occur in areas other than solo performance and in relation to a wide range of music skills. This underlines the necessity to provide supportive environments when structuring new courses that develop broad music skills such as sight-reading, accompanying,

improvising, arranging, conducting, and collaborative music making, to name just a few. Since many of these skills receive only a limited training time during undergraduate degrees, this leaves music students particularly vulnerable and anxious regarding their mastery of these skills when compared to a long-term immersion in playing their major instrument. Therefore, we need to introduce some MPA mitigation strategies when training a variety of music skills and at the same time broaden MPA research into settings other than solo performance. Gathering physiological and psychological data will assist academics and administrators in consolidating the evidence to challenge the status quo and generate new ideas for creating supportive approaches to training of music skills in higher education.

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