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Post-Sonic and Psychosocially Engaged: Developing a Decentred, Impact-Focused Approach to Open-Score Composition

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Bath Spa University

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This study was approved by the Bath Spa University Ethics Panel on 30/ 06/2021. Should you have any concerns regarding ethical matters relating to this study, please contact the Research Support Office at Bath Spa University (researchsupportoffice@bathspa.ac.uk).

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Abstract

This thesis documents the development of a post-sonic and psychosocially engaged approach to open-score composition - a transdisciplinary mode of music-making that operates at the boundaries of socially engaged art practices, experimental music, and music therapy, to pursue a novel conceptualisation of its impacts. The thesis begins by setting out the context for such a practice by introducing these complementary areas of research, before focusing on four key themes (reaction, interaction, impact, and performativity) that are used to introduce a series of critical arguments, musical analyses, and commentaries of my own compositions. In Chapter 1, the theme of reaction is approached in order to reflect upon critical or contrarian art practices - pieces or movements that primarily position themselves as an alternative to established forms of practice. This chapter charts some of these methods and legacies, primarily in relation to the art-group Fluxus and post-Cagean experimental music, before introducing my own works that were conceived from a similarly reactive position. Then, in Chapter 2, greater attention is given to socially engaged arts practices, and how interactions are quantified, valued, or discussed in this artform, with particular prominence given to the writings of Bishop and Nicholas Bourriaud, before the interactive elements of my own compositions are again discussed. In Chapter 3, the question of impact in participatory art and music-making is addressed with greater urgency, and evaluative frameworks from music therapists including Brynjulf Stige and Stuart Wood are introduced to sketch out the means by which impacts might be evaluated more successfully in socially engaged composition practices. Again, this discussion is followed by an introduction to elements of my work that explore these themes, and a number of my works are evaluated using frameworks taken from music therapy. Next, in the fourth chapter on the theme of performativity, the thesis condenses the criticisms and conclusions of the previous three chapters into an affirmative and original illustration of what a transdisciplinary approach to post-sonic and psychosocially engaged open-score composition may consist of, predominantly through a detailed commentary on a substantial collection of compositions taken from my portfolio. The thesis concludes with some closing remarks that sketch out some of the forms future practice could feasibly take and the contexts in which they could be deployed.

Acknowledgements

I'd like to begin by thanking my three supervisors - James Saunders, Robert Luzar (both of Bath Spa University), and Stuart Wood (independent scholar) for their valuable support throughout this doctorate. Over and over again, their input, suggestions, and feedback were stimulating, thoughtful, and impeccable. If this project is judged to be of any success, it is in no small part because of their collective talent, flair, and openness as supervisors, and the swathes of research that their cumulative expertise touches upon.

Next, I'd like to thank a number of colleagues: Harry Matthews was a frequent source of guidance, encouragement, and reinvigoration - a thoughtful friend, writer, and composer who made studying towards this doctorate immeasurably more enjoyable; Uri Agnon provided continued correspondence that respectfully challenged many of the ideas, thinking, and implications behind much of this thesis; Andy Ingamells was integral in laying the foundations for this doctorate - offering advice on life, institutions, and art, as I shuffled around following the conclusion of my Masters degree; and Oogoo Maia furnished apt insights that inspired many of the twists that this project has taken. I'd also like to thank the members of the Dramaturgy Online Reading Group (organised by Klara Kofen) - a cluster of artists, writers, and researchers who unknowingly showed me the way at the start of my PhD, at a time when I wasn't really sure what I was doing. Additionally, I'd like to thank the various reviewers and editors who contributed their knowledge and support while I wrote papers for *Organised Sound*, *Tempo*, *Voices*, *Question*, and *Riffs*. In each case, their careful consideration and unique specialisms brought a range of perspectives to each paper, perspectives that have also undoubtedly enriched this thesis.

Finally, I'd like to thank the various employers, colleagues, and volunteers who enabled the experiences I had working with SEN children and young adults, as well as these children themselves. Without these opportunities, and without this side of the research, I have no doubt I would have abandoned both the PhD and probably composition itself altogether; I'm grateful to everyone involved for giving me the chance to (re)discover meaning in music, and to produce research that I see value in.

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1. Introduction

"All artists are alike. They dream of doing something that's more social, more collaborative, and more real than art." (Claire Bishop, 2012, 1).

"All artists are alike. They dream of doing something that's more social, more collaborative, and more real than art." (Douglas G. Barrett, 2016, 166).

"All artists are alike. They dream of doing something that's more social, more collaborative, and more real than art." (Suhail Malik, 2013).

1.1. Introduction

The above quotation, attributed to the American visual artist Dan Graham,[1] provides a fulcrum for the literature that has informed both this thesis and the development of its accompanying portfolio of compositions. The quote is used as the opening to Claire Bishop's *Artificial Hells: Participation and the Politics of Spectatorship*[2] - arguably the most influential text on the subject of socially engaged art practices and participatory gestures in art, and it also closes Douglas G. Barrett's *After Sound: Toward a Critical Music*[3] - one of the most convincing movements of contemporary musical analysis, towards a post-sonic conception of music. Additionally, it also appears at the beginning of a talk by the art theorist Suhail Malik, titled 'Exit Not Escape - On The Necessity of Art's Exit from Contemporary Art'.[4]

Naturally, these three writers have different agendas: Bishop explores a reimagining of how we understand and appraise participatory gestures in contemporary art; Barrett pursues a critique of the emphasis placed on sound in both historical and contemporary approaches to musical analysis; and Malik questions what art itself should, and must,

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[1] The quote itself originated in the label text for Graham's 1994 exhibition *Two-way Mirror Punched Steel Hedge Labyrinth*, held in the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, Walker Art Center, in 1998. The significance of its redeployment has already been acknowledged by both Barrett and Malik (Barrett, 2016, 166).

[2] Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship.* New York: Verso Books.

[3] Barrett, G. D. (2016). *After sound: Toward a critical music.* New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

[4] Artists Space. (2013, June 21). *1. Exit not escape - On The Necessity of Art's Exit from Contemporary Art* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=fimEhntbRZ4.

become in order to make itself meaningful again. Yet, the recurrence of Graham's quote in each context provides a startling thread that begins to outline how all three writers would like to see art transformed: into work that is 'more social, more collaborative, and more real'.

My practice-based thesis, which charts the development of an approach to composition that is both post-sonic and psychosocially engaged, shares these desires, and also leans heavily on two of the texts that redeploy Graham's quote. Specifically, Bishop's contributions to the field of socially engaged art practices provide the frameworks by which many participatory artworks, and many of the precedents for my own practice, are currently understood; and Barrett's theorisation of a music after sound provides an aesthetic template for much of my own compositional activity. However, this thesis also presents an account of how a reliance on these authors' frameworks alone was insufficient as I developed my own creative practice. The 'real' in my own interpretation of Graham's invocation of an ideal art is a real that is tangible, visible, quantifiable, and human - individual impacts (and impacts on individuals) that can be appraised and evaluated, alongside methods for doing so. These areas are generally left unexplored within the fields of both socially engaged art practices and musical analysis - what did a performance do, and to whom? Therefore, I present the argument that although Bishop's and Barrett's critical frameworks are valuable, they nonetheless remain 'a few steps removed from the immediacy of experience itself'[5] - an immediacy that I was keen to pursue in my own practice. Subsequently, this thesis also charts the effect that perspectives and frameworks from music therapy have had on developing a compositional approach that is specifically psychosocially engaged. In doing so, the thesis draws together three fields of study that I consider to be complementary, and results in a transdisciplinary approach to open-score composition that exists at the borders of these areas of practice.

1.2 Structure

The remainder of this Introduction is spent providing brief explanations of some of the key contexts for both this thesis and my creative practice, namely: experimental music, open-scores, post-sonic music, socially engaged art practices, and music therapy. Then, four

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[5] Moorehouse, A., Matthews, H., & Maia, O. (2023). Post-sonic Perspectives on Socially Engaged Compositional Practices: Composing 'after sound' and beyond music. *Organised Sound*, *28*(1), 93.

themes are introduced: reaction, interaction, impact, and performativity. These themes identify four main areas that my own compositions explore, and after a brief methodology section, my work is introduced and analysed in relation to these themes. At the same time, these four themes are used to introduce relevant lines of inquiry that question elements of accepted or conventional practice, and offer the rationale for the shifts I explored in my own practice - with the most substantial shift being a movement away from a socially engaged practice and towards a psychosocially engaged one. Finally, the thesis concludes with an evaluation of my practice more generally, and an assessment of where it lies within a plethora of possibilities for work that aims to be both post-sonic and psychosocially engaged, alongside a discussion of some of the potential benefits that such an approach to open-scoring may afford.

1.3 Experimental Music, Open-Scores, and Verbal Notations

The first key context for my thesis is that of experimental music, and in particular the emphasis this alternative approach to Western concert music has historically placed, and continues to place, on open-scoring and verbal notations. However, the tradition itself is difficult to define, and there are many examples of experimental music that forgo open-scoring and verbal notations altogether. This is because, rather than sharing identical approaches to instrumentation, structure, or form,[6] the field of experimental music instead consists of a shared attitude (or attitudes) to composition. And, as my own practice falls firmly within many of these parameters, it may be helpful to sketch out some of these attitudes alongside experimental music's origins, in order to provide a general context for my creative practice.

With respect to its lineage, John Cage is often positioned as the figurehead of experimental music, and his courses in 'Experimental Composition' at the New School in New York have a legendary reputation - attended as they were by notable figures including Allan Kaprow, La Monte Young, George Brecht, and Dick Higgins.[7] Subsequently, multiple

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[6] Elements that provide the identifiers for Classical and Serialist approaches to composition, for example.

[7] Hilsabeck, G. 'John Cage in the Classroom: His New School sessions in the 1950s were noisy free-for-alls, and a model of how to teach'. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 8, 2016. However, as Ken Friedman acknowledges, attendance numbers at these classes have become somewhat exaggerated, and it is likely that many people have falsely claimed to have attended. Friedman, K. (2021). Fluxus Legacy. *Fluxus Perspectives*, (51).

accounts, histories, and reflections on the development of experimental music place their emphasis on Cage and these classes, including Michael Nyman's highly-influential *Experimental music: Cage and Beyond*,[8] and Benjamin Piekut's *Experimentalism Otherwise: The New York Avant Garde and its Limits*.[9] Works such as these address Cage's influence and cement his legacy. Similarly, in terms of Cage's own compositions, particular importance is placed on his indeterminate techniques, from which Cage himself discerned two primary styles that have in turn been used to delineate two complementary areas of experimental music:[10] compositions that are 'indeterminate with respect to their composition' (such as *Music for Changes),*[11] and compositions that are 'indeterminate with respect to their performance', such as the epoch-defining *4'33"*.

First performed by the pianist David Tudor in New York, 1952, the debut performance of *4'33"* consisted of Tudor opening and closing the keyboard lid of a piano three times over the course of four minutes and thirty three seconds. However, the score for *4'33"* clarifies that the work may be performed 'by any instrumentalist or combination of instrumentalists and last any length of time'.[12] Readings of this work are numerous, and contradictory.[13] However, it is generally accepted that a primary focus of the work is the environmental sounds that necessarily accompany a performance of *4'33"* - sounds that are then foregrounded through the absence of conventional concert music. In this respect, the composition is indeterminate with respect to its performance, as these environmental sounds necessarily change from iteration to iteration. In turn, both *4'33"* and Cage's definition of a work that is 'indeterminate with respect to [its] performance' have provided the most famous illustrations of an attitude towards indeterminacy that has come to exemplify one area of experimental music.

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[8] Nyman, M. (1999). *experimental music: Cage and beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[9] Piekut, B. (2011). *Experimentalism otherwise: The New York avant-garde and its limits* (Vol. 11). Oakland, California: Univ of California Press. And as another example of the scope of Cage's legacy, Brandon Joseph's exploration into the oeuvre of Tony Conrad contextualises the artist's work against the backdrop of Cage and his influence, illustrating the effect Cage's compositions and ideas had beyond purely musical circles. Joseph, B. W. (2013). Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the arts after Cage. New York: Zone Books.
[10] Nyman, M. (1999). *experimental music: Cage and beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[11] Which makes use of chance operations derived from the Chinese Classical text the *I Ching*. Jensen, M. G. (2009). John Cage, Chance Operations, and the Chaos Game: Cage and the" I Ching". *The Musical Times*, *150*(1907), 97-102.
[12] Nyman, M. (1999). *experimental music: Cage and beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 3.
[13] See 1.41 'THE LIMITS OF PERFORMING CAGE'.

Furthermore, since Cage's incidental environmental sounds provide the musical material for *4'33"*, the composition has no need to utilise traditional staff notation,[14] with the score for replicating the piece instead usually taking the form of a short set of verbal instructions. It is these instructions that preserve the character of *4'33"* from performance to performance. Again, such an approach to scoring - combining indeterminate processes with verbal instructions, has come to be associated with experimental music. And, while the legacy of *4'33"* is multi-layered and far-reaching,[15] with respect to this thesis and my own aesthetic, the key precedents of Cage's practice are the work's verbal notation and Cage's notion of a composition that is indeterminate with regards to its performance.

The influence of these areas of Cage's legacy[16] on experimental music can be seen in a plethora of subsequent compositional activity that coalesced around the label of open-scores, such as verbal notations, text-scores, and event-scores - various banners for works that predominantly use written language to set the parameters for open (or indeterminate) performances.[17] However, the character of indeterminate elements and the processes used to generate them can vary significantly from work to work: in some instances indeterminacy is invoked implicitly through the imprecision of written instructions;[18] in some, decision-making is left explicitly at the discretion of a work's performers;[19] occasionally works poetically ask performers to complete an impossible or imaginary task (to the best of their ability);[20] and some works make use of chance processes.[21] My own scores, particularly those that appear later in this collection, make frequent use of open-scoring and

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[14] A system made up of sets of five horizontal lines (and four spaces between the lines) which signify the progression of time, and upon which various dots are placed to indicate pitches and durations for musical material. It is this scoring system that is most commonly associated with Western concert music, and one that Cage eschewed for the composition of *4'33"*, aside from one version of the score which utilises empty staff notation.

[15] For example, Cage himself was dogmatic in his desire to 'let sounds be themselves', and *4'33"*'s incorporation of incidental noise is indicative of a general trend throughout his practice to distance himself from the image of an authoritarian composer. Campbell, I. (2017). John Cage, Gilles Deleuze, and the Idea of Sound. *Parallax*, *23*(3), 361-378.

[16] Of which *4'33"* is only the most famous example.

[17] In reality, indeterminate processes accompany any musical score or performance, and it is usually an open-score's acknowledgement of these elements of a performance that is of greater significance than the existence of these elements themselves.

[18] Such as in the work of Manfred Werner, in Lely, J., & Saunders, J. (2012). *Word events: Perspectives on verbal notation*. London: Continuum. 378.

[19] Such as in the work of Gavin Bryars, in Ibid. 123.

[20] Such as in the work of Yoko Ono, particularly pieces that appear in Grapefruit. Ono, Y. (2000). *Grapefruit: A book of instructions and drawings by Yoko Ono*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

[21] Such as in George Maciunas' *In Memoriam to Adriano Olivetti* (1962) in Lely, J., & Saunders, J. (2012). *Word events: Perspectives on verbal notation*. London: Continuum. 265-272.

verbal notations, and as such are necessarily indebted to, and exist as an extension of, the tradition of experimental music.

1.4 Post-Sonic Music[22]

Another key feature of my own compositional practice is its employment of a post-sonic aesthetic. This approach to composing music is largely synonymous with the pursuit of a decentred music, and to a lesser extent, postconceptual music, with each field's respective nomenclature generally pointing to varied points of departure, emphasis, and subsequent lineages, rather than illustrating any sustained or significant divergences in the aesthetics of contemporary practice. As such, 'post-sonic' is used here primarily to highlight the significance of the role Barrett's text in particular has had on the development of this research.

In addition, to exacerbate this effect, recently many of these ideas have overlapped. An illustration of this overlap is provided by one the key texts of this thesis - *After Sound: Toward a Critical Music*,[23] by the multidisciplinary artist and theorist Douglas G. Barrett. In *After Sound*, Barrett references both Rosalind Krauss' 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' (a highly influential text that outlined the case for a decentred field of sculpture and a break from classical forms)[24] alongside an approach to post-conceptualism informed by the philosophy of Slavoj Žižek, to illustrate Barrett's notion of a post-sonic approach to musical analysis. This is one of the greatest strengths of Barrett's text - it takes a wide range of perspectives and arguments for an expanded, postconceptual, or postmodern approach to art in general, and redeploys these discussions specifically within musical contexts, and in contrast to historical approaches to musical analysis.

In particular, as the post-sonic title implies, over the course of *After Sound*, Barrett determinedly and repeatedly questions the disproportionate emphasis placed on sonic materials in the construction of Romantic-era 'absolute music'. This tradition proposed that its musical works provided a consistency of communication across disparate performance locations and interpretations, since meaning ultimately lay in musical score rather than in

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[22] This section derives from an article I co-wrote with Harry Matthews and Oogoo Maia, that was published by a journal focusing on the uses of technology in music. Moorehouse, A., Matthews, H., & Maia, O. (2023). Post-sonic Perspectives on Socially Engaged Compositional Practices: Composing 'after sound' and beyond music. *Organised Sound*, *28*(1), 88-96.

[23] Barrett, G. D. (2016). *After sound: Toward a critical music*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

[24] Krauss, R. (1979). Sculpture in the expanded field. *October*, *8*, 31-44.

musical performances. However, as well as challenging these assertions, Barrett also traces their lingering, and often unchallenged impact in contemporary musical analysis. Primarily, he identifies the inheritance of a critical armoury that is ill-equipped to deal with the non-sonic musical elements that accompany a performance - such as performance spaces, the identities of performers and audiences, and the musical forms a performance may redeploy and why. For this reason, Barrett advocates an alternative critical approach to music, one that drastically relegates the importance of sound and instead focuses on the sociological, political, philosophical, and art-historical (or music-historical) implications of musical performances. At the centre of his framework is a hyper-awareness of the context within which a work, or perhaps more appropriately a performance of a work, is situated.

Moreover, as well as the site of a performance, Barrett explores the forms and precedents that mould a work and subsequently shape its meaning. As such, it is of little surprise that the author repeatedly draws attention to the fact that every musical act is grounded in a time and a place. The physical and historical context of a musical act bleeds into a musical work at the same time as that work bleeds into the site of its performance. Barrett formulates the term 'materialist conceptualism' as a label for his aesthetic philosophy, which he defines as 'the notion of a conceptual art that acknowledges the inherent discursivity of artistic practice while taking into account the material impact language and ideas have on the real'.[25] He supports this aesthetic approach with reference to Slavoj Žižek's reading of Pussy Riot, one that the philosopher sums up with the capitalised statement –'IDEAS MATTER'.

Suitably, throughout *After Sound* the musical examples that Barrett pursues uniformly reject sound as the primary focus of the work, and Barrett's readings of these examples (such as his interpretation of Cagean indeterminacy which is summarised below), often argue against popular readings of these works. Through these means, Barrett provides a perspective on music 'after sound' that informs much of my creative practice,[26] and his chosen label of a 'post sonic' music provides the foundation for a counter-intuitive musical

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[25] Ibid. 3. And, while conceptualisations of the 'real' are necessarily complex (see Žižek's Lacanian articulation of The Real, for example - Žižek, S. (1988). 'The Object as a Limit of Discourse: Approaches to the Lacanian Real'. *Prose Studies*, *11*(3), 94-120.), Barrett's text primarily focuses on a 'real' that consists of the precise political implications and political meanings of a variety of performances, rather than extending this discussion to a post-Lacanian exploration of ideas as cognitively dissonant experiences of phenomena.
[26] As does Seth Kim Cohen's *In the Blink of an Ear* - a text that explores similar themes, albeit while reaching different conclusions.

aesthetic that I utilise in many of the compositions that are introduced over the following chapters.

1.4.1 'The Limits of Performing Cage'

A brief description of Barrett's opening analysis goes some way towards tracing his critical framework and flags its relevance to conceptions of my own post-sonic and psychosocially engaged music practice. The focus of his first case study is John Cage's *4'33"*, arguably concert music's most recognisable iteration of American post-war avant-gardism. Specifically, Barrett explores the contingent politics of indeterminate Cagean 'silence' by comparing disparate performances from both the 1960s and 2000s and uncovering the impact each context had upon readings of the work.

As one example, Barrett begins by summarising Benjamin Piekut's analysis of Charlotte Moorman's performances of Cage's indeterminate composition – *26'1.1499"*. Owing to the sexual nature and absurdity of her performances, these performances were renounced by Cage who claimed Moorman had 'murdered' his composition.[27] Barrett argues that Cage's reaction to these performances illustrates that although *4'33"* was intended to liberate performers from the tyranny of a composer and the authority of their score, the piece fell short in its pursuit of any emancipatory aesthetic. Instead, early performances of indeterminate Cagean silence ushered in another stifling performance practice. An aesthetic was therefore established that reinforced the particularities and preferences of Cage himself.

Essentially, Barrett uses these readings of Cage's work to illustrate that no piece exists in a vacuum, and context will always invariably bleed into a work even if a composer tries to deny this fact. Subsequently, with respect to my own compositional practice, Barrett's analysis implied that removing a number of author functions from my working processes would perhaps paradoxically result in work that more successfully fulfilled my intentions for it. And, Barrett's ideas also make apparent the contradictions present in the simultaneous generation of significant or successful work, alongside the construction of the image of ourselves as significant or successful composers.

It is clear that Barrett is dubious about the success of Cage's indeterminacy project in relation to Cage's own desires for the work. However, the author is more sympathetic to the

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[27] Barrett, G. D. (2016). *After sound: Toward a critical music*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA. 32.

political power of Cagean silence. He explores the symbolic political implications of these supposedly 'passive' works through the writings of Jonathan Katz, who argues that silence was not passive for a gay or bisexual composer in McCarthy-era America. In fact, mute works ensured their survival and, in the context of Cage's composition (and his sexuality), silence is not silence at all, it is the *performance* of silence, and something akin to a protest. Barrett acknowledges that Katz's interpretations are somewhat speculative – suggesting that 'the political thrust of Cage's work may even be understood as running *counter* to [Cage's] own stances on his work'.[28] These contradictions only serve to further reinforce the weight Barrett affords to the particularities of a situated performance, which can assume prominence over and above any abstracted notion of compositional intent. He reminds the reader that *4'33"* is the performance of silence within a musical space, and the work's 'sociopolitical force' is entirely dependent on its context. Specifically, Barrett refers to Caroline Jones's interpretation that Cagean silence may be understood as a kind of *proto-critical music* – one that is 'critical of itself in its very form'.

Continuing his focus on context, Barrett then analyses a series of contemporary performances of Cage's *4'33"* that were subsumed within AIDS literacy workshops delivered by the activist art collective Ultra-red. During these workshops held in various art galleries across the USA at the turn of the century, Cage's composition was deployed to advance a series of recorded statements on the AIDS epidemic. While analysing this work, Barrett argues that:

> The collective use Cage's silent composition as an immanent temporal container, crossed with the iconicity of silence. As such, silence in this context represents the undermining of valuable information that saves lives, the negligence and unwillingness of governments in responding to the epidemic on a public and global level, and an index of the violent effects of stigmatization exacerbated by the constant threat of criminalization faced by people living with AIDS.[29]

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[28] Ibid. 34.
[29] Barrett, G. D. (2013). The Limits of Performing Cage: Ultra-red's SILENT| LISTEN. *Postmodern Culture*, *23*(2).

Ultimately, an analysis of this iteration of *4'33"* illustrates how the meanings attached to its performances are wholly contingent upon the *physical* contexts in which the work is deployed. As Cage's composition opens a listener up to the world around them, this world around the piece inevitably seeps into the world of *4'33"*. Barrett argues that this discursivity also encompasses the *forms* that a musical performance deploys and concludes:

> Ultra-red's work opens *4'33"* onto a critical confrontation with the present … because, at the same time as Ultra-red's appropriative gesture (the transportation of a concert-work into a politically-charged gallery setting) simultaneously provides a critique of Cage's composition and historical music practices,[30] the performance also draws parallels referencing historical AIDS activism strategies.[31]

Subsequently, Barrett similarly highlights the importance of a work's historical context, as well as its physical context, in the generation of its meaning.

Throughout his analysis, Barrett implicitly uses these comparisons between various interpretations and performances of Cagean silence to illustrate that every performance is porous, and that interpenetration between a site and its subjects are inevitable. Furthermore, Barrett implies that even if this interpenetration is not instrumentalised by the author of a work,[32] we would do well to at least pay it greater attention.

However, although Barrett's text makes the argument that the physical and historical implications of a musical performance are integral to an understanding of musical meaning in musical *analysis*, I use his text as a departure point for musical *composition*. I utilise Barrett's framework to consider where to deploy my work and in which form, as well as to what end. This approach is also reminiscent of Christopher Small's provocations, particularly his argument that 'no matter what message the composer may *think* [they are] conveying,

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[30] Barrett argues that 'appropriation frames: it reconstitutes and reconfigures historical substance'. Barrett, G. D. (2016). *After sound: Toward a critical music*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA. 22.

[31] Barrett, G. D. (2013). The Limits of Performing Cage: Ultra-red's SILENT| LISTEN. *Postmodern Culture*, *23*(2).

[32] Barrett also uses this opportunity to expand upon his criticism of any arbitrarily defined 'historical authenticity' (*werktreue*) or faithfulness to a score. In Ultra-red's work, Cage's composition is realised precisely and sincerely from a sonic perspective, yet these performances occur in contexts laden with references towards sexuality which the living composer frequently chased fervently away from *4'33"*.

the act of performance within the structure and the conventions of the concert hall or opera house carries its own message'.[33] And, whereas Barrett highlights the importance of a performance's context for the *analysis* of music, Small explicitly assigns the responsibility of these implications to composers themselves.

To briefly summarise, Barrett provides a radical and perhaps necessarily exaggerated analytical perspective from which to engage with music and its meaning. He proposes a post-sonic approach that I believe to be especially relevant to the construction of interdisciplinary compositional practices and works that explicitly accommodate aims that are often arbitrarily considered extra-musical. However, whereas for Barrett, and across the music examples he explores in *After Sound*, these aims are often political, conceptual, or philosophical, with respect to my own practice they are instead material, tangible, and psychosocial. Nonetheless, Barrett's post-sonic approach to music analysis is used as a point of reference for many of my own compositions.

1.5 Socially Engaged Practices[34]

In pursuing psychosocial impacts (which are defined in section 1.11) through my own compositional activities, there is a clear affinity with the field of socially engaged art practices. Subsequently, the work of the composer Brona Martin, the artist Susana Delahante, and the Artist Placement Group are introduced in chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis in order to present and compare a variety of different approaches to the artform. However, my own practice departs from much contemporary socially engaged practice for a variety of reasons that are articulated throughout this thesis. That being said, in order to illustrate how my work departs from these models in the pursuit of a specifically psychosocially engaged practice, it is worth first sketching out the artform and briefly introducing two of its key texts in this introduction (although these texts will be covered in greater detail in Chapter 2).

The social turn in contemporary art, whereby outreach programmes, community projects, and participatory works became the new vogue, was arguably predicated on two false dichotomies. The first of these centres on audience behaviour, and the argument that

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[33] Small, C. (1987). *Music of the common tongue: Survival and celebration in Afro-American music*. London: Calder Publications Limited. 354.

[34] This section derives from an article I co-wrote with Harry Matthews for an Arts and Humanities journal. Matthews, H., Moorehouse, A., (2021). Evaluating Socially Engaged Practices in Art: The Autonomy of Artists and Artworks in Community Collaborations. *Question Journal*, 6, 18-27.

active spectatorship (in which an audience contributes creatively to the form and content of an artwork), is of more value than *passive* spectatorship (in which an observer encounters an already completed work). Secondly, the social turn is built upon the foundations of conceptual and performance art and their preferences for art-processes (situated in time) over art-objects (which are situated in space). Taken together, these inclinations led to an avalanche of artists tumbling out of the galleries and into communities, to facilitate experiences that primarily posited the act of art-making *as the artwork*, rather than generating material intended for an audience situated outside of these experiences. Additionally, such artworks often hope to affect changes in society at either an individual or community level. For this reason, works are often socially-engaged ideologically, while this label simultaneously refers to the site of action.

As well as accommodating sociological aims, (for example, the promotion of liberal worldviews, or the critique of capitalist, private ownership) socially engaged practices are often positioned as disrupters of the art market, whereby experience itself is authored in order to evade the creation of objects which can easily be commodified, reproduced, and sold. In reality, the market subsumes these experiential practices with a dispiriting ease, as noted by the art critic and curator Lucy Lippard with regards to the dematerialisation of the art object in 1960s conceptual art.[35] However, socially engaged practices depart from conceptualism in the artform's approach to collaboration and accessibility.

1.5.1 The Critique of Socially Engaged Art

Bishop, in her article 'The Social Turn: Collaboration and its Discontents', illustrates how artists working in community contexts often designate 'social events, publications, workshops, or performances' as the products of their artwork.[36] This departure from material form, as Bishop notes, problematises the preconceived link between art and the artmaker. Instead, the resulting 'work' reflects both the process and product of its own socially created environment. Furthermore, these types of artistic output continue to fuel debates concerning the role of the artist, their relationship to their work, and the precedence given towards either creative processes or the sociological changes desired by

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[35]Lippard, L. R. (Ed.). (1997). *Six years: the dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972*. Oakland, California: University of California Press. *vii - xxii.*

[36] Bishop, C. (2005). The social turn: Collaboration and its discontents. *Artforum*, *44*(6), 178.

socially engaged art. Bishop suggests that this art is borne out of a value system that opposes repressive capitalism, and that it often escapes criticism by using community inclusion and political engagement as principal measures of value.[37] However, Bishop argues that socially engaged art should not be exempt from critical enquiry simply because it is participatory and politically well-intentioned.

Bishop positions her critique against Nicholas Bourriaud's theorisation of *relational aesthetics* - art that establishes meaning through the relationships it generates between people and societal groups.[38] Relational art often considers its audience to be the community that participates in its creation or realisation, rather than situating the audience outside of these processes. Bishop is largely dismissive of this approach, instead advocating for transgressive, risky, and even ethically problematic works such as *El Escalando De Lo Real* by Susana Delahante - a work that consists of a photo of the artist being impregnated by the semen of a recently deceased male. This work, although highly individual, is intended as an exploration of Cuban law and ethics,[39] and Bishop states that art which raises consciousness is of far more value than the ultimately ineffectual articulations of exemplary and demonstrative political gestures that the author links with relational aesthetics. For this reason, Bishop implies that even in socially engaged art, 'its separation from social praxis is ultimately integral to its pursuit of sociological aims'.[40] And, while in turn I position my practice in opposition to some of Bishop's conclusions, their introduction here serves as a means of foreshadowing some of these oppositions as well as sketching out the field of socially engaged art.

1.6 Music Therapy

Finally, while my creative practice is indebted to a number of models and frameworks taken from music therapy (which will be introduced later on in this thesis), it has also been

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[37] Ibid, pp. 179-80.

[38] Bishop, C. (2004). Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

[39] And, from a musical context, works such as *Fremdarbeit* by Johannes Kriedler could be argued to fulfil a similar function. Iddon, M. (2016). Outsourcing progress: On conceptual music. *Tempo*, *70*(275), 36-49.

[40] This is a reference to comments written by Matthew Shlomowitz in a virtual discussion group occupied by the composition staff and doctoral students of University of Southampton and Bath Spa University (4 October, 2018). Although I didn't participate in the group, I was granted access to their discussion archives by Matthew Shlomowitz, and his comments are taken from one of the group's discussions of Bishop's writing.

influenced by the colour, tone, and aims of music therapy in general. For this reason, it is perhaps helpful to here provide a brief contextualisation of music therapy alongside a quick illustration of some of its many applications.

Although theorisations of the relationships between sound and healing are as old as academia itself, it was not until the 1950s that music therapy began to establish itself as a professional practice and academic discourse; subsequently, it has been said that music therapy has 'a long history, but a short past'.[41] Therefore, music therapy scholarship faced the task of assimilating ideas from sources as disparate as the Ancient Greek philosophers,[42] Christopher Small,[43] Carl Jung,[44] Theodor Adorno,[45] Edward Elgar,[46] and meditation practices[47] into a body of literature that is inevitably pluralistic, and often contradictory.

For this reason, music therapy has been defined by the elusive nature of its own definition,[48] and respective associative bodies rarely arrive at anything resembling a consensus.[49] However, foundations become a little sturdier with a separation between the use of 'music-in-therapy', and 'music-as-therapy',[50] and these distinctions approach two contrasting theoretical backgrounds within the field of music therapy: one illustrating the therapeutic potential of music, and the other illustrating the therapeutic potential of sound.

In its simplest form, music-in-therapy covers the use of music in the pursuit of primarily non-musical therapeutic goals, whereas music-as-therapy covers approaches to music therapy in which therapeutic goals are primarily musical. Or alternatively, music-in-therapy approaches often incorporate musical experiences into treatment programs to aid the progression of a beneficial client-therapist relationship. Whereas in music-as-therapy, it is the musical experiences themselves, facilitated by a music therapist,

[41] Wigram, T., Saperston, B., & West, R. (Eds.). (2013). *Art & science of music therapy: A handbook*. Oxford: Routledge. 3.

[42] McClellan, R. (2000). *The healing forces of music: History, theory, and practice*. Bloomington, Indiana: iUniverse.

[43] Pavlicevic, M., & Ansdell, G. (2004). *Community music therapy*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

[44] Austin, D. S. (1996). The role of improvised music in psychodynamic music therapy with adults. *Music Therapy*, *14*(1), 29-43.

[45] DeNora, T. (2003). *After Adorno: rethinking music sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[46] KOÇASLAN, G. (2019). A HIDDEN PIECE IN MUSIC THERAPY: MUSIC FOR THE POWICK ASYLUM. *Music Therapy in Turkey*, *13*, 57.

[47] Medcalf, B. (2017). Exploring the music therapist's use of mindfulness informed techniques in practice. *Australian Journal of Music Therapy*, *28*, 47-66.

[48] Edwards, J. (Ed.). (2016). *The Oxford handbook of music therapy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1-8.

[49] Bruscia, K. E. (1989). *Defining music therapy*. New Braunfels, Texas: Barcelona Publishers.

[50] Aigen, K. (2005). *Music-centered music therapy*. New Braunfels, Texas: Barcelona Publishers.

which are instrumentalised to provide benefits to a client. As such, one example of music-in-therapy would be a psychodynamic music therapy session, in which the conscious and unconscious structuring of improvised musical elements is subsequently processed psychoanalytically through a verbal dialogue with the music therapist.[51] On the other hand, an example of music-as-therapy would be an anthroposophical music therapy session in which particular tonalities are prescribed to cure specific ailments,[52] or a vibroacoustic approach which operates in a similar manner.[53]

Of course, there are areas of music therapy practice that resonate greatly with me, and other areas of which I remain more wary.[54] However, my opinions of these practices have not correlated with the value of the discussions I have had with their respective practitioners. Over the course of several informal interviews, introductions through mutual friends, glimpses of practice through promotional material online, and access to music therapy documentation, I was repeatedly humbled and inspired by the kindness, carefulness, and openness shown by representatives of the profession. Additionally, and importantly (within the context of this thesis), the field has a sustained, nuanced, and compassionate understanding of the impacts of the practice it conducts - an understanding that was especially enlightening to me as I searched for discourse on these effects within the field of socially engaged art practices and experimental music. For this reason, specific models and frameworks within music therapy have been of particular use to the development of my compositions. However, it is equally the attitude of music therapy (and particularly the attitude shown towards participants, clients, or performers) that have had the most significant impact upon the nature of my research and the goals I set for my music.

1.7 Reaction

The remainder of this introduction will briefly sketch out the four themes by which the musical works presented as part of this thesis are introduced and analysed. Generally, these

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[51] Kim, J. (2016, June). Psychodynamic music therapy. In *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*, *16* (2).

[52] Intveen, A., & Edwards, J. (2012, June). The history and basic tenets of anthroposophical music therapy. *Voices: a world forum for music therapy 12* (2).

[53] Skille, O., Wigram, T., & Weekes, L. (1989). Vibroacoustic therapy: The therapeutic effect of low frequency sound on specific physical disorders and disabilities. *Journal of British Music Therapy*, *3*(2), 6-10.

[54] As articulated in Moorehouse, A. (2021, June). Representation, Radicalism, and Music "After Sound": A Composer's Perspective on the Music of the Future in Music Therapy. In *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy 21*(2).

themes also follow the order that these compositions were composed in, with most of the earliest works being primarily reactive, and the later works being performative. However, many compositions contain elements that relate to multiple themes, and occasionally works contradict this chronology altogether. Subsequently, it is the progression of the themes, and the narrative that is strung up between each chapter that is of greater importance than the chronology of the works, and it is this narrative that offers an illustration and contextualisation of the development of a post-sonic and psychosocially engaged practice, even if this journey was not always linear in a chronological sense.

With this in mind, the theme of reaction is a logical place to begin. This first chapter explores the genealogy of the critical arguments and precedents for a decentred music practice in the 1950s and 1960s, a practice often framed against a straw-man image of conventional (and specifically Classical or Neoclassical) music-making. Then, I introduce my own compositions that were primarily conceived in response to similar stimuli. With respect to my own compositions from this chapter, although the criticisms that provoked them are somewhat outdated and far from novel, their forms and materials are more idiosyncratic. For example, while one of the pieces discussed (*Symphony Number None* (2020)) is outwardly critical of symphonic form and the relationships it symbolises - a position that has been repeatedly enunciated in musical and artistic works over the past century, the character of *Symphony Number None* is especially post-sonic, and the implications of this focus are highlighted.

The chapter also introduces Fluxus, a collective of musicians and artists who placed critique and criticism at the heart of their creative practice (particularly in the 1960s), and the successes and legacies the group left behind, before arguing that criticism and a reactive artform ultimately isn't enough. This was the realisation that set my compositional approach on a course towards creating works that presented more hopeful and performative alternatives, rather than continuing to compose works that primarily positioned themselves as a series of somewhat contrarian retaliations against a sea of various musical tropes.

1.8 Interaction

The second theme is that of interaction, and the chapter begins by defining interactive and participatory performances. Then, the chapter expands upon this introduction's brief summary of socially engaged arts practices (see section 1.5) through the discussion of a

number of case studies and key texts. Bishop and Bourriaud's theorisations of the artform are explored in greater detail, and a tentative compromise between the two is put forward through an analysis of Brona Martin's composition *Sowing Seeds* (2018). Finally, the chapter concludes by introducing a number of my own compositions that deal with the theme of interaction and particularly the similarities and differences they share in comparison to socially engaged, interactive, and participatory practices, through an exploration of the models they use, and the aims of the works.

1.9 Impact

This third theme begins as an off-shoot from a previous discussion of impact that is briefly introduced in relation to socially and politically engaged art practices in Chapter 2, before extending this evaluation to music and composition more generally. Particular attention is given to contemporary composers' evaluations of the impacts of their own practice, and the argument is made that these evaluations of impact are often neglected - an assertion evidenced through one of my own compositions titled *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*. Then, the chapter presents a brief exploration of some of the processes by which these considerations of impact are bypassed, as well as an exploration of how institutional research structures may encourage this neglect. Afterwards, the chapter goes on to document how my own implementation of music therapy research enabled me to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of my own compositional activity, and thus afforded me the opportunity to develop a more efficient practice. Again, at this stage of the chapter, examples from my composition portfolio are introduced in order to illustrate this point, and particular attention is paid to how these works deal with the theme of impact.

1.10 Performativity

The final chapter finishes on an optimistic note - focusing on how the criticisms offered in the previous three chapters are formulated into more hopeful alternatives: proactive and performative works that offer another way of doing things, and afford different kinds of successes. These works bring into being the world they wish to create, and the compositions introduced here are the most novel, combining as they do research from music therapy and

socially engaged art practices with a post-sonic perspective to create a decentred, impact-focused, and performative approach to open-score composition. Particular attention is paid to one of my substantial composition collections (titled *H-E-L-P (and Music)*) that illustrates this end-point, however, in this section and also in the conclusion of this thesis, the argument is made that this is but one departure from many that may authentically follow the approach to composition that is put forward. This chapter also analyses the Artist Placement Group, and works by contemporary composers, in order to contextualise my own practice and identify precedents.

1.11 Conclusion: Arriving at a Post-Sonic and Psychosocially Engaged Compositional Practice

With these contexts and themes briefly introduced, it is easier to provide a brief sketch of my creative practice. I consider myself a composer, and for many years I have been exploring the use of open-score verbal notations as the primary medium for articulating and disseminating my pieces. In addition, as my practice has evolved over the previous few years, it has moved further away from the manipulation of sound, and closer towards a conceptualist approach and an interest in the interpersonal and intrapersonal impacts experienced by a piece's participants. However, this thesis specifically charts a more formalised (and bolder) evaluation of these areas of my practice, with the conceptual elements of it contextualised by Barrett's post-sonic framework. Similarly, the personal and interpersonal elements are informed by socially engaged practices, as well as frameworks from the community arts, and music therapy research. In relation to the latter elements, I utilise the term psychosocially engaged to describe my practice (as opposed to socially engaged), for a variety of reasons. These will be introduced throughout this thesis, but a general explanation will be provided here.

In my psychosocially engaged practice, impacts are evaluated on an individual level, rather than at the social or community level, as is often the case in socially engaged practices, and even these kinds of evaluations are often neglected in experimental or contemporary music. Therefore, with regards to my own practice, the focus of my pieces' evaluation is not only what the piece was, but what the piece did, and to whom. In this respect, I believe this to be one of the most original elements of my practice in comparison

to socially engaged art practices and contemporary music in general, and this is the area of my research that is most indebted to my fairly novel implementation of music therapy research. In addition, these individual changes that my pieces and their evaluations focus on are often psychotherapeutic - another nod to music therapy practices, as well as a natural result of my employment in various contexts that focused on the psychological and social wellbeing of children and young adults, as well as their diagnoses, behaviours, and education. As such, my practice primarily addresses these areas, with music used as a resource to provide improvements to a participant's wellbeing, happiness, or their experiences of formal education. In truth, it would perhaps be more apt to label my practice as a quasi-psychotherapeutically and socially engaged practice, in order to better illustrate the links my practice shares with the contexts in which I was employed over the course of this PhD, and the perspectives and knowledge that these contexts utilised and were concerned with in relation to SEN children and young adults. However, this has been reduced to 'psychosocially engaged' throughout this thesis, and is best applied to the works that appear later in this thesis, rather than the pieces that appear in earlier chapters (which tend to have been composed before I began working in SEN contexts).

2. Methodology

The research undertaken over the course of this practice-based PhD has naturally incorporated many different elements taking many different forms. I will first outline the practical elements of my methodology, before briefly outlining the theoretical methods I used while creating my compositions.

2.1 Practical Methods

Throughout my study, I benefited from regular supervisions which, due to the complementary specialisms of my three supervisors, enabled me to discover relevant research from a variety of fields and uncover texts that became integral to building a novel context for both this thesis and my compositional practice. Specifically, *After Sound* by G. Douglas Barrett, the writings of Bishop on socially engaged practices, nods towards the Artist Placement Group and performativity, and figures such as Charlotte Posenenske,[55] were all introduced by my supervisors alongside their considered critiques of both the practical elements of my PhD and the papers that I submitted to various academic journals over the course of my study. And, on this point, I also received helpful feedback from a host of editors and reviewers each time I submitted iterations of my ongoing research for publication.

Continuing from an institutional perspective, I regularly attended the Open Scores Lab at Bath Spa University - a research cluster focussing on open-score compositions, where I presented and received feedback on my work a number of times, and participated in many debates surrounding the issues that arise in open-score practices. Furthermore, I also had the opportunity to teach on the Community Music module at Bath Spa, and to collaborate with doctoral students from other departments across the university. In addition, over the course of my studies I attended an inter-university reading group between composition students from Bath Spa and Southampton Universities, and an informal online discussion group made of mixed-media artists, theatre-makers, and musicians from a variety of contexts. Furthermore, my external supervisor - a lecturer in Community Music Therapy, was able to challenge, encourage, and supplement my independent research into music therapy,

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[55] Wallace, I. (2021). *Compromised Values: Charlotte Posenenske, 1966–Present* (Doctoral dissertation, City University of New York).

correcting many of my initial assumptions and furnishing my awareness of music therapy with a number of pertinent examples of practice that were especially relevant to the models of composition I was pursuing.

With respect to more formal or data-driven iterations of research methodology, this PhD also makes fairly novel use of interviews - incorporating these into a work titled *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* that encouraged a large volume of composers to discuss the impacts of their compositional activity. And, although they do not appear in this thesis,[56] this work was followed up by a series of exploratory and informal interviews with practising music therapists - interviews that consolidated my understanding of the field and encouraged me to explore the contrasts that lay in the group's approach to questions of impact in comparison to those of the composers. Furthermore, two frameworks from music therapy have been used to analyse the impacts of my own compositional practice, and this process is discussed in the chapter on impact.

Over the course of my study, I also undertook an unusual combination of employment and fieldwork that significantly altered the nature of the research I was conducting and the direction it ended up taking. Specifically, while completing my doctoral studies, I worked with a huge range of children in a variety of SEN settings - something that began as incidental employment before ultimately becoming an integral part of my thesis. These roles were either musical, educational, or pastoral, and I was variously employed as a music tutor, teaching assistant, psychological and emotional support worker, carer, support worker, learning support worker, behavioural support worker, and SEN co-ordinator, for children with diagnoses including terminal illnesses, autism spectrum disorders, alcohol foetal disorders, neonatal abstinence syndromes, profound and multiple learning disabilities, physical disabilities, neurodevelopmental conditions, attachment disorders, trauma (including physical, emotional, and sexual), mental health conditions, and epilepsy, as well as children in care, and refugees. In each case, aside from when in my role of a private music tutor, I always worked under the direction of various supervisors and superiors, and had to abide by the safeguarding practices and policies that were implemented within each employment context. However, at the point at which it became clear that my forms of employment were going to have a significant impact upon the nature of my PhD, I also

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[56] However, the music therapists' written responses to the question 'What has your music done?' are included in the Appendices.

applied for, and received, full ethical approval from Bath Spa University (and this process is discussed later in this thesis). The predominant consequence of this process was the stipulation that any references made to the children I worked with must protect their identity, and this has been ensured. It was my interactions with these children that offered me the opportunity to pursue a compositional practice that was inherently relational, and allowed me to find a meaning in my work that would probably have eluded me had I composed using a more conventional methodology. In addition, these interactions themselves were used as quasi-case studies - explorations into the impacts of certain kinds of music upon various individuals, which are articulated through text-scores presented in the composition portfolio. Occasionally, I also used a participant observation methodology while employed in these contexts, and this approach is covered in the third chapter on impact.

Finally, in addition to independent reading and study, the most important method by which this thesis was completed was that of composing. I produced a wide variety of scores over the course of this doctorate, and these will provide much of the focus of the discussions in the remaining chapters of this thesis. These works primarily make use of open-scoring and verbal notations, however various compositions also make use of more conventional performance, as well as videos (including montages and other editing techniques for found materials), creative writing, photography, and model-making.

Perhaps, while reading this thesis, it may come to be seen as an unexpected omission that this composition portfolio generally lacks documentation regarding the performances of many of these works, despite many of them having been performed. However, this decision is intentional and consistent with the aims of the thesis. Firstly, there is often a tendency for composer-authored (or composer-published) realisations of open-scores to become exemplary, or to at least have the effect of restricting the interpretative scope of their realisations. Such a phenomenon can be observed in relation to Cage's works (as mentioned in section 1.41), whereby the composer's preferences for how his work should be performed resulted in a Cagean aesthetic that limited the breadth of 'acceptable' interpretations of his compositions, and also muted some of their liberatory potential and their success in providing an alternative to conventional performance practice. Clearly, with regards to my own portfolio, and an emphasis on an impact-focused *approach* to composition, rather than the musical nature of these compositions, the risks associated with publishing composer-authored interpretations of the works are heightened. However, it may be argued

that an impact-focused approach to composition is one that as such necessitates documentation more than most. In response to this, I would argue that it is of more value for many of these works to have no documented performance, and it is infinitely more useful for readers of this thesis to creatively imagine what a performance may be, rather than apprehend one that has already been configured, as these small movements towards devising a performance are nevertheless a micro-realisation of the work, and it is in this state of becoming that these compositions hold the most value. This is particularly true with respect to the works that are introduced towards the end of this thesis, where my compositions explicitly pursue psychosocial impacts. To put it simply, this thesis explores an approach towards composition, or an invitation to compose from a particular perspective, and I believe documenting multiple performances of these works would counterproductively place too great an emphasis on what has already been composed (or realised).

2.2 Theoretical Methods

Theoretically, my research combines theory and approaches from socially engaged art practices, experimental music (and more precisely, post-sonic approaches to experimental music), and music therapy into a compositional form that is both decentred and psychosocially engaged. In doing so, this research presents a novel approach to composing within an artistic (rather than therapeutic) context that explicitly prioritises precise personal transformations over the manipulation of material in the pursuit of aesthetic desires. In short, the focus of much of the work is primarily its impacts - what the piece did, and to whom, and these impacts often have a quasi-therapeutic character, particularly towards the apex of this thesis. As such, by translating the aims of much music therapy practice into the context of open-scoring, these compositions occupy a liminal space in the hope of uncovering and exploring the affordances this approach may provide. And, it is this compositional form that provides the ultimate focus of this research (although it is necessarily furnished by my own specific compositional examples).

Over the course of my study, this compositional form has itself been evaluated by a number of complementary methods: firstly, and most importantly, it is evaluated in light of the theoretical frameworks, aims, and artistic precedents that provided its context and provoked its creation; it has also been apprehended by many of the professionals and specialists who I have worked with over the past few years; it has been discussed in various

seminars with a variety of peers and colleagues; and it is analysed throughout the chapters of this thesis. At each stage, these mechanisms resulted in a feedback loop (and something akin to an action research methodology) by which the compositions themselves became more refined, precise, and successful, at the same time as they provided more comprehensive illustrations of my own understandings of the frameworks and ideas that they articulate.

Through these means it is hoped that this theoretical methodology results in a nuanced, contextualised, and balanced exploration of the fields of socially engaged arts practices, post-sonic experimental music, and music therapy. The methodology then draws these areas of research together into a novel approach to composition, one which combines elements of all three of these fields, and one that invites and evidences a precise consideration of the potential psychosocial impacts of open-score composition.

3. Theme 1: Reaction

3.1 Introduction

The theme and focus of this first chapter is that of *reaction*, specifically artistic or musical works conceived in response to existing, established, or conventional forms of practice and discourse. Clearly, there is an element of such an effect nestled within the development and progression of almost every artform across every medium, as any novelty must necessarily be accompanied by a series of ruptures, departures, disavowals, reactions to, or rejections of previous practice. However, there are certainly instances in which this phenomenon can be observed to a greater degree, and situations which hold greater relevance to this thesis. For example, whereas the advent of Serialism after World War II presents an exemplary iteration of a shift away from tonal harmony, an analysis of this transition would offer little to the progression of this thesis due to the character of the movement and the nature of its musical approach. Therefore, this discussion will focus primarily on the critical, transgressive, and somewhat iconoclastic position occupied by the art group Fluxus throughout the 1960s[57] - a loose community of interdisciplinary artists and musicians whose works have greatly influenced a number of the compositions in my portfolio through their intermediality and playful nature, as well as their tendency to attack established forms of practice. After an introduction to Fluxus and an illustration of the nature of the works that fell under its banner, some of my own compositions will be discussed in comparison to these works, before the chapter concludes with an exploration of the legacy and contemporary impact of the Fluxus movement and the attitude it represented. The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise my research, by foregrounding some of the criticisms I level at historical reactive or iconoclastic practices as well as a number of my own compositions, and these criticisms are used as a foundation for the development of the psychosocially engaged post-sonic practice that is articulated over the remaining chapters of this thesis.

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[57] To be clear, although the activities of the Fluxus group span more than a single decade, this particular decade is the focus of this chapter.

3.2 Pre-Fluxus: Duchamp and Cage

This chapter primarily focuses on the reactive stance occupied by the art-group Fluxus in the 1960s. However, briefly sketching out two of the group's primary influences offers the opportunity to introduce complementary examples of iconoclastic works and contemporaneous attitudes, while further fleshing out the character of Fluxus and the circumstances of its genesis. To this end, this section will begin by introducing *Fountain* by Marcel Duchamp - the somewhat mythical 20th century artist whose impact and oeuvre was integral to the development of Cubism, Dada, and Conceptual Art, as well as Fluxus.

3.2.1 *Fountain* (1917)

Consisting of a small porcelain urinal, approximately 50cm tall, that was purchased by Duchamp from a sanitary wares supplier, *Fountain* was signed 'R.Mutt' so that the artist could disassociate himself from responses to the work. Through the use of this pseudonym, without claiming *Fountain* as his own, Duchamp was able to submit the work to the newly-formed Society of Independent Artists - a group that Duchamp retained membership of, and one that was bound by the group's constitution to accept for exhibition any artworks presented by any of its members. However, the Society's board of directors voted to exclude *Fountain* from its inaugural exhibition, with its unimpressed members arguing that 'a piece of sanitary ware - and one associated with bodily waste - could not be considered a work of art and furthermore was indecent'.[58] The fallout from *Fountain*'s exclusion was acrimonious, with Duchamp quitting the Society, and press interest in the affair provoked the board of directors to publicly defend its position - stating in the French press that 'The *Fountain* may be a very useful object in its place, but its place is not in an art exhibition and it is, by no definition, a work of art'.[59]

Fountain provides a clear precedent to many Fluxus works in terms of the challenges it presented to art, and to the definitions imposed upon art, by art institutions. Specifically, *Fountain*'s urinal challenges these definitions using a form that can be variously read as playful, vulgar, humorous, and transgressive in equal measure, and this tone can be applied to much of the Fluxus work that is explored later in this chapter. Similarly,

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[58] Haworth, S. (2000, April, revised by Mundy, J. 2015, August). *Marcel Duchamp, Fountain, 1917, Replica 1964.* Tate. https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/duchamp-fountain-t07573.

[59] Naumann, F.M. in Haworth, S. (2000, April, revised by Mundy, J. 2015, August). *Marcel Duchamp, Fountain, 1917, Replica 1964.* Tate. https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/duchamp-fountain-t07573.

Duchamp's work 'eloquently [draws] attention to the processes by which an observer actively and imaginatively (if often unconsciously) constructs any experience of art, as well as drawing out the temporal and subjective elements of any such experience'.[60] Arguably the most pertinent of *Fountain*'s many implications with regards to a discussion of Fluxus is the way in which *Fountain* leads viewers towards a recognition of the creative leaps required by an audience to recognise an(y) artistic experience (or in *Fountain*'s case, the apprehension and recognition of an art object). This approach, reinforced through Duchamp's use of a 'readymade' urinal[61] can be traced into multiple Fluxus works, many of which position the guided observation of naturally-occurring, or commonplace phenomena as significant artistic experiences.

3.2.2 *4'33"*

Given the legacy of Duchamp's 'readymade' urinal, it is easy to follow the links into John Cage's *4'33"*, and particularly the composition's foregrounding of incidental environmental noise (as introduced in section 1.3). In addition, such a lineage is not purely coincidental, with Cage repeatedly articulating the influence Duchamp had on his own practice.[62] Like Duchamp's *Fountain*, works such as Cage's *4'33"* challenge conventional conceptions of art as an experience of aesthetic judgement (or taste) and instead declare art to be an experience of choice[63] - with *4'33"* using the attention the piece places on environmental sounds to illustrate the creative framing processes by which individuals distinguish music from sound. And, at the same time, Cage's work expands conventional definitions of what kinds of sound may be considered musical to include 'natural' sound and noise. As such, while Duchamp reacts against readings of visual art experiences, Cage specifically challenges (some of) the expectations and idiosyncrasies of Western concert music. This primarily occurs through two elements of Cage's practice that have already been introduced in this

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[60] Matthews, H., Moorehouse, A., (2021). Evaluating Socially Engaged Practices in Art: The Autonomy of Artists and Artworks in Community Collaborations. *Question Journal*, 6, 18-27. Endnote 1.
[61] The artist's own label for many pieces that incorporated the use of found objects.
[62] Nicholls, D. (Ed.). (2002). *The Cambridge Companion to John Cage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 28.
[63] As theorised by Thierry De Duve (De Duve, T., & Krauss, R. (1994). Echoes of the Readymade: Critique of Pure Modernism. *October*, 70, 61-97.) Duchamp and Cage each proclaim: 'this is art', and there are links to be drawn here with the fourth chapter on performativity and the notion of speech acts or performative utterances.

thesis - indeterminate processes, and verbal notations. However, here, their reactive nature and their contribution to Fluxus' development will be drawn out in greater detail.

3.2.3 Cagean Indeterminacy

As mentioned in section 1.3, *4'33"* is 'indeterminate with respect to [its] performance', as opposed to 'indeterminate with respect to its composition'. These distinctions were made by Cage himself, however taken together the two approaches make up the notion of a Cagean indeterminacy, both strands of which were utilised by Fluxus-associated artists throughout the 1960s. Cage viewed his indeterminate methods as an alternative to (as well as a challenge towards) established performance practice, and his position will be summarised here in relation to two of its key elements.

3.2.4 The Liberatory Potential of Cagean Indeterminacy

Compositions such as Cage's *4'33"* are indeterminate with respect to their performance. In other words, the nature of these performances necessarily change from iteration to iteration, although the score does not. On many occasions, Cage drew attention to the emancipatory potential of these actions, and for the purposes of this chapter, these in turn can be split into two categories - the liberation of performers, and the liberation of sounds.

3.2.5 Liberating the Performer

As mentioned in section 1.4.1, Barrett uses an analysis of the performances of another of Cage's indeterminate works (one that is also indeterminate with respect to its performance) to illustrate that although Cage intended for these works to exist as a reaction and challenge to established performance practice, it was the composer's own actions that led to their failure in this regard.[64]

Specifically, Barrett introduces an analysis of Charlotte Moorman's performances of Cage's indeterminate composition – *26'1.1499"*, in which Moorman plays her cello in the nude. Most likely due to the sexual nature of Moorman's interpretations, Cage renounced these performances, claiming that Moorman had 'murdered' his composition.

Subsequently, Barrett argues that Cage's reaction to these performances illustrates that although Cage intended for works like *4'33"* to liberate performers from the tyranny of a

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64 Barrett, G. D. (2016). *After sound: Toward a critical music*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA. 32.

composer and the authority of their score, these pieces fell short in their pursuit of any emancipatory potential of the aesthetic experience. Instead, early performances of Cagean indeterminacy ushered in another stifling performance practice to replace the one Cage had intended to dismiss. Furthermore, the authoritative nature of Cage's alternative practice was established and reinforced by the particularities and preferences of Cage himself, to the extent that it is arguable that Cage came to embody the tyrannical composer he had sought to exile.[65]

However, although it is demonstrable that the challenges Cage's indeterminate compositions posed to established performance practices (including the role of the performer and the authority of the composer) were unsuccessful, these themes were picked up in the work of Fluxus in the 1960s. Furthermore, it is arguable that the group achieved greater success than Cage through the subtle departures that they made from the composer's practice, and particularly his attitude towards openness and the control he refused to cede over interpretations of his work.

3.2.6 Liberating Sound

As well as his intent to liberate performers, Cage's compositions and writings are similarly punctuated by his intention to reject the compositional ideal of controlling sound - to instead 'let sounds be themselves rather than vehicles for man-made theories or expressions of human sentiments'.[66] Here, Cage is again reacting to, and providing an alternative to established practice in Western Classical music - in this case the romanticised image of an isolated composer grappling with various notes, systems, and configurations in order to impose some order upon the chaotic world of sounds, or to funnel and squeeze them into a representation of an emotional state.

Partly to enable a departure from this approach to composition, Cage developed his strand of indeterminacy in which works are indeterminate with respect to their composition, such as *Music For Changes.* This work, like many from Cage's oeuvre, makes use of chance operations derived from the Chinese Classical text the *I Ching*.[67] Through the use of dice, tables, and multiple outcomes, Cage uses the *I Ching* to compose a work that is supposedly

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[65] At least with regards to performances of Cagean indeterminacy that occurred within the purview of Cage, or those realised with his own peculiarities in mind.

[66] Cage, J. (1961). experimental music. *Silence: Lectures and writings*, 7, 12.

[67] Jensen, M. G. (2009). John Cage, Chance Operations, and the Chaos Game: Cage and the" I Ching".

free from his own intentionality.[68] In this respect, the works are indeterminate in respect to their composition, and they present one method that Cage utilises to allow sounds to 'just be sounds'.[69] Again, Cage's success in this regard can be questioned, however his desire to remove some of his own intentionality from his work is stimulating and provocative, especially when contrasted with conventional and established notions of composition. As such, the influence of these works that were indeterminate with regards to their composition can be traced into Fluxus performances from the 1960s: Cage's naturalisation of sound can be identified in George Brecht's *Drip Music*, a Fluxus score which directs attention to (any) source of water dripping into a vessel,[70] while Cage's incorporation of chance processes can be observed in the work of Fluxus founder George Maciunas, one of whose pieces - *In Memoriam to Adriano Olivetti*, utilises sections of randomly-selected, and randomly-numbered ticker-tape as a musical score.[71]

3.2.7 Alternative Notations

As mentioned previously, as well as Cage's indeterminate processes, his use of non-traditional (in a Western Classical sense) forms of musical notation can also be traced into the work of the Fluxus group. For example, *4'33"* is notated using written language, and Fluxus artists often championed similar approaches to scoring.[72] However, it is worth pointing out that Cage himself utilised a wide variety of approaches to alternative notations that incorporated graphic scoring, codes, and reformulations of traditional notations, as well as verbal elements.

For Cage, his development of these scoring systems can be read as an extension of his aim to let sounds be themselves, and to offer performers more agency in realisations of his work. In this sense, these alternative approaches to scoring were not explicitly devised in reaction to established forms of scoring, and it is perhaps more the case that Cage's musical

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[68] This is clearly a stretch, however Cage does manage to shift intentionality from the specifics of a musical performance towards the general character and underlying concepts of a piece.
[69] However, compositions such as *4'33"* also contributed to Cage's naturalisation of sounds, illustrating that this desire was not only pursued through compositions that were indeterminate with regards to their composition.
[70] Robinson, J. (2009). From Abstraction to Model: George Brecht's Events and the Conceptual Turn in art of the 1960s. *October*, *127*, 77.
[71] Lely, J., & Saunders, J. (2012). *Word events: Perspectives on verbal notation*. London: Continuum. 265-272.
[72] Bowen, D. (2014). Fluxus. 6.

ideas - themselves explicitly positioned against established forms of composition, were unsuited to being articulated using conventional Western staff notation.

3.2.8 Summarising the Pre-Fluxus Landscape

The previous sections provide a brief characterisation of the state of play in the years preceding the formation of Fluxus, primarily through an introduction to the reactive elements present in the practice of two of the era's most renowned figures and their most influential contributions.[73] The next section will then follow these threads into an examination of the critical, transgressive, and iconoclastic elements of much Fluxus-associated output. This discussion will introduce a number of examples of Fluxus work, before my own pieces, many of which share a similar character, are then introduced and evaluated.

3.3 Fluxus

Although the group's influences are easy to recognise, knowing how to trace the beginnings of Fluxus is a difficult decision to take, and Dore Brown identifies a glut of conflicting accounts given by various Fluxus artists: for George Macuinas, the 'self-appointed "chairman"' of the group, the collective sprung out of a series of new music concerts that Macuinas organised across Europe in 1962; however, Emmet Williams claims Fluxus began with a publication of new music proposed by La Monte Young; Dick Higgins argues Fluxus arose naturally four years previously; while for Ken Friedman, Fluxus is best conceptualised as an ongoing 'laboratory of ideas and social practice' rather than a single event. To this end, Brown concludes that the failure of Fluxus to define itself can be read as its defining feature.[74] However, Fluxus' roots within experimental music are clear to see - the group took its name from a magazine that 'featured the work of artists and musicians centred around avant-garde composer John Cage',[75] and the new music concert tours that Macuinas organised were clearly important in the development of the group, even if their status as the founding moment of Fluxus is debatable.

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[73] This is of course a reductive exercise, and glosses over many key texts that preceded Fluxus, including Roland Barthes' *The Death of the Author* and Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle*, to name but two.
[74] Bowen, D. (2014). Fluxus. 1.
[75]The Tate Gallery. *Fluxus.* https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/f/fluxus.

If its origins are hazy, so too was its membership at any one time, with Fluxus consisting of a variety of 'artists, architects, composers, and designers' that made up a 'loose, international community' utilising a plethora of different mediums, aims, and methods, rather than existing as a geographically-concentrated movement focusing on a single area of artistic practice.[76] George Brecht perhaps sums it up best, while also hinting at Fluxus' contrarian character, by stating that

> In Fluxus there has never been any attempt to agree on aims or methods; individuals with something unnameable in common have simply naturally coalesced to publish and perform their work. Perhaps this common thing is a feeling that the bounds of art are much wider than they have conventionally seemed, or that art and certain long established bounds are no longer useful.[77]

Furthermore, to compound this looseness, many 'members' of the collective positioned themselves closer or further away from the movement at various points over the course of their career, often in response to internal conflicts that arose during the movement's existence.[78] For this reason, this thesis will generally utilise the term 'Fluxus-associated artists' to refer to the membership of Fluxus in lieu of any strict subscriptions, although occasionally the abbreviated 'Fluxus artist' (and similar) appears. In any case, these Fluxus-associated artists present a list of key figures in 20th century art and music, including George Maciunas, Nam June Paik, Yoko Ono, Allan Kaprow, George Brecht, Joseph Beuys, Alison Knowles, and Carolee Schneemann, although even the latter's inclusion in this list is not without controversy.[79]

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[76] Friedman, K. (Ed.). (1998). *The Fluxus Reader*. Chichester: Academy Editions. 61.

[77] The Art Story. *Fluxus*. https://www.theartstory.org/movement/fluxus/.

[78] Such as in the case of La Monte Young - a figure who, despite being credited by some as founding the collective, was in fact only briefly associated with the movement in its early stages, and later distanced himself from these associations entirely. Duckworth, W., & Fleming, R. (Eds.). (1996). *Sound and Light: La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela*. Lewisburg, Pennsylvania: Bucknell University Press. 27.

[79] The Art Story. *Fluxus*. https://www.theartstory.org/movement/fluxus/. Also see, Kubitza, A. (2009). Flux-proof or "sometimes no one can read labels in the dark": Carolee Schneemann and the Fluxus paradox. *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory*, *19*(3), 391-409.

To summarise, if the origins, aims, methods, membership, and mediums of Fluxus are all respectively up for debate, it becomes difficult to trace a history, and it is perhaps best to stick with Brecht's tantalising argument that Fluxus was based around the 'feeling that the bounds of art are much wider than they have conventionally seemed, or that art and certain long established bounds are no longer useful,' particularly as this definition is the most pertinent to this chapter's theme of reaction and to my own portfolio of compositions that challenges similar norms. To this end, the next section introduces a selection of examples of Fluxus-associated artwork that represents these values, in order to then contextualise some of my own portfolio works that share a complementary character.

3.4 George Brecht - *Concertos*, *Symphonies*, and *Solos*

From 1962 to 1966, George Brecht scored a series of works that co-opted nomenclature from the composition of Classical music - giving these pieces labels such as Concerto, Symphony, and Solo, as well as Octets, Quartets, and Concerts. Many pieces from Brecht's *Water Yam* collections utilise these references to Classical forms and structures,[80] and their titles are respectively addressed to fairly conventional instruments or ensembles, such as saxophones, pianos, orchestras, violins, flutes, and collections of wind and string instruments. However, it is my argument that these works present a challenge to, a reaction against, and ultimately a departure from the established composition and performance practice of Classical works, rather than existing as a continuation of this tradition.

To illustrate this point, all of the scores for Brecht's *Concertos*, *Symphonies*, and *Solos* consist entirely of written verbal instructions rather than the conventional staff notation that may be expected from Classical music, and what's more, although many Fluxus-associated artists frequently prescribed specific pitches and durations using written language (eg. play an 'A' for as long as you can), Brecht's works make no mention of either. Instead, Brecht's scores present a succession of absurd, playful, and poetic instructions under these referents to the Classical tradition, that, when taken collectively, can be read as a dismissal of the tenets of Classical music and the values it represents. Furthermore, this conclusion is made all the more likely when considered against Brecht's explanation of the commonalities

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[80] Friedman, K. (1990). *The Fluxus performance workbook*. O. F. Smith, & L. Sawchyn (Eds.). Trondheim: El Djarida.

running through the Fluxus group - primarily a desire to illustrate that the 'bounds of art are much wider than they have conventionally seemed'.[81]

As an example, the score for *Saxophone Solo*[82] (1962) simply reads 'Trumpet', and the score *Solo for Wind Instrument*[83] (1962) consists only of 'putting it down'.[84] The *Concert for Orchestra*[85] (1962) offers the text - '(exchanging)', *Flute Solo*[86] (1962) consists of two bullet points - 'disassembling' and 'assembling', and *Symphony No.2* reads 'turning'. Finally, *String Quartet*[87] (1962) contains the single, congratulatory phrase - 'shaking hands'.[88]

Although when taken individually the tone of these works can read as playful and humorous, the total effect of these works portrays a different character - establishing as they do a relentless undermining and ridiculing of the established performance practice of Western concert music, at the same time as they drastically push against the boundaries of what kinds of material this artform can conceivably comprise. This latter effort is reinforced by other works that share a similar approach to nomenclature, yet eschew humour, satire, and playfulness for a poetic beauty. For example, the score for *Symphony No. 6* (1966) contains only the fragile instructions:

the music of dreams

dream music

Second version: dream.[89]

To be clear, the tendency to name works after Classical forms is not a trait that appears universally across Brecht's pieces from this period, nor even the ones that are published in

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[81] The Art Story. *Fluxus*. https://www.theartstory.org/movement/fluxus/
[82] Brecht, G. (1963). *Water Yam*.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] *The Fluxus Performance Workbook*, in which this piece appears (Friedman, K. (1990). *The Fluxus performance workbook*. O. F. Smith, & L. Sawchyn (Eds.). Trondheim: El Djarida. 28.),
is in some respects, a problematic source. The collection features many pieces labelled as 'Fluxversion' or 'Fluxvariation' (eg. *Symphony No. 3, Fluxversion 1*) that derive from George Macuinas' descriptions of how Fluxus would realise works by other artists in concerts. However, the collection does not make this clear, and this casts doubt over the origins and authorship of many of the scores included in the workbook. However, as *Symphony No.6* doesn't have one of these titles, it is likely that the piece is Brecht's own unedited work, and likely too that the score also appears in one of Brecht's *Water Yam* collections. However, I was unable to locate proof of this.

the *Water Yam* collections. 'Drip Music', previously mentioned in this chapter, appears alongside these scores, as does a series of pieces 'For a Drummer'. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that Brecht was comfortable titling his musical works, even those written for specific instrumentation, without referencing the Classical tradition in the manner that his *Concertos, Symphonies* and *Solos* do. This suggests that Brecht's titling was neither arbitrary, nor was it a uniform that he placed on all of his scored works from this period, but rather a considered series of pieces (even if their content may appear whimsical) with a specific goal in mind. I argue that Brecht invokes these Classical forms in order to react to, and challenge the established performance practice for Western art music, as well as what material this tradition may consist of, and these labels underscore the fact that Brecht's work exists as a departure from this tradition, rather than a miscellaneous addition to the canon of Classical music.

3.5 Similar Fluxus Scores

In reality, much Fluxus-associated oeuvre could be argued to manifest a departure from the tradition of Western concert music specifically, and this hypothesis may be reinforced by emphasising the links the movement shares with John Cage. To reiterate, his experimental music class in New York was attended by Brecht, Kaprow, Young, and other figures who later became associated with the Fluxus movement. Furthermore, a large number of Fluxus members primarily considered themselves composers. However, more specifically, there are a number of additional works by Fluxus members that make a similar Brechtian use of Classical nomenclature for the titles of their pieces, and these offer a more explicit articulation of a Fluxian desire to manifest a departure from the established practice of Western concert music. Furthermore, although the titles of these works may follow the same pattern as Brecht's series of *Concertos*, *Symphonies*, and *Solos*, their instructions prescribe pieces with a variety of different characters. These variations articulate some of the nuances of the Fluxus membership's position in relation to its challenge towards established practice, as well as glimpses into the group's provision of alternatives for future, or idealised, forms of music practice.

For example, in the first movement to Henning Christiansen's *Sonate for Piano (1)*,[90] two naked performers are instructed to 'Sit before the piano, absorbed in deepest meditation', before 'crawl[ing] around each of the four legs of the piano. Painstakingly.' - a composition that provides a metaphor for the significance of piano repertoire and the position the instrument holds within the Western Classical tradition. Eric Anderson's *Opus 22* (1961)[91] invites an audience to vote for a piece to hear, each of which ultimately consists of a metronome tempo 'played in such a way that the audience only can see the metronome, but not hear it'.[92] Toshi Ichiyanagi's *Music for Piano No.5, Fluxvariation*[93] instructs a performer to throw darts at the back of a piano with the sustain pedal depressed. Jackson Mac Low's *Piano Suite for David Tudor and John Cage* (1961)[94] asks performers to disassemble, reassemble, and tune a piano before then playing 'something'. *Vaseline Symphonique, 1921 Fluxversion*[95] consists of the idiosyncratic instructions 'Microphone, hands, vaseline' - presumably composed by George Macuinas as a reworking of Tristan Tzara's *Symphonique Vaseline* - a tone poem for multiple performers.[96] Ben Vautier's *Piano Concerto for Rachmaninov*[97] asks a pianist to 'run away and the whole orchestra chases after him so as to bring him back to the piano'.[98] And finally, Ken Friedman's *Variation for Food and Piano* (1982)[99] requests that a piano first 'be prepared with food' before offering the suggestion that '(The piano may be played.)'.

A whirlwind introduction to these works illustrates the weight behind Brecht's postulation that there is a common feeling across Fluxus that 'the bounds of art are much wider than they have conventionally seemed, or that art and certain long established bounds are no longer useful'.[100] Furthermore, the works' titles, and their references to the tradition of Western concert music give sway to the notion that Fluxus, itself operating on the fringes of experimental music and under the formidable shadow of John Cage, was

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[90] Christiansen, H. (1963). *Three Progressive Sonatas for Piano Op. 17: Sonate for piano (1); Sonate for piano (2); Sonate for piano (3).*
[91] Friedman, K. (1990). *The Fluxus performance workbook*. O. F. Smith, & L. Sawchyn (Eds.). Trondheim: El Djarida. 25.
[92] Andersen, E. (1961). *Opus 22*.
[93] Friedman, K. (1990). *The Fluxus performance workbook*. O. F. Smith, & L. Sawchyn (Eds.). Trondheim: El Djarida. 54.
[94] Ibid. 78.
[95] Ibid. 101.
[96] See footnote 95.
[97] Ibid. 106.
[98] Lyon Museum of Contemporary Art, (2010). *Ben Vautier Retrospective*. 8.
[99] Ibid. 43.
[100] The Art Story. *Fluxus*. https://www.theartstory.org/movement/fluxus/.

necessarily occupied with challenging the bounds of Western art music specifically, and that the group aimed to broaden the artform's scope of available musical materials; that the Fluxus-associated artists make this point using humour, absurdity, and playfulness, need not diminish the strength of their conviction, and it can be argued that this light-heartedness is simply yet another challenge, to the gravity historically bestowed upon Western concert music.

Nonetheless, it would be reductive to paint the picture that the Fluxus oeuvre only challenges conceptions of music. Over the course of the 1960s, Fluxus began to become increasingly associated with performance art and conceptualism - traditions predominantly located in the gallery arts. However, rather than only signalling the group's shift away from a focus on music, this branching out can also be read as an extension of their focus on music - one that argues for a greater and greater breadth of musical materials, to the point whereby music is perhaps unrecognisable as music by art institutions.[101] This thread will be picked up again in a discussion of the Fluxus legacy in section 3.10.1.

3.5.1 Fluxus: Conclusion

The last port of call with regards to Fluxus is to clarify its relevance to my own compositions. As stated, the argument has been put forward that much of the Fluxus-associated oeuvre can be read as an extension of Western Classical music, primarily through the large proportion of Fluxus-associated artists who self-identified as composers, the references many Fluxus-associated artists make to the Classical tradition in their work, and through the group's affinity with John Cage. Furthermore, when viewed within this context, the manner by which Fluxus advocated an extension of the tradition of Classical music can also be read as a challenge to it, and a reaction against its historical and contemporaneous practice. In particular, Fluxus works of the period were often playful, absurd, and light-hearted, and the character of these pieces can be placed in opposition to the typical seriousness of Classical music (such as that exhibited by the Serialist movement that occupied a prominent position in the 1950s). Additionally, many Fluxus works are particularly relevant due to the methods

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[101] Again, the looseness and variety of the Fluxus movement ultimately leads to any generalisations having the potential to appear ridiculous, or refutable. However, when this generalisation is held against the output of Fluxus-associated artists who primarily self-identified as composers, I believe this hypothesis nonetheless holds some weight.

by which they attack and critique established practice. In these respects, Fluxus are a useful precedent for my own compositional practice.

However, it would be remiss to suggest that Fluxus was the only movement that engaged these shifts in Western art music music - the musical minimalists, and composers such as Pauline Oliveros, can be argued to have had similar goals (and to illustrate this, it is worth pointing out the collaborations that Oliveros shared with Fluxus-associated artists such as Alison Knowles[102]). Therefore, where Fluxus specifically is most relevant to this thesis, and most useful as a precedent for my own compositions, is the decentred nature of the group's musical works and the tone these works took, with the art-group rigorously and determinedly questioning and expanding definitions of musical and artistic materials over the course of the 1960s in a provocative and playful manner.

For example, the pieces introduced from *The Fluxus Performance Workbook* over the course of this chapter illustrate how the Fluxus-associated artists used music as a context for a performance, rather than as a noun or a subject that made up a performance. Instead, music is used as a quality of attention to be given to a wide variety of actions, and this is reinforced through the use of titles that refer to Classical forms. To use one example, Albert M. Fine's *Concerto for Solo Piano and Performer,[103]* which asks a performer to remove a different item from themselves for each of the 88 keys found on a piano, invites an audience to witness this performance as if it were a Concerto, despite this performance's sonic output likely consisting of a series of unremarkable, modest, or intangible sounds.

At this point, one may be able to sense the affinity many Fluxus works share with Barrett's notion of a post-sonic music (introduced in section 1.4). For example, whereas Barrett argues that the activist art collection Ultra-red use Cage's *4'33"* as an 'immanent temporal container', it can be argued that Fine's *Concerto for Solo Piano and Performer* uses concerto form in the same manner. Furthermore, like Barrett's post-sonic framework for music (and the decentred musical examples that the author invokes over the course of *After Sound*), Brecht, and other Fluxus-associated artists, similarly choose to fill this container with musical materials that eschew an emphasis on sound in favour of a conceptualist interest in relationships and ideals, and theatrical elements. Fine's *Concerto* is a concerto about

[102]Seita, S. *Beethoven was a Lesbian.*
https://www.sophieseita.com/beethoven-was-a-lesbian.
[103] Friedman, K. (1990). *The Fluxus performance workbook*. O. F. Smith, & L. Sawchyn (Eds.).
Trondheim: El Djarida. 34.

concertos: music about music that articulates itself almost soundlessly, and this is a theme that resonates with many of the reactive elements of pieces from my composition portfolio.

3.6 *This Piece Is Not Its Name* (2020)

Fig. 1 Documentation of *This Piece Is Not Its Name* (2020)

This Piece Is Not Its Name - a piece that frames a cut-out of its own title, can be read as a response to one of Tony Conrad's text-scores from 1961. Conrad was a Fluxus-associated artist perhaps best known for his notorious and hallucinogenic experimental film *The Flicker* (1966), however the artist occasionally collaborated with La Monte Young, and was associated with Fluxus in its early days.[104]

    During this period, Conrad produced a text-score that consists of a single sentence, 'THIS PIECE IS ITS NAME.', that is handwritten twice - once as its title and once as its

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[104] Joseph, B. W. (2013). Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the arts after Cage. New York: Zone Books.

content.[105] The work's form is particularly Fluxian - like many of Conrad's scores from the period, it makes use of verbal notations to furnish an elusive, cyclic, and cryptic articulation of its own existence and the realisations it necessitates (as well as the performances it precludes). To this end, the work is typical of many of the pieces introduced in this chapter already, existing as it does as another intangible exploration into the boundaries and functions of a piece, a performance, and a score. And, particularly when viewed in relation to other Conrad scores from 1961, the work retains a playful sense of inquiry that is underscored by its hand-written instructions.

My own composition *This Piece Is Not Its Name* shares this tone, and explores similar paradoxes, albeit with subtle differences. For example, whereas *THIS PIECE IS ITS NAME* makes the case that its title provides the substance of the work, *This Piece Is Not Its Name* subverts this model and makes the case that the work's title is not its content, this despite the significant effect the title has on the physical substance of the work.[106] However, it could be argued that the content of my piece is the absence of its title. In any case, the work has a function beyond illustrating the inverse of Conrad's Fluxus score. Specifically, *This Piece Is Not Its Name* is instead a direct articulation, and subtle challenge, to Barrett's framework for a post-sonic music.[107]

One of the key features of Barrett's conceptualisation of a post-sonic music is the responsibility he places on context to determine the meaning of a piece. Barrett rejects the notion of *werktreue* - the Romantic ideal that musical works had a 'real meaning' that was to be found in the composer's intent, and articulated by the composer's score.[108] Instead, Barrett argues that the real meaning of a work lies in its performance. However, as identified by Oogoo Maia, Barrett's framework remains

> a few steps removed from the immediacy of experience itself [...]
> how [musical] events communicate with the immediate environment
> where they take place: with the individuals in the room, with the

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[105] Lely, J., & Saunders, J. (2012). *Word events: Perspectives on verbal notation*. London: Continuum. 161.

[106] To be clear - the composition is the framed acronym, and the photo provided in this commentary is only its documentation.

[107] See sections 1.4 - 1.41.

[108] Ball, J. S. (2014, October 9). Werktreue: or How We Handle Composer's Intent. *MUSC 930: Romantic and Modern Music*. https://blogs.brown.edu/musc-0930-s01/2014/10/09/werktreue-or-how-we-handle-composers-intent/.

sounds and smells that invade the performance space, with the time

of day, the season of the year, or the weather outside. In essence, all

the things that can't be generalised at all from performance to

performance. Yet, these elements also affect the experience of an

audience, and fundamentally, the meaning of a performance.[109]

Therefore, *This Piece Is Not Its Name*, while reinforcing Barrett's general argument that real musical meaning lies in the performance of a work rather than in its composition, also extends this reasoning and offers greater focus to the immediate and disparate nature of every *single* performance of a work. In other words, the physical context of the *This Piece Is Not Its Name* score provides an allegory for the impact that multiple (and immediate) contexts have in determining the meaning of a piece. Through these means, while *This Piece Is Not Its Name* may exist as a response to Conrad's score, its primary function is to serve as a reaction, and challenge, to Barrett's framework for a post-sonic music, and the lack of emphasis the author places on individual performances and tangible, immediate, and individual impacts.

Through these means, *This Piece Is Not Its Name* presents a number of reactive elements that recur throughout the composition portfolio that accompanies this thesis - as the work was primarily conceived in response to external stimuli. Additionally, the work invokes a Fluxian use of verbal notations, as well as decentred or expanded approaches to the medium of music, and the incorporation of playful paradoxes. Over the remaining sections of this chapter, after introducing additional examples of this kind of work from my portfolio, their efficacy will be evaluated in relation to the legacy of Fluxus - a historical model sharing similar aesthetic sensibilities that can be analysed in order to critique the potential value (and impact) of the reactive position my practice initially occupied.

3.7 *Piano Solo #1 (2020)*

3.7.1 Introduction

Piano Solo #1 is a multi-layered work conceived in response to a brief given to postgraduate composers during a Masters seminar conducted as part of Bath Spa University's Open Scores

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[109] Moorehouse, A., Matthews, H., & Maia, O. (2023). Post-sonic Perspectives on Socially Engaged Compositional Practices: Composing 'after sound' and beyond music. *Organised Sound*, *28*(1). 93.

Lab (OSL). OSL is a research group directed by Professor James Saunders that 'functions as an environment in which creative practitioners can experiment with new approaches to scoring [...] to develop new modes of music making'.[110] At one OSL session, an OSL brief simply invited composers to compose a piece on the theme or subject of 'harmony', with works to be presented at the next OSL session the following week. And, in this context, the first demonstration of *Piano Solo #1* consisted of three resources - a YouTube video, a commentary, and a set of coloured cards that were distributed to the OSL attendees.

3.7.2 Video

The YouTube video for *Piano Solo #1*,[111] which was projected and played twice consecutively at the OSL meeting, begins by showing a homemade model piano (complete with miniature musical score) that bursts into flames when its keyboard is depressed.[112] At this point, a filtered, panned, and distorted clip of The Ink Spots' 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire', is played, and the ending of this song accompanies the piano-burning - footage of which is duplicated either side of a black rectangle. The song then concludes as the negative edit fades out to white and the last flames from the burnt piano flicker away.

3.7.3 Commentary

The next element of *Piano Solo #1* is its commentary, which is reproduced in full in the Appendices of this thesis (Appendix 1). This commentary consists of 62 numbered justifications for various aspects of the piece - for example, the decisions made relating to the video, decisions regardings the commentary, and decisions that relate to its presentation in OSL. The justifications are detailed, playful, and informal, covering a myriad of choices made during the composition of the work. However, these justifications frequently contradict each other. For example, various forms of reasoning are provided to justify the burning of the model piano (numbered 8 - 14), to justify the song choice (16 - 24), and to justify the tone and length of the commentary (53 - 57).

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[110] Saunders, J. *open-scores Lab - about*. https://openscoreslab.james-saunders.com/about/
[111] Moorehouse, A. (2020, Feb 13). *Aaron Moorehouse - Piano Solo #1* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=P11fMWR2ek0.
[112] I made the piano predominantly out of wood, matches, and cardboard, however there were also a couple of lighters positioned under the keyboard and attached to levers that ensured they would ignite when the keyboard was pressed.

In addition, the commentary outlines a number of perspectives on harmony, piano-burning, and composition, as well as perspectives on reliability and disclosure in composition commentaries. These points make various leaps from sincerity to insincerity, and between absurdity, vulnerability, pomp, and pretension, as well as moving through a collection of tenses and grammatical styles. Point 59 reads: 'I've been reading about Paul DeMarinis lately and he built a lot of instruments and he agrees that "harmonies are just passing hints at an order that can only exist in the mind", which is a nice way of putting things'. Point 48 reads 'I wrote this commentary because I think music in academia should be more personable and transparent. But I will lie lots and lots during this commentary because I think harmony is a fabrication too'. Furthermore, a handful of bullet points reference other musical works, people,[113] and texts, such as point 52 which states

> I wrote this commentary because most of the time it feels like composition courses aren't about learning how to arrange material, they're about learning to justify why you have arranged material in the way you have, and there are ways of arranging material that mean you don't have to make as many justifications, but this is not how criticism should work and when criticism works in this way it is important to examine why it is working in this way and who these blind spots serve/exclude (*Unmarked/After Sound)*.

When taken in its entirety, the commentary to *Piano Solo #1* provides a cluttered and chaotic mess that is constantly shifting, relentlessly inconsistent, and frequently contradictory. However, it does contextualise the piece, even if this is achieved through presenting multiple readings of the work, rather than a single or definitive one. This multiplicity, alongside the acknowledgement of its fabricated elements, enables the commentary to exist as a reaction to more traditional forms of commentary, at the same time as the justifications contained within the commentary offer complementary criticisms of harmonic music, new music trends, and the disclosures that composers make. However, to be clear, even these criticisms are often exaggerated and reductive, while varying hugely in terms of their sincerity - the intention is for the commentary to provide a number of

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[113] Some well-known such as Annea Lockwood, others less so, such as 'Marcus' and 'Bella'.

provocative perspectives (which in turn provoke a reaction from the piece's audience) rather than a clear or consistent argument.

3.7.4 Cards

The reasoning for these jumbled provocations is linked to how this commentary was presented as part of the Open Scores Lab. At the start of my presentation, attendees were each handed a coloured card printed with a random selection of five numbered questions from 1-62 (an example of which is provided in Appendix 2). Then, after playing the YouTube video twice, I invited the attendees to call out numbers from their cards, in lieu of the traditional questioning that normally concludes the presentation or demonstration of a piece during a seminar. For each number that was called out, I read out its accompanying point from the commentary without disclosing what the question itself was. For example, a coloured card may have had the numbered question '1. Why does the piano have to burn?', however an attendee would only call out 'Number 1!', to which I would reply 'because I don't use prescribed pitches'. By requiring attendees to only call out the number of the question, rather than repeating the questions themselves, this fragments collective understanding and complicates how individuals are able to piece together any coherent commentary for the work. Additionally, by this process it becomes more difficult for the group to become aware of contradictions in the commentary, as although questions are often repeated across multiple cards (eg. points 16-24 all contain questions regarding the song choice of 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire'), by answering these without referring to this context it becomes incredibly challenging to guess the question that is being asked.

3.7.5 Harmony

Through these means, *Piano Solo #1* disrupts the rhythms and form of a composer seminar, and the structures that often frame and support discussions of a composer's work. This disruption is intended as a reaction against traditional forms of discourse, as well as being used as an analogous critique of out-dated perspectives on harmony. To elaborate, by limiting understanding in *Piano Solo #1* (through limiting the context available to an audience), *Piano Solo #1* represents an illustration of the contexts and cultural information that must be accessed in order to make sense of harmony. This perspective exists in opposition to the idea of harmony being taken for granted as something that exists

independent of these contexts, or as something universal and sacred. Here, it becomes evident that the piece engages with the theme of 'harmony' and reacts to some of its anachronistic interpretations. This was discussed in greater detail at the end of my presentation during the OSL meeting, when attendees requested to discuss the piece further in a traditional question-and-answer format.

3.7.6 Precedents

Piano Solo #1 is another piece that is indebted to the Fluxus oeuvre. Its title is a nod to the work of composers from the group such as George Brecht, who co-opted nomenclature from the Classical tradition in order to provide a critique of this tradition (see sections 3.4 and 3.5). Additionally, the piano-burning element of the work is synonymous with Annea Lockwood, a composer who shared close professional relationships with Fluxus artists such as Alison Knowles[114] and Hugh Davies,[115] and whose piano-burning pieces were made for the group.[116]

A number of texts are also referenced in the commentary to *Piano Solo #1*, including Peggy Phelan's *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*,[117] John Cage's *Silence*,[118] and Barrett's *After Sound.*[119] Paul DeMarinis, a sound and media artist, is also quoted,[120] as is Sol LeWitt's 'Statement on Wall Drawings',[121] and a collaboration between James McIlwrath and Phillipa Booth is also indicated.[122] Through this collection of references, *Piano Solo #1* can be read as a reaction to a variety of different stimuli, including a mixture of artistic works, as well as historical perspectives on music-making and contemporary forms of musical discourse.

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[114] Revell, I. (2022). Speculating on the 'Feminist Performance Score': Pauline Oliveros, Womens Work and Karen Barad. *Contemporary Music Review*, *41*(2-3), 281-294.
[115] Gray, L. *Annea Lockwood - Sound Streams.* http://www.edition-festival.com/annea-lockwood-sound-streams/.
[116] Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. *artist to artist// in conversation: annea lockwood + auclair.* https://hcmf.co.uk/programme/artist-to-artist-in-conversation-annea-lockwood-auclair/.
[117] Phelan, P. (2003). *Unmarked: The politics of performance*. Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge.
[118] Cage, J. (2012). *Silence: lectures and writings*. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.
[119] Barrett, G. D. (2016). *After sound: Toward a critical music*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
[120] DeMarinis, P. *Fireflies Alight on the Abacus of Al-Farabi*. https://www.adan.or.jp/%E8%AB%96%E8%80%8301_04e.
[121] This is an error in *Piano Solo #1*, and the text I intended to refer to was LeWitt's 'Sentences on Conceptual Art'. LeWitt, S. (1969). Sentences on Conceptual Art (1969). *Conceptual Art: a critical anthology* (2000). Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press. 106-08.
[122] McIlwrath, J. (2020, May 23). *this piece isn't about you* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=IY1RdPcl9_o.

3.7.7 Evaluation

However, despite these contrarian and reactive elements, in a similar manner to *This Piece Is Not Its Name* (3.6), *Piano Solo #1* formulates these responses into a novel experience - in this case one that is interactive, disruptive, critical, and disorientating. And, while the interactive elements of the work will be analysed in greater detail in the upcoming chapter on interaction, there is an argument to be made here that the work again combines a Fluxian attitude to music-making (and a Fluxian attitude to historical practice) with Barrett's conception of a post-sonic approach to composition and the emphasis the author places on the context of a musical performance in the generation and interpretation of meaning. However, whereas *This Piece Is Not Its Name* simply provides an illustration of this phenomenon, *Piano Solo #1* is more ambitious in its manipulation and exploration of its own context - that of a postgraduate composition seminar, and what is afforded or expected in this context. However, despite this novelty, the biggest criticism I would level at the work, and one that hopefully becomes more difficult to fix onto works that appear in the later chapters of this thesis, is that despite all the criticisms it contains, *Piano Solo #1* shies away from confidently providing an alternative approach to the historical, academic, and contemporary practices it is clearly dissatisfied with. This topic will be picked up again in the conclusion at the end of this chapter, when a discussion of the Fluxus legacy is accompanied by a reflection on the impact of my own compositions that appear in this chapter.

3.7.8 *(Please) Don't Feed the Trolls* (2020)

At this juncture, it is also worth briefly introducing a complementary piece - *(Please) Don't Feed the Trolls*, which similarly explored the context of a composition seminar (see Appendix 3). Although this piece doesn't form part of my composition portfolio, it is worth including in the Appendices as an illustration of another piece that explores, manipulates, and challenges the institutional contexts in which composers talk about their work, as this becomes an increasingly important element of later works from my portfolio.

3.8 *Symphony Number None (2020)*

3.8.1 Introduction

Although *Symphony Number None* may be presumed to be another invocation of the Fluxian co-opting of Classical music's nomenclature, in reality the piece is best read as an extension of typical symphonic composition, rather than as a challenge to this tradition, although some subversive elements remain. An introduction to this piece was first published in *Riffs|Open*[123] - the online section of a peer-reviewed interdisciplinary journal exploring 'experimental ways of thinking about pop music', although in practice the journal's remit is much more broad. This introduction is reprinted below as plain text, while a full copy of the formatted article is provided in the Appendices (Appendix 4), and an explanation for the article's idiosyncratic formatting style can be found in its postscript.

> Aaron Moorehouse is a British-Asian artist from Leeds. He studied composition with Roger Marsh and Andy Ingamells, and his first orchestral work (titled Symphony Number None) is a work for the private rehearsals of a symphony orchestra. Each of the score's instrumental parts is full of complex staff notation made up of precise rhythms and prescribed pitches, all marked with dynamics ranging from 'ppp' to 'ppppppp'. Meanwhile, although the piece is conducted, the conductor works from a separate sheet of text-based instructions, as a full score for the work does not exist. In this respect, the material sounds of the piece are similarly elusive, as all performers must wear foam ear defenders whenever material is either performed or rehearsed (though knowing for certain when one action or the other is happening is made deliberately ambiguous). The justification for this absence of sound is articulated with a handwritten-inscription which hangs over each of the scores - a quotation from La Monte Young arguing that 'it didn't seem to me at all necessary that anyone or anything should have to hear sounds and that it is enough that they exist for themselves'. Aaron explains that:

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[123] Moorehouse, A. (2020). 'Can You Not? Non-Performance in New Music'. *Riffs|Open*. https://riffsjournal.org/aaron-moorehouse-can-you-not-non-performance-in-new-music/.

'The piece is similar to a lot of my works, in that it tries to be lots of things in order to illustrate the subjectivity of complexity, the illusionary and exclusionary nature of harmony, and the meaninglessness of meaning. Commentaries to my pieces work in similar ways, and I often retrospectively attach a slew of associations to completed works in order to show that nothing means anything anyway. I do this to prove a point that new-music composition courses aren't about learning to arrange material, they're about learning to justify the arrangement of material, so I find it interesting to play with which compositional devices and aesthetics can be invoked in order to escape (or invite) the necessity for justification in academia. Similarly, if aesthetic consistency and self-awareness are the only barometers of success, then I use my work to explore where the frame for this consistency ends. Can constant inconstancy be successful? I'm just another clichéd postmodernist, really.

As such, Symphony Number None is alternately making the point that I think new orchestral works are needless, that humans are selfish, and that despite all this I still want to write an orchestral work because I am vain. It also asks questions about sustainability and material waste, gate-keeping, and the codification of noise, as well as the wider audiences of sound - as the quiet orchestral material is used to exaggerate the presence of pitches which fall outside the range of human perception. The piece also questions the assumptions of absolute music, as ultimately it strips away sound to reveal a musical experience which is introspective, affirmatory, and satisfying for the orchestral players. The piece similarly investigates concepts surrounding mediation, authorship and authenticity, Western art practices in general, and lemons, and Lemmings, and

maybe it will mean some different things tomorrow if I need it to, too.'[124]

Again, as can be seen from this excerpt, the work references Barrett's *After Sound* through its questioning of 'the assumptions of absolute music', while the La Monte Young quotation[125] is another nod towards the Fluxus group even if *Symphony Number None*'s title does not fulfil this function on this occasion.[126] Additionally, like the commentary to *Piano Solo #1*, the *Riffs* commentary to *Symphony Number None* is full of contradictions, arbitrary statements, and provocations; through both the composition and its commentary, established forms of practice (specifically, orchestral concert music) are attacked implicitly and explicitly.

3.8.2 Imaginative/Conceptual Works

However, the piece departs from *Piano Solo #1* in its mode of realisation - *Symphony Number None* exists entirely as an imaginative or conceptual work, ie. it has never been performed and I never intend to make any effort to perform it, or to even formally score its orchestral parts. Although this might initially seem counter-intuitive, there is a rich tradition of work that either requests, or is best suited to, an imagined realisation rather than a concrete one. Examples can be found in various Fluxus scores (see section 1.3) and across the work of composers including Kenneth Maue[127] and Janet Oates.[128] In addition, Jamie Allen has collated a huge collection of 'Imaginary Sound Works' that perhaps provides the most pertinent precedent for *Symphony Number None*'s imaginary state, and an anonymous score from Allen's collection[129] is introduced in my paper *'Can You Not?: Non-performance in New Music*[130] (see Appendix 4, page 5), in which *Symphony Number None* (2020) also

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[124] Moorehouse, A. (2020). "Can You Not?': Non-Performance in New Music'. *Riffs|Open*. https://riffsjournal.org/aaron-moorehouse-can-you-not-non-performance-in-new-music/. 2-3.

[125] Young, L. M. (1965). Lecture 1960. *The Tulane Drama Review,* 10(2), 73–83. https://doi.org/10.2307/1125232. 75.

[126] In actuality, the title is a nod to Richard Ayres' collection of NONcertos. Ayres, R., Blaauw, M., Kluttig, R., & Timmermans, W. (2010). *NONcertos and others*. NMC.

[127] Maue, K. (1979). *Water in the Lake: Real events for the imagination*. Scranton, Pa.: New York: Harper & Row.

[128] Oates, J. (ed). (2012). *Closet Music: Imagined Soundworlds*.

[129] Allen, J. *Imaginary Sound Works: descriptions of unrealised sound projects*. [online] http://imaginarysoundworks.com/.

[130] Moorehouse, A. (2020). "Can You Not?': Non-Performance in New Music'. *Riffs|Open*. https://riffsjournal.org/aaron-moorehouse-can-you-not-non-performance-in-new-music/.

appears.[131] The impact and implications of imaginary or unrealised works are perhaps too tangential for this chapter, however it is worth stating here that *Symphony Number None* exists in this form primarily due to resources that would be used (and ultimately wasted) in the pursuit of a performance of the piece, as well as in order to emphasise the piece's provocation that I believe many new symphonic works are unnecessary, even ones created in order to make this point.

3.9 *Archive: Socially-Engaged Art Practices in Contemporary Music* (Part 1) (2020), *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* (2020), and *The Music Box* (2021)

Finally, before this chapter approaches its conclusion, it is worth introducing three more pieces from my portfolio. Although these each primarily explore alternative themes that are discussed in turn over the following chapters, they each retain some links with the topic of reaction, and as such are briefly introduced here and analysed with respect to this theme in order to illustrate the variety of the works that began from this point of departure, despite these works being evaluated in greater detail later on in this thesis.

3.9.1 *Archive: Socially-Engaged Art Practices in Contemporary Music* (Part 1) (2020)

This piece exists as a ficto-critical radio documentary uploaded to YouTube,[132] one supposedly recorded while I was studying a Masters at the University of York, although in reality it was recorded at my home in Bath during the summer of 2020. The documentary explores various intersections of Classical or new music with homelessness, including: American convenience stores which play Classical music to deter people who are homeless from sleeping outside;[133] Gavin Bryars' 'Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet';[134] and Zidane Larson's piece from *'Can You Not?'*;[135] as well as YouTube interviews with young people who

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[131] In addition, the '*Can You Not?'* pieces 'composed' by Zidane Larson, Kia Clark, and Raja Maya all fulfil this definition of an imaginary work.

[132] Moorehouse, A. (2020, Jul 17). *Archive: Socially-Engaged Art Practices in New Music (Part 1)*. [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=IcPlwOSYDvI.

[133] The Now. (2018, May 4). *7-Eleven playing opera to keep loiterers and homeless away*. [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=-zTJKvp-Ie8. Burgess, D. (2018, July 11). *Proof! Homeless people hate Classical music*. [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=ictDEaFVl6E.

[134] Bryars, G. 1998. *The sinking of the Titanic and Jesus' blood never failed me yet* (sound recording). London: Virgin EG.

[135] See Appendix 4, pages 1-2.

are homeless,[136] and YouTube channels that instrumentalise stereotypes of people who are homeless as characters in prank videos.[137] The documentary exists as a reaction and attack against some of these attitudes that I considered problematic or dehumanising towards people who are homeless, although the documentary also offers a more nuanced and sympathetic critique of Bryars' work. Additionally, Zidane Larson's monologue (recorded by Andy Ingamells under the pseudonym of Steve Scruton)[138] offers the conclusion that the forms of critique that the documentary utilises, well-intentioned though they may be, risk discouraging action of any kind.

Through these means, *Archive* retains the same responsive character as *This Piece Is Not Its Name*, as well as an approach to referencing that shares similarities with *Piano Solo #1*, and a near identical manipulation of truth and sincerity when compared to that which can be found in *'Can You Not?'*. Furthermore, in a similar manner to *'Can You Not*?*', Archive* utilises these ficto-critical elements[139] (including multiple voices and fabrications) to subvert traditional forms of discourse in the hope of questioning these practices and exploring alternative approaches.

There is a rich precedent for work of this kind, most pertinently the musical histories provided by the composer Jennifer Walshe for her 'invented Irish avant-garde'.[140] Both *'Can You Not?'* and *Archive* share a similar affinity with Walshe's work - treading a line between inventing a chronology that may have been happening unobserved, as well as imagining practices that it would have been pleasing to have uncovered (and exploring the effects and questions produced by presenting these contemporary pieces in an artificial context). However, with regards to *Archive* specifically, the fabricated links the work shares with University Radio York are also somewhat pragmatic - although I wanted to present the piece as a product of student radio, Bath Spa University (where I was studying at the time of

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[136] Invisible People. (2020, May 13). *Homeless Youth Sleeping Rough in London after Mum Died.* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=24To8SF46jU.
[137] Special Head. (2014, September 29). *Never Underestimate the powers of the crazy old Homeless man Yelling in the Street.* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=7Yoj1iiqmgg.
[138] The name Steve Scruton was selected intentionally. In Ingamells' piece *BBC Radio Luck*, Andy masquerades as the composer Neil Luck during an interview given by the DJ Steve Scruton. And, although not integral to the meaning of *Archive*, Scruton's name-drop in the work is another nod towards the complex (and misleading) webs of names and identities that run through my work. Ingamells, A. *BBC Radio Luck*. [Webpage]. https://andyingamells.com/bbc-radio-luck/.
[139] Haas, G. (2017). *Fictocritical strategies: Subverting textual practices of meaning, other, and self-formation.* transcript Verlag.
[140] Casey, R. (2019). Aisteach: Jennifer Walshe, Heritage, and the Invention of the Irish Avant-Garde. *Transposition. Musique et Sciences Sociales*, (8).

Archive's composition) did not have these facilities, and various national lockdowns restricted my ability to collaborate with other institutions.

3.9.2 *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* (2020)

The following piece is perhaps the most substantial in my portfolio, and my own introductions to it have already been published in various academic journals. As such, the following account is reproduced from these sources.[141]

Over the course of 2020, as part of a survey-score titled *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*,[142] I attempted to contact every composer listed on the British Composer Index[143] of the *British Music Collection*.[144] Although the index names more than 2,000 composers, many are deceased and many entries consist solely of a list of a composer's published works. However, several hundred composers were more extensively profiled and their entries contained contact details or links to personal web pages with contact forms. To these composers, I sent a short message, which, after a general preamble, offered the single question 'What has your music done?'.

For the composers who responded, 'done' became the question's operative word, as well as its greatest point of contention. This may seem unsurprising, yet when I addressed the same question to a group of music therapists most began by clarifying what their music was and whether it could be (or ever had been) theirs. One might also imagine that other artists, working with or without sound, would begin by rejecting 'music' as an appropriate label for their work. Clearly, the *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* composers' preoccupation with 'done' was a product of their interpretation of the question, rather than of the question's structure, and this in turn validated my initial rationale for conducting the survey.

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[141] Moorehouse, A., Matthews, H., & Maia, O. (2023). Post-sonic Perspectives on Socially Engaged Compositional Practices: Composing 'after sound' and beyond music. *Organised Sound*, *28*(1), 93. And, Moorehouse, A. (2023). Where Are We Going? and What Have We Done?. *Tempo*, 77(305), 7-16. Additionally, Christopher Fox's own evaluation of the piece goes some way to reinforcing the claims I make of it. Fox, C. (2023). SOMETHING ELSE. *Tempo*, *77*(305), 3-4.

[142] Moorehouse, A. *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*. (2020).

[143] British Music Collection. *Composer Index*. [Webpage]. https://britishmusiccollection.org.uk/composer-list.

[144] The British Music Collection is an archive of scores and recordings accessible through a website and as a physical collection of over 60,000 scores and recordings held at Heritage Quay in the University of Huddersfield.

Over the previous months I had found myself becoming increasingly disillusioned with how composers talked about their own work. In the majority of the discussions that I read or participated in, both formal and informal, there was an overwhelming tendency for composers to focus either on their next work or, more occasionally, their newest work. While the site of current composition clearly provides fertile ground for learning and stimulation, I felt that other areas were being unduly ignored. A future-oriented perspective may be the most productive, but it is the least suitable for reflection, and tends to propel itself past that point. I found myself preferring to hear why people composed and what their compositions had done, although these kinds of conversations were significantly harder to find or initiate.

I recognised that my preferences for these kinds of discussions were personal and also part of the reason for my gravitation towards socially engaged art and sound practices in my own composing. Yet, counter-intuitively, I had also become similarly frustrated with how some theorisations dealt with questions of impact there. As Oogoo Maia points out, although each of the successive frameworks used to appraise socially or politically engaged art or music (from Bourriaud,[145] to Bishop,[146] to Barrett[147]) professes to be more critically contextualised, they remain 'a few steps removed from the immediacy of experience itself'.[148] While the potential meanings of a performance are well articulated, its impacts are glossed over: what did the performance do, and to whom?

While the responses I received will be introduced in the following chapters of this thesis, it is worth pausing here to emphasise the reactive elements of *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*. Firstly, the work itself was conceived as a reaction against, and challenge to, the opportunities I had had to listen to composers discuss their own work, and *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* was intended to encourage composers to take an alternative approach to discussing and evaluating their work. In this respect, the piece shares clear similarities with *Piano Solo #1*, and *(Please) Don't Feed the Trolls*, as it pushes against the boundaries of various forms of traditional compositional discourse. Secondly, *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* is reactive in an additional sense -

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[145] Bourriaud, N. (2020). *Relational aesthetics*. Les presses du réel.
[146] Bishop, C. (2005). The social turn: Collaboration and its discontents. *Artforum*, *44*(6), 178.
[147] Barrett, G. D. (2016). *After sound: Toward a critical music*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
[148] Moorehouse, A., Matthews, H., & Maia, O. (2023). Post-sonic Perspectives on Socially Engaged Compositional Practices: Composing 'after sound' and beyond music. *Organised Sound*, *28*(1), 93.

the work is labelled as a survey-score, and this nomenclature was chosen for two main reasons, the first of which provides further context for the work, and the second of which illustrates this phenomenon specifically. Firstly, as a composer of text-scores, an open-form survey on the subject of composition was a logical extension of my own creative practice and my interest in post-conceptual music; and secondly, the responses I received from the *British Music Collection*'s composers were in turn repurposed as prompts for a series of my own complementary compositions, sketches, and pieces of writing, which appear alongside these responses in full versions of the work. In other words, the composer's responses were in turn analysed and ultimately used to provoke further creative work.

3.9.3 *The Music Box* (2021)

This piece is similar to *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, in that a brief introduction to the work will be provided in this chapter in order to illustrate the links it shares with the theme of reaction, before the bulk of *The Music Box*'s analysis and evaluation is saved for a later chapter. The following excerpt is taken from *The Music Box*'s 'Documentation Pack'.

> *The Music Box* was an interactive performance-protest that took place from the 16th to the 20th of August at Bath Spa University's Newton Park campus besides the Commons building - the University's largest teaching facility.
>
> Throughout the duration of the performance, a wooden box (width - 79cm, height - 180cm, depth - 81cm) was placed on campus, and, over five days, five performers spent 115 hours performing from within this box.
> Performance diaries, provided as part of this Documentation Pack, detail the nature of these performances in greater detail.
>
> The performance-protest was devised by AM, as an exploration and illustration of their experiences with the university's Research and Ethics Committee; an artistic investigation designed to discover

first-hand where lines are drawn between various kinds of research within the university. Helpfully, while preparing for the performance-protest, the project became collaborative when additional PhD students were similarly provoked by subtle shifts in the university's attitudes towards artistic research, shifts that occurred over the summer of 2021.

Consequently, on July 30th, 2021, The Music Box Membership was formed by AM, DT, EJ, HB, and MS. Each member became primarily responsible for various aspects of the performance-protest, as well as a day of performing from inside the box. Additionally, approval from each of the members of The Music Box Membership is currently required in order for others to access the work's Documentation Pack.

This Documentation Pack comprehensively covers the chronology of *The Music Box* project, from its inception, to its realisation, and its reception. It documents the project.

Further distribution or dissemination of these materials, in any form (apart from in cases approved by The Music Box Membership), is strictly prohibited.[149]

As its label of a 'performance-protest' would suggest, *The Music Box* was almost entirely reactive - specifically, it was conceived as a critical response to the bureaucracy of institutional research ethics and the process of gaining ethical approval that I was subjected to over the course of my studies. It is this process and its implications that are attacked and critiqued through the work. At the time, my own research was subject to fairly rigorous scrutiny from university staff who were perhaps concerned with the links my research shared with wellbeing, psychosocial impacts, and music therapy. While this nervousness was understandable, I took issue with its wider implications (and *Where are we Going? and*

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[149] Moorehouse, A. *The Music Box*. (2021)

What have we Done? was conceived partly to illustrate that wellbeing and psychosocial impacts are the concern of every composer, and the crux of why they compose). Therefore, I devised *The Music Box* as a blunt demonstration of how music cannot be placed in a box - as the invisible performers nonetheless provide audible sound that the wooden structure can't completely obstruct.[150] Additionally, the image and sounds of the performers contained within the wooden box also references Barrett's conception of a post-sonic music - specifically the interpenetration of any performance site and the processes by which the physical and historical context of a musical act bleeds into a musical work at the same time as that work bleeds into the site of its performance.

3.10 Conclusion

The portfolio pieces (and the pieces which appear in the Appendices of this thesis) that have been introduced in this chapter hopefully provide a rich illustration of my own compositional activity that deals with the theme of reaction. The works introduced in this section either variously reformulate and expand upon the artistic precedents of Fluxus-associated artists (such as *This Piece Is Not Its Name* and *Piano Solo #1*), articulate a reaction or an attack against a mixture of contemporary and historical attitudes towards music-making (such as *Symphony Number None* and *Archive: Socially Engaged Practices in Contemporary Music (Part 1)*), or explore and criticise the structures and forms of institutional research (for example, *Piano Solo #1*, *Troll Piece*, *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* and *The Music Box*). However, the success of such reactive work has not yet been discussed in this chapter, and a brief analysis of Fluxus' legacy (an art group whose members' work offers a variety of precedents for my own compositional practice) can perhaps be used to hint towards the potential efficacy of working with this attitude.

3.10.1 The Fluxus Legacy

As referenced in section 3.3, Fluxus is difficult to define. As a loose collective of artists, architects, composers, and designers, who perhaps, as George Brecht argues, share only the desire to illustrate that the 'bounds of art are wider than they have conventionally

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[150] A phenomenon that also nods to the reach of the wellbeing effects and psychosocial impacts that necessarily accompany all music practices, impacts that I felt the university was policing inconsistently and illogically.

seemed',[151] it is arguable that the disparate nature of the collective may have contributed to its relative contemporaneous insignificance during the 1960s. As Ken Friedman states

> Fluxus emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s when the world ignored us. The world still ignored Fluxus in the 1970s and the 1980s. Things began to change in the 1990s, but there was a price.[152]

For Friedman, that price was ultimately an assimilation into the 'pantheon' of modern art, rather than Fluxus providing an antidote to this tradition, as was desired by Fluxus 'chairman' George Maciunas.[153] To illustrate contemporary art's acceptance and assimilation of Fluxus, in recent times, there have been numerous investigations into the group's legacy,[154] and many Fluxus works are exhibited worldwide.

However, as the above quote may suggest, although Fluxus' impact on contemporary art (and design) practices continues to gain traction, the group's impact on contemporary music-making can be argued to be less dramatic. Yet, it is an analysis of this impact in particular that is most relevant to a discussion of my own compositional practice - one which shares the (early) Fluxian desire to expand the remit of music specifically.

Clearly, the group are dwarfed in recognition in comparison to Cage, who has become the father figure of the experimental music tradition that Fluxus' musical works are often subsumed within. And, although Fluxian approaches to text-scoring cemented this approach within contemporary music-making in a way that perhaps even Cage's text-scores did not, it is arguable that Fluxian intermediality has come to be viewed more so as a passage into contemporary art practices rather than as an extension of contemporary music practices. Additionally, while many Fluxus works are performed extensively in concerts across the world, it would be fair to say these works are often treated as outliers or anomalies within this Classical tradition, rather than torchbearers that have ushered a mainstream intermediality into new music. While this is perhaps not a problem for Fluxus

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[151] The Art Story. *Fluxus*. https://www.theartstory.org/movement/fluxus/.
[152] Friedman, K. (2021). Fluxus Legacy. *Fluxus Perspectives,* (51).
[153] Ibid. Tofts, D. (2011). Fluxus Thirty-Eight Degrees South: An interview with Ken Friedman. *Postmodern Culture*, 21(3).
[154] Patrick, M., & Richter, D. (2021). Fluxus perspectives. *Fluxus Perspectives*, (51). Friedman, K., & Smith, O. F. (2006). The Dialectics of Legacy. *Visible Language*, 40(1). Lushetich, N. (2014). *Fluxus: The Practice of Non-Duality* (Vol. 41). Rodopi. 223-242. Holling, H. B. (2021). Unpacking the Score: Fluxus and the Material Legacy of Intermediality. *On Curating: Fluxus Special Issue*, 52, 64-81.

members (although it does neglect the group's specifically musical origins), who can be argued to have become preoccupied with challenging the boundaries of art, it is potentially a problem for my own compositions. My own works from this section often attack historical and contemporary music practices specifically, or historical and contemporary attitudes to music, and they use Barrett's post-sonic conception of music as a framework for doing so. Therefore, I began to sense that perhaps my own works' specificity in the challenges it directs towards music (rather than the general challenge Fluxus eventually presented to art more widely) may have been counterproductive. I began to think that if I was pursuing an expanded musical vocabulary - an intermediality that placed a significantly reduced importance on sound, it was not enough to only criticise and react against historical and contemporary music practices, as many of the portfolio pieces in this chapter do. For this reason, the following chapters begin to articulate the methods and processes by which my compositions became more interactive and cognisant of their impacts, and less likely to emulate any aspects of concert music, before ultimately becoming proactive and performative approaches to composition that provide rigorous (and hopefully convincing) alternatives to the practices I critique during this thesis. It is intended that this progression will articulate the context and methodology of a post-sonic and psychosocially engaged approach to open-score composition, as well as providing a demonstration of some of the benefits of this novel way of working.[155]

In addition, while the influence of Fluxus on my own practice is significant, it is worth recognising that Fluxus, and specifically the pieces in this chapter, are now around sixty years old. Many of them are iconic, and in some respects are more well-known today than they were in the 1960s, yet it is still potentially problematic that such a historical practice is used as such an important precedent for my own contemporary composition. However, I would argue that many composers are currently working in an explicitly post-Fluxus way, and that this is not an usual way of working. As one illustration, signposting the work of Andy Ingamells provides one articulation of this phenomenon.

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[155] However, as an intermediate stage, the score to *Symphony Number One* is provided in the appendix to this thesis. This is a work for large groups of school children that explicitly moves away from the contrarianism of *Symphony Number None*, albeit while redeploying a fairly conventional musical form and eschewing any post-sonic features. In addition, the work is not socially engaged by my own definition, and instead exists as a music education exercise used to introduce school children to group performance and composition. See Appendix 5.

A composer and improvisor based in Ireland, Ingamells titled his PhD portfolio of compositions as 'The Grandchildren of Experimental Music', and many of the pieces contained within share a clear and explicit affinity with the intermediality, playfulness, and critical perspective of Fluxus works, while the thesis explores the impact of early experimental music practices on contemporary composers. Suitably, Ingamells' work also illustrates some of the potential problems associated with redeploying this tone and aesthetic against the backdrop of contemporary culture specifically. To elaborate, whereas many Fluxus works were fairly radical in the 1960s, today, such an aesthetic, although it is not without value, does not always produce this effect. I studied with Ingamells for a number of years, and in and amongst our discussions the theme of radicalism recurred. In particular, Ingamells spoke about the reception of his compositional practice, with these reactions frequently oscillating between claims that his practice was either 'too radical', or 'not radical enough'. Ingamells' audience was often split between people for whom the novelty, iconoclasticism, and implications of a Fluxian aesthetic constituted a criticism of the work, and people who were perhaps familiar with this history, for whom Ingamells' work didn't go far enough in the challenges it presented to contemporary music and art. While the first group rejected the ideals and criticisms that Fluxus (and similar artistic approaches) presented, the second group were dissatisfied at how Ingamells' compositions didn't reach their expectations for how radical they wished his work to be. Subsequently, Ingamells reflected that he often felt caught between two audiences, neither of whom he could entirely satiate.

In this respect, Ingamells' position illustrates both the kind of significance that Fluxus holds for many contemporary composers and how this is instrumentalised in contemporary practice, while also articulating how elements of a Fluxian approach perhaps struggle to translate into contemporary culture. Over time, it is fair to say that Ingamells' recent work has made a significant number of departures from the Fluxian model and tone, and this is partly due to his recognition of the polarising position his previous works occupied. For me, I ultimately reached a similar conclusion with regards to my own practice, and the remaining chapters of this thesis illustrate how I made my own departures from Fluxus-inspired approaches. And, while the art group continued to stimulate my practice, my compositions slowly began to address the various incompatibilities and difficulties of holding onto a post-Fluxus position, and used these limitations to develop alternative ways of working.

4. Theme 2: Interaction

4.1 Introduction

While the previous chapter covered the theme of reaction in the work of Fluxus and my own portfolio of compositions, this second chapter will instead focus on the theme of interaction. To begin with, the chapter provides a brief introduction to interactive and participatory performances (as well as clarifying the distinction between these and a conventional performance), before spending some time on the subject of socially engaged art practices in particular - a tradition that often uses participatory models in the pursuit of social change. Here, Bishop and Bourriaud's thoughts on the subject will be drawn out in greater detail alongside a case study of the composer Brona Martin's *Sowing Seeds* (2018) that is analysed in relation to the 'Collaborative Stories Spiral' - a framework taken from the community arts. Finally, a number of my own compositions are again brought forward for inspection, and in this context, their (psycho)social, interactive, and participatory elements are analysed in light of the precedents provided in this chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a context for the departure my own practice makes from various approaches to socially engaged art practices, and to articulate some of the increasingly novel elements of my compositional activity.

4.2 Audience Participation and Interaction, and Participatory Music

Although interactivity in contemporary music has a tendency to be presented as a novelty, the tradition of interactive and participatory music is a lengthy one. Furthermore, when the history of music and performance is viewed in its entirety, the contemporary proliferation of music practices that aren't overtly interactive or participatory can be seen as a brief rupture from the majority of historical practice. For example, Christopher Small refers to the ancient practice of festivals and rituals across a variety of cultures, and their mass incorporation of participatory music, dance, theatre, and artistic elements, to illustrate that the recent phenomenon of an audience sitting quietly through a symphonic performance (or perusing paintings in a gallery in a similar manner) presents a significant rupture from most historical practice, and an odd one at that.[156] Small uses this argument to present the notion of

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[156] Small, C. (1987). *Music of the common tongue: Survival and celebration in Afro-American music.* London: Calder Publications Limited.

'musicking', utilising music as a verb rather than as a noun to promote the active engagement any musical act (even listening alone to a recorded symphonic performance) necessitates, and the author contrasts this with contemporary views on musical engagement.[157]

While my own position doesn't challenge that occupied by Small, and while I remain wary of the fallacy of the binary options of either passive or active spectatorship,[158] I believe that interactive and participatory music practices nonetheless retain a distinct character in comparison to how observers and audiences are mobilised in most contemporary art and art-music practices (and even in *Fountain* or *4'33"*). Therefore, this introduction will aim to distinguish between these heightened interactive and participatory gestures, and place them on a rising scale away from what is generally expected of an audience in a concert hall or similar art-music setting.

4.2.1 A Definition for a Conventional (Musical) Performance

In grading participatory and interactive gestures, and tracing their impact on my own music, a good starting point would be a definition of a conventional musical performance. The OED defines a performance as 'presenting a play, concert, or other form of entertainment, to an audience',[159] and this seems to correspond fairly accurately with how many Western musical performances manifest themselves.[160] This definition implies a distinction between an audience and the presenters of material, and I would suggest that the latter group may be given the generic label of performers.

In this definition of a conventional musical performance, I also suggest that audiences give attention, either intentionally or reflexively, to performers, while performers are aware of an audience's attention. A conventional audience may also be categorised as passive, or as being in the 'receiver state'. And, although the problematic impact of the

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[157] Small, C. (1998). *Musicking: The meanings of performing and listening*. Wesleyan University Press.
[158] As illustrated by Bishop. Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. New York: Verso Books. 37-44.
[159] Since the time of writing, the Oxford English Dictionary has become more difficult to access online, although it seems its definition may have dropped this reference to an audience. In any case, the Cambridge Dictionary's definition is similar.
Cambridge Dictionary. *PERFORMANCE*. [Webpage].
https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/performance.
[160] Although clearly 'entertainment' is unhelpful for our purposes, particularly as it could be taken to imply that all plays and concerts primarily strive to entertain, which suggests the definition has a certain kind of performance in mind.

passive/active spectatorship binary is addressed by Bishop in *Artificial Hells*[161] and in Jacques Rancière's *The Emancipated Spectator*,[162] here the term is only used to define the audience's role in a straw-man conventional performance, rather than as an indictment or endorsement of either form of spectatorship.

Next, conventional performances will be defined as consisting of at least one distinct audience member, and at least one distinct performer, with technical support staff such as lighting operatives, audio engineers etc, also falling under the banner of 'performers', even if their roles may not be considered conventionally musical or independently creative. Finally, I would suggest that a performance will also be defined by its own recognition as such by either performers, audience, or both.

To recapitulate then, this definition for a conventional musical performance is as follows: performers consciously presenting a performance (framed as such by either performers, audience, or both) to a passive audience conscious of the performer's actions. Next, the following sections of this chapter will primarily focus on performances that move away from this model, and identify how interactive, participatory, and socially engaged music and art practices differ from this archetypal performance.

4.2.2 Audience Participation and Interactive Performances

Our first exploration of audience participation or audience interaction presents a trope that, although unconventional in its similarity to our definition of a conventional Western art-music performance, has itself been used often enough that it appears as an anomaly of this performance practice, rather than existing comfortably alongside more provocatively participatory processes. 'Creative audience participation' is referenced in Thomas Turino's *Music as Social Life*: *The Politics of Participation*[163] as a means of distinguishing between intentionally participatory gestures and the audience reflexes which fall under the banner of environmental sound.[164] However, the term will be hereby referred to as 'audience

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[161] Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. New York: Verso Books.
[162] In which Rancière discusses the complex issue of the politics of spectatorship, who participates and who interacts. Rancière, J. (2007). *The emancipated spectator* (pp. 271-280). London: Verso Books.
[163] Turino, T. (2008). *Music as social life: The politics of participation*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press.
[164] Within a music context specifically, Stephanie Pitts' *Valuing Musical Participation* builds on from the work of Christopher Small and Tia DeNora to examine the variety of ways in which people engage with music, and widen the scope of what constitutes a valuable musical performance. Pitts, S. (2016).

participation' in order to prevent confusion in the comparisons between these audience participations and other participatory works which appear later in this chapter. For clarity then, audience participation moves beyond a passive audience, although an audience nevertheless continues to defer authority to performers and continues to distinguish themselves from these performers. For example, audience participation in musical performance is showcased in the United Kingdom by the audience joining in with the last verse of 'Jerusalem' at the *Last Night of The Proms,* by an audience who clap along to the beat in a piece of music, or by an audience at a rock concert who take over the singing at the invitation of a band's lead singer. All of these participatory gestures arguably exist as exaggerated illustrations of a positive emotional response to a work, rather than illustrating a creative or autonomous response that is intended to alter the nature or direction of a performance.

However, the term audience participation can be contrasted with 'interactive performances' - an example of which can be found in the Open Symphony initiative developed by engineers based at Queen Mary University.[165] In these interactive performances, given by an improvising ensemble of musicians, the incorporation of smartphone applications allow:

> audience members to send emotional directions using their
> mobile devices in order to "conduct" improvised performances.
> Emotion coordinates indicated by the audience...are aggregated
> and clustered to create a video projection. This is used by the
> musicians as guidance, and provides visual feedback to the
> audience.

Valuing musical participation. New York: Routledge. However, Turino's definition is employed here, in order to provide a more generalised point of departure from which to introduce the subject of participation in socially engaged practices.

[165] Fazekas, G., Barthet, M., & Sandler, M. B. (2014). Novel methods in facilitating audience and performer interaction using the mood conductor framework. In *Sound, Music, and Motion: 10th International Symposium, CMMR 2013, Marseille, France, October 15-18, 2013. Revised Selected Papers 10* (pp. 122-147). Springer International Publishing.

Audiences such as these are invited to interact with a performance, and are also able to influence material intentionally. In instances where this process occurs, regardless of how authored the situation in reality is, and the extent to which an audience is conscious of the direct impacts of their gestures, the result is an audience which nonetheless consciously leaves the receiver state.

Similarly, this then allows for situations in which audience members shape a work against their wishes, or as it happens more often, without their knowledge. These pieces are rarer, but tend to work by performers pre-determining which (normally reflexive or predictable) audience gestures will act as cues that impact the material presented during a performance. An illustration of this process would be a violin player who performs five seconds of a Paganini violin piece every time an audience member coughs. In this scenario, it would be expected that after some time the audience would become aware of their role in triggering musical material. My own piece, *(Please) Don't Feed the Trolls* (see Appendix 3) works in a similar manner, by precoding behaviours and gestures that would be expected in the context in which the work is performed, before interpreting them as cues to present sections of performance material.

There are, however, interactive performances which can become more abstract. Philip Corner's *Amplified Audience*[166] takes as its stimulus the noise-making of an audience, which is then amplified to varying levels by 'performers' who have placed hidden microphones around an empty auditorium. Although these performers are not operating in a conventionally-musical capacity, the dynamic that exists between participants clearly mimics that of our Paganini hypothetical, and once again it would be expected that after a period of time, the audience would become aware of the source of the sound material and its subsequent manipulation by the performers. Again, at this point it could be argued that the participation becomes conscious and interactive. Or, as Manuela Naveau would suggest, the audience move from 'unknowing' and a mixture of 'willing' and 'unwilling', to 'knowing' and a mixture of 'willing' and 'unwilling'.[167]

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[166] Lely, J., & Saunders, J. (2012). *Word events: Perspectives on verbal notation*. London: Continuum. 37.
[167] Naveau, M. (2017). *Crowd and art-Kunst und Partizipation im Internet* (Vol. 107). transcript Verlag. Diagram formatted by James Saunders.

	willing	unwilling
knowing	classical	instrumentaliation
unknowing	deception	appropriation

These interactions certainly provide the audience with a sense of authorship that alters the conventional dynamic between performers and audience, and allows the audience to at least feel as though they are shaping the materials or direction of a piece. However, I believe there are distinctions to be made between these pieces and much bolder participatory works. Namely, it is the case that these interactive performances require audience participation gestures which have already been coded, assumed, or predicted by performers beforehand, and there is a predetermined expectation on the behalf of these performers as to how to interpret these signals or material cues. Therefore, this constitutes situations in which performers and audience members are both fulfilling entirely different roles, even though they are both integral to the performance of material. For this reason, these examples still reinforce fairly consistent distinctions between performers and audience in respect to our conventional performance definition, whereas the same could not be said for the participatory works which appear in the next section of this exploration.

4.2.3 Participatory Works

In this section, participatory works will refer to pieces for group situations in which the conventional distinctions made between performers and audiences are disfigured in a way that outstrips the effects of audience participation or interactive performances. As Bishop notes in *Artificial Hells*, participatory pieces 'differ in striving to collapse the distinction between performer and audience',[168] while 'their emphasis is on collaboration and the collective dimension of social experience', and I believe this definition can not be applied appropriately to the example pieces which have fallen under the brackets of 'audience

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[168] This is also similar to Turino's definition for participatory performance - 'a special type of artistic practice in which there are no artist-audience distinctions, only participants and potential participants'. Turino, T. (2008). *Music as social life: The politics of participation*. University of Chicago Press. 28.

participation' and 'interactive performances' earlier on in this piece of writing, each of which retain two separate groups of actors who perform entirely different roles.

On the other hand, the kind of collaborative performer-audience relationships that Bishop describes can be found in section 4.3.2 - which analyses Brona Martin's work *Sowing Seeds*, as well as in some of Pauline Oliveros' *Deep Listening* activities.[169] During Oliveros' pieces, an audience (or group of listeners) all participate in working towards the same goal, often a meditative experience, though a lead performer is usually required to facilitate the structuring of a participatory situation. Although the necessity for a lead performer is perhaps problematic against our collaborative frame, it is worth noting that participatory performances do not require that all performers are undifferentiated, or that all invited participants must participate materially with the work. It is more specifically the case that all participants who choose to move beyond passive spectatorship work towards a collective goal, or perform the same action. Furthermore, in defence of the insignificance of the differentiated role of a lead performer, it is arguably the case that any contrived experience must be authored in some way (as articulated in Situationist International's *Preliminary Problems in Constructing a Situation*),[170] and this remains the case even when the written instructions for a musical score replace the verbal instructions provided by a lead performer or facilitator. In this way, it is often the case that a lead performer simply articulates the instructions of a score (whether this resource exists materially or not), and due to the perfunctory nature of this articulation, this can perhaps be overlooked as evidence of a significant distinction between performer roles; without an enabler, present or otherwise, many works would not be able to exist. Therefore, this suggests the role of a lead performer is perhaps a resource to a piece, as much as it is a facet of a performance (a conclusion reinforced by notions put forward in *'A Summary of the Characteristics of a Score'* by Lawrence Halprin).[171]

4.2.4 Conclusion

This brief introduction to interactive and participatory practices in music is important in

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[169] Oliveros, P. (2005). *Deep listening: A composer's sound practice*. Bloomington, Indiana: IUniverse.
[170] Debord, G., Dahou, M., Gallizio, G,. Wyckaert, M.,. "Preliminary problems in constructing a situation." *Trans. Ken Knabb. Internationale Situationniste* 1 (1958).
[171] Lely, J., & Saunders, J. (2012). *Word events: Perspectives on verbal notation*. London: Continuum. 200-206.

contextualising the field of socially engaged art practices - references to which are necessary in order to approach a conceptualisation of socially engaged music (or composition) practices. Therefore, the following section will move forward with participatory processes being defined by the traits that both Bishop and Turino identify - namely, works that strive to 'collapse the distinction between performer and audience', and this section will unpick some of the implications of this categorisation, as well as two well-known approaches to evaluating participation in socially engaged art practices offered by Bishop and Bourriaud.

4.3 Socially Engaged Art and Music Practices

To be clear, socially engaged art practices can contain either interactive and participatory elements, both, or none at all. In fact, the crux of Claire Bishop's argument for a reevaluation of the value of socially engaged art practices is that for too long pieces have been judged on the relations they contain and their democratic (or participatory) nature. These non-hierarchical approaches are often built primarily upon Bourriaud's notion of *relational aesthetics* and a socially engaged tradition that is informed by his writing. Instead, Bishop also gives weight to socially engaged practices that may not be participatory at all, such *El Escandalo de lo Real* - a piece by Susana Delahante that consists of a photo of the artist being impregnated with the semen of a recently deceased man.[172] Bishop argues that this piece is effective because of the strength with which it engages with reality - with material law and explorations of ethics, and that the effect of this engagement remains powerful despite the work's lack of a democratic model or the inclusion of a group of participants. In this way, Bishop's reading of socially and politically engaged practices, one that places value on the autonomy of art, stands in opposition to Bourriaud's - whose approach primarily measures its success through the relationships it fosters between participants, between participants and artists, and between participants and society.[173]

There is however, another strand of music that engages with social and political themes, and this is worth introducing here in order to tease out some of the implications of Bishop's position, and to explore where the boundaries for a socially or politically engaged music practice may lie. Harry Matthews identifies a contemporary music 'about' a social

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[172] Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. New York: Verso Books. 247. Although Bishop argues that the true documentation for the work exists in hospital records that are inaccessible even to the artist. (p. 356)
[173] Bourriaud, N. (2020). *Relational aesthetics*. Les presses du réel.

cause,[174] such as Steve Reich's *Different Trains* - a string quartet that references the transportation used to move Jewish people to concentration camps during World War II. While the work engages with political themes, it is debatable whether it is politically (or socially) engaged by Bishop's definition.[175] Although Bishop champions an autonomous art that need not rely upon participatory models or democratic ideals to illustrate its value, Bishop does champion real and direct engagement with social and political causes, and it can be argued that music, particularly instrumental music, struggles to engage with these themes without reference to other resources or texts. Therefore, although music such as Reich's *Different Trains* may draw attention to the Holocaust, and although the piece has the capacity to alter an audience's attitudes to the atrocity, it is questionable whether this engagement is direct enough or whether these outcomes are particularly likely.

In a similar vein, it is also questionable whether Reich's work is best placed to produce these transformative effects, and whether Western concert music is an efficient vehicle with which to alter conservative attitudes or to promote liberal ideology. As Uri Agnon states, a criticism that could be aimed at compositions such as Reich's is that the piece is effectively 'preaching to the choir'[176] - ie. the already-converted. There is a tendency for new music works that draw attention to a variety of social or political causes to be labelled as somewhat ineffective, as the forms and contexts they utilise necessitate that they are generally encountered by an audience who are already sympathetic to the attitudes being conveyed. In addition, often this political music simply consists of political texts accompanied by music, such as Reich's *Different Trains*. In situations such as these, the conclusion can be drawn that such compositions have the effect of making all concerned feel better about a social or political cause that has the potential to make people uncomfortable, by creating the illusion of action and engagement. Agnon recognises these limitations, while concluding that 'preaching to the choir' is a useful starting point for music that seeks to engage with politics so long as the 'preaching' is targeted, both in terms of the audiences it tries to engage with, as well as with regards to the context it is deployed in, or the means by

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[174] Private correspondence.

[175] In this thesis, politically and socially engaged practices are considered almost synonymous, with distinctions in nomenclature arguably referring to the level at which changes are desired.

[176] Agnon, U. (2021). On Political Audiences: An Argument in Favour of Preaching to the Choir. *Tempo*, 75(296), 57-70.

which it directs these good feelings towards concrete impacts.[177] Here, we can perhaps begin to see the distinction that Bishop outlines between socially engaged practices that may nonetheless champion an autonomous art, and works that are only *about* a social cause. For example, Bishop points out that *El Escandalo de lo Real*, while a highly individual exploration of Cuban ethics and law, is ethically-emotive and abrasive - making it much more likely to challenge an audience's preconceptions, rather than blithely reaffirming an existing worldview. Similarly, the work was presented as part of an alternative arts residency in which a variety of artists collectively explored the Cuban social and political landscape through their creative practice - illustrating that the context for the work reinforces its intended message and encourages any future audiences to appropriately recognise the themes with which it engages.

To summarise, taken together, Bishop and Bourriaud illustrate two approaches to the evaluation of socially engaged art and the participatory gestures this artform may include. Whereas Bishop champions artwork that engages directly with social causes, and enables the production of socially engaged individual and autonomous works, Bourriaud, and the tradition of socially engaged practices that have been informed by his writing, focuses on evaluating the experiences of individuals who participate in such work and the hierarchical nature and political implications of this participation.[178]

Often, these two approaches are positioned against each other, however, such a separation between these two approaches is disadvantageous for two reasons. Firstly, art that denies its sociological implications, or neglects the relationships it is dependent upon, likely results in the same political inefficiencies that Bishop identifies. And secondly, collaborative art preoccupied with generating positive experiences for its participants is in many ways indistinguishable from social and community work, and in these cases, the purpose of a work's artistic designation needs further investigation, especially when this designation is often used to place these practices within the tradition of the gallery arts

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[177] For example, Agnon composed a series of protest songs challenging the British Museum to stop its BP-oil sponsorship. And, while the songs themselves were conventionally musical, their deployment over the course of a three day action (attended by 1500 participants) at the British Museum gives the compositions their political weight. Agnon, U. *BP Must Fall - Preference Action in the British Museum* [Webpage]. https://www.uriagnon.com/bp-must-fall.

[178] Clearly, this is a reductive summary. For example, it is not the case that Bishop only values autonomous works rather than participatory models. It is more the case that Bishop is hesitant to use an evaluation of the relational aesthetics that socially engaged practices often champion, as the primary measure with which to determine an artwork's value.

specifically - usually by presenting documentation of these practices in a gallery context, or using similar forms from the gallery tradition. Therefore, the following section will put forward the notion that it is perhaps more appropriate for artists to use autonomous artforms to draw attention to these contradictions, as well as to their role in facilitating participatory work, and their evaluations of the work itself. This process will be illustrated through the implementation and adaptation of the 'Collaborative Stories Spiral' - a framework for working with communities in a non-hierarchical manner taken from the community arts that also makes allowances for further dissemination of materials created using this model.

4.3.1 The 'Collaborative Stories Spiral' as a Socially Engaged Framework[179]

It is often implied that Bishop and Bourriaud have opposing views regarding the nature of exemplary social engagement in contemporary art practices. However, through an introduction to the Collaborative Stories Spiral and the work of composer Brona Martin, it can be argued that there is some compatibility between these two approaches.

The following framework from the community arts, termed the 'Collaborative Stories Spiral' (CSS), outlines the process followed by a research team made up of a mixture of academics and youth workers as they worked with communities to produce stories using exemplary models of participation. The framework focuses on the experiences of community members, and champions the promotion of shared engagements over the individual successes of an artwork or artworks - in this case, the stories and narratives that communities produced. However, there is the potential to add a fifth stage to this framework if it were to be adopted in the generation of socially engaged art practices, and this addition would also allow for the creation of autonomous artwork while adhering to the kinds of collaborative models that the CSS encourages.

The CSS framework, authored by scholar Paul Gilchrist et al., demonstrates the importance of pairing non-hierarchical community projects with academic research

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[179] Much of the following text originally appears in a paper I co-wrote with Harry Matthews that was published in *Question* journal. Matthews, H., Moorehouse, A., (2021). Evaluating Socially Engaged Practices in Art: The Autonomy of Artists and Artworks in Community Collaborations. *Question Journal*, 6, 18-27. Additionally, this material also appears in Matthews' doctoral thesis - 'Curiosity in Trespass: Developing a Social Approach to Composition' (currently unpublished).

methodologies, in order to generate self-told narratives authentically.[180] The study grouped two youth workers with three academics as a way of co-producing research from within various communities, and these collaborative projects were developed into a 'co-designed multi-method conceptual framework' for organising the generation of data about personal and community narratives to be used while working with these communities.[181] Specifically, the CSS framework seeks to instrumentalise non-hierarchical methods to create academic research that encourages narrative inquiry from communities, avoiding the need for further academic mediation.[182] However, this research is then disseminated in a traditional manner.

The CSS framework itself is made up of four stages:

1. **Situating Stories**

This first stage consists of conducting background research - understanding the historical context of a community and how these communities produce and experience stories. This stage of the CSS framework is conducted by the academic researcher(s) and does not involve the community.

2. **Generating Stories**

This second stage involves active participation from the community, with the primary goal of building narratives. This is completed at either an individual and/or community level, and at this stage researchers are concerned with the sensitive production of information that may connect multiple actors within a community.

3. **Mediating Stories**

This third stage consists of a process of retelling captured narratives to the collective community. Here, something akin to a peer-review process is conducted, whereby participants are encouraged to interpret and dispute narratives, and this has the potential to lead to multiple individual narrative strands.

4. **Remediating Stories**

Then, during the final stage, each strand is formulated into a collective narrative which is distributed for wider consumption. However, this formulation is intended to be an

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[180] Gilchrist, P., Holmes, C., Lee, A., Moore, N., & Ravenscroft, N. (2015). Co-designing non-hierarchical community arts research: The collaborative stories spiral. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *15*(4), 459-471.

[181] Ibid, 462. Narratives here refer to how participants understand and present their own identities and experiences.

[182] Ibid, 463.

ongoing process, one that encourages further communication, collaboration, and exchange.[183]

In summary, CSS generates research that is created and owned by those who participate in the project – it is not then reinterpreted by academics (although it is distributed by them) - and its conceptual four-stage structure could similarly be utilised by artists to provoke self-generated and socially engaged narratives (or artworks) through participatory practices. However, as Bishop's and Turino's definitions for participatory practices in art champion a collapse between the distinctions between performers (or participants) and artists, it can be argued that for the CSS framework to be applicable to the creation of participatory art practices specifically, it would be appropriate to add a fifth stage to this framework, as in the CSS framework considerable distance remains between researchers and the community they collaborate with. During this proposed fifth stage, artists could be encouraged to embed their own reflections - their own narratives and experience of the collaborative process - within the artwork itself, offering artists the opportunity to foreground autonomous work that evaluates and reflects upon the participatory and collaborative processes they initiated. These outputs could take the form of either art objects (sound, installation, film etc.) or publications (such as commentaries), but most importantly, these would contain the artist's own reflections on the collaboration. In doing so, this proposed fifth stage would position an evaluation of the collective and participatory experiences as a fundamental element of the experience for the artist as well as the community - an act that has the potential to bridge the gap between Bishop and Bourriaud's interpretations of valuable socially engaged practice. In other words, while the process put forward in the CSS framework promotes the value of non-hierarchical collaborative models, the framework also understandably glosses over the roles played by the facilitators of these collaborations, whose roles extend into disseminating the work, if not remediating it (although this is a difficult balance to strike). In any case, the framework may benefit from being adapted in order for it to be applied to socially engaged art practices in particular, and specifically for practices that aim to be participatory by Bishop's and Turino's definitions. Therefore, the addition of the proposed fifth stage to the CSS framework goes some way to negotiating this problem. By inviting artists to acknowledge and evaluate their own experience of participatory processes, this

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[183] Ibid, 464-5.

collapses at least one of the distinctions between artist and participants, both of whom would now fulfil the same task. Additionally, this fifth stage would also then provide an artist with the opportunity to produce autonomous work, and to embrace the benefits that Bishop argues such autonomous art can provide, as well as granting access to the avenues through which it can be disseminated as an artwork. The next section of this chapter will analyse a participatory socially engaged music practice in relation to this framework, including the proposed additional fifth stage, to demonstrate the affordances that this approach may offer.

4.3.2 *Sowing Seeds* (2018)

Brona Martin's *Sowing Seeds* exemplifies the ways in which to produce a platform for community-focused workshops while also providing the opportunity for both an artist and participants to create independently-produced, autonomous work in response to their reflections on the collaborative process, their own roles in this process, and their own identities. Specifically, in Martin's project, the artist and participants explore these narratives and reflections principally through electroacoustic musical means - sounds that are recorded and manipulated using digital audio workstations (DAW). As such, with Martin herself creating electroacoustic works during the project, an analysis of *Sowing Seeds* offers the opportunity to critique a collaborative and participatory process alongside individual artistic output, this without either relying upon participatory involvement as the sole predictor of its success, or dismissing these elements entirely.

Martin's project was commissioned by Seeds Studio and the Vonnegut Collective for MANTIS Festival in Manchester. The work is a two-part project with the first part consisting of a variety of collaborative workshops devised by Martin and delivered to members of local Manchester communities who were encouraged to explore their identity as Mancunians. Then, the second phase consisted of Martin reflecting on the communal experience through the creation of an electroacoustic artwork that makes use of the compiled narratives from those involved in the workshops. Below, the stages of Martin's project are discussed in relation to the CSS framework, with Martin's reflections on the experience aligning with the proposed additional fifth stage.

4.3.3 Situating Stories

During workshops, attended by 8-10 participants, the first stage of *Sowing Seeds* acted as a communication forum in which information was shared about growing up in Manchester. Themes such as industrialisation and the climate crisis emerged as significant changes affecting the participants' lives.[184] This initial stage of the project aligns closely to the first stage of the CSS framework, 'Situating Stories': where researchers grasp an understanding of how communities communicate when engaging with their historical and cultural identities. This approach is used by Martin in order to understand which aspects of living in Manchester are affecting the participants.

4.3.4 Generating Stories

The next stage of the workshops focused on outlining a process by which participants could author their own narratives surrounding industrialisation and climate change. In this instance, each participant was provided with sound-recording equipment and asked to capture audio from their environment that contributed to their personal experiences of change.[185] Martin mentions that participants were taught how to use this equipment during the workshop itself, and beyond the simple mechanics of operating this technology there was no prior knowledge needed to capture material.[186] In fact, this format of narrative-building is fairly neutral in comparison to other forms of story-making, with field recording providing a relative autonomy and novelty in comparison to the production of literary or visual narratives which are inescapably tied to the weightier and more recognisable traditions of literature and the visual arts. Martin found that participants focused on recording a wide variety of sounds (for example, some recording instruments, some using found objects to generate sounds, and others recording conversations), and that when collected and presented together these recordings generated a collective image of the community and the stories they had discussed together during the earlier phase of the workshop process.[187]

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[184] Ibid.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid.

4.3.5 Mediating Stories and Remediating Stories

The final stage of Martin's workshops included the collection of all the participants' recorded material, as well as her own, which was combined into a shared 'sound library'. These recordings were then distributed to the participants, who were taught the techniques by which they could create their own electroacoustic soundworks using the sounds they had collectively recorded. Through this process, the recordings became invaluable tools for storytelling. These recordings, whilst giving a necessary formal creative restraint to the nature of the participants' soundworks, were combined, manipulated (using studio techniques), and given a structure that nonetheless presented the unique narrative of each participant.[188] The soundworks were produced over a three-month period, with participants able to request technological support from staff and volunteers at Seed Studio throughout.[189]

Aligning directly with the third and fourth stages of the CSS framework, participants here began to mediate and remediate stories with the potential to generate their own narrative strands. Interestingly, rather than these stages becoming a process of live dialogue between participants, what emerges in Martin's work is a private, creative experience. The combination of both a shared and a private reflective period allows all participants to pursue their own narrative strands, without interference from voices that may have otherwise been more dominant in group contexts. Furthermore, by giving participants the opportunity of continued engagement with the generated material, the process of remediating becomes a self-perpetuating process, a recognised step in stage four of the CSS framework.

4.3.6 Fifth Stage Proposition

Finally, during the three-month process where this remediation took place, Martin was herself making an electroacoustic work utilising the sound library of recordings. Referring to this chapter's advocacy for an additional fifth stage to the CSS framework – in which an artist provides their own creative reflections on the collaborative experience – it can be argued that although at this point Martin is entering a different reflection process to that of her participants due to the position she occupies as both artist and outsider, the task she is performing is identical. Therefore, by Bishop's and Turino's definitions, this exercise is

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[188] Ibid.

[189] Martin, B. 'Community Engagement and Composition Sowing Seeds Commission 2018'.
[Webpage]. https://www.bronamartin.org/seed-studiosvonnegut-collective-project.html.

necessarily participatory.

At this stage of *Sowing Seeds*, Martin creates a retelling of her own experience of the participatory process through the medium of an electroacoustic work, whilst highlighting the community's attitude towards industrialisation, climate change and social inequalities - a community to which Martin is an outsider. Her creative process also utilises the sound library as a creative restraint, with an understanding that this approach avoids a distinction between her output and the work of the participants.[190] This process, while not an ongoing intervention, and more akin to conventional artistic output, can be an important aspect of working with communities through collaborative projects as it provides a novel outlet by which such work can be disseminated. Notably, it provides an opportunity for Martin to present her work to an audience of outsiders, allowing space to critically reflect upon the art that is ultimately presented to those situated outside of the experience, and to disseminate the experiences, issues, and concerns that the Manchester community raised. Through these means, the proposed fifth stage of the CSS framework offers artists the opportunity to expand the audience that their work reaches, and if done selectively (see Agnon in 4.3) this dissemination can increase a work's impact.

To reiterate, at the core of Bourriaud's relational aesthetics, the role of the participant is foregrounded above that of any final art object, whereas the proposed additional fifth stage of the CSS framework places greater focus on the evaluative role of the artist (in terms of both their own engagement with the participatory process as well as with the social cause itself), and their potential to disseminate their own work. Although it could be argued that our proposal for a fifth stage constitutes the same kind of academic (although in this case artistic) remediation that the CSS framework explicitly prohibits, the implications of this prohibition are problematic. Community collaboration facilitated by an outsider inevitably results in an authored experience, and it is better to recognise and direct this inevitability, as opposed to denying these implications entirely. This becomes especially pertinent with regards to a situation authored by an artist, and especially when socially engaged practices are often documented and presented by making use of the same techniques and contexts of the visual art traditions. As, if this kind of documentation is

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[190] Matthews, H. (2019, January 17). When Harry Met (Some) Composers: Part 1 – Brona Martin. *Soundings Blog.*
https://blog.soton.ac.uk/music/2019/01/17/when-harry-met-some-composers-part-1-brona-martin/.

utilised, it may be better to acknowledge its implications, rather than criticise these forms without providing an alternative.

4.3.7 Conclusion

This section illustrates some of the challenges posed during the conception and criticism of socially engaged art practices. Firstly, the provocations of Bishop and Nicholas Bourriaud were considered simultaneously. Taken together, the authors effectively intertwine various meanings of an artwork – on individual, collective, and aesthetic levels – and it is logical that thorough explorations of these areas will result in more meaningful art. However, addressing the authors' positions as separate and irreconcilable results in a considerable rift, or distance between individual and collective models of socially engaged art. Therefore, this section has argued that artists should not shy away from recognising their roles in facilitating these practices, as well as their own experiences of these collaborations and the implications of the participatory models they initiate or participate in. And, by containing these reflections and challenges to various hierarchies within autonomous artworks, as well as by embracing their role as an outsider (and their potential to disseminate narratives and ideas), this offers artists the opportunity to document and distribute their work in a meaningful and sincere way.

With this in mind, the introduction of the CSS framework also serves to illustrate that artists working in social contexts could perhaps make greater use of research relevant to their practice, even if it is found outside of the literature surrounding the gallery arts or socially engaged practices specifically. Although artists often intentionally occupy novel perspectives from which to work with a community,[191]occasionally the intended novelty of this position is invoked in order to remain unaware of helpful material that navigates existing concerns. And, while recognising that research such as the CSS framework may initially be difficult to immediately reconcile with artistic practices, this section has illustrated how such frameworks may be adapted and put to use in an artistic context. Alongside the case study of Brona Martin's work specifically, a theoretical fifth stage was proposed for the CSS framework - one during which Martin evaluated and highlighted the uses of a community-generated sound library in order to foreground both her experience and that of

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[191] And this position is often used to make a distinction between socially engaged practices and social work, or community art.

the community.

To conclude, this section reconciles the primary criticisms that Bishop and Bourriaud theoretically address to socially engaged art practices. Where Bishop claims that the nature of relational processes in socially engaged art should not be used to measure a work's value, this does not mean that these relational elements of a work, and their implications, should be left unexplored. And similarly, although Bourriaud places an exaggerated weight on the nature of these relational processes in determining the value of socially engaged art, it is argued that artists may benefit from acknowledging the role that documentation and presentation invariably play in the dissemination of these participatory works, and that autonomous work may be an effective vehicle with which to evaluate, praise, or critique these participatory processes and the experiences, identities, and concerns of both participants and artists alike.

4.4 *This is a story about me and Zayn Malik* (2020)

At this stage, as in the previous chapter, my own works will be introduced and analysed, with particular attention paid this time to the nature of the interactive and participatory processes they utilise and the form any social engagement takes.

In light of this focus, and with regards to the context that this chapter has so far provided for these processes, this first piece - *This is a story about me and Zayn Malik*, arguably presents a work that is *only* about a social cause - a work that fails to manoeuvre or activate the piece's audience. Partly for this reason, the work is not included in my composition portfolio, and the script for the work instead appears in the Appendices of this thesis alongside a YouTube link to its recording (Appendix 6).

This is a story about me and Zayn Malik is a work that was produced for presentation during one of the sessions of an informal and interdisciplinary online reading group formed during the first lockdown of 2020. The group was occupied with exploring the notion of dramaturgy, and the first text the group explored was Caroline Levine's *Forms: Whole, rhythm, hierarchy, network*.[192] Subsequently, *This is a story about me and Zayn Malik* was intended as a response to Levine's work and the analytical processes that the author uses to explore forms, structures, and rhythms in literature, politics, and everyday life.

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[192] Levine, C. (2015). *Forms: Whole, rhythm, hierarchy, network*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

The piece takes the form of an extended monologue that presents a semi-fictional story about the school relationship I shared with Zayn Malik - once a member of the popular boy band One Direction. While most of the biographical details that are presented with respect to both my own life and Zayn's are true, the connection we share is false, and I've never met Zayn.[193] The story itself explores a variety of racial and social elements at their intersections with various forms, structures, and authorities. These include the Bradford riots, the stratification of the school playground, and the relationship between celebrities and the public. In many respects, the story co-opts elements from a stand-up routine from the comedian Stewart Lee, in which Lee tells a story about going to school with Richard Hammond.[194] However, my own work uses this narrative form to explore themes of identity and race in my own up-bringing.

While I believe *This is a story about me and Zayn Malik* to be interesting, and while the responses it received from the dramaturgy reading group were positive, the work illustrates an entirely different approach to socially engaged composition in comparison to the pieces that are included in my submitted portfolio. Specifically, *This is a story about me and Zayn Malik* is a piece *about* social phenomena, rather than a form of practice that engages with these social contexts in any meaningful manner. In fact, the sum effect of the work is arguably to give the illusion of my proximity to a celebrity, and while uncovering (or falling for) this falsehood can be entertaining, there is little substance behind this deceit, and a general description of the cultural landscape of West Yorkshire could have been provided without this fabrication. However, to again refer back to Agnon's paper on 'preaching to the choir', it is not a limitation of *This is a story about me and Zayn Malik* that the work exists as a narrative about race and identity, it is more the case that the piece's failure to activate, expand, or galvanise the audience it engages which would represent its failure from a socially engaged perspective, if this was the piece's intention.

4.5 *Piano Solo #1* (2020)

Next, it is worth returning to *Piano Solo #1* - the tripartite exploration of harmony and discourse first introduced in section 3.7. Rather than existing as a socially engaged work proper, *Piano Solo #1* instead articulates perspectives on harmony and the forms and

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[193] Although it's feasible that we could have.
[194] And Lee's anecdote is also largely fictional. Lee, S. (2012). *Stewart Lee! The 'If You Prefer a Milder Comedian Please Ask For One' EP*. London: Faber & Faber.

structures that composers use to discuss their own work. Such perspectives are necessarily political, however these implications are not the focus of the work, and when another composer in attendance at the same Open Scores Lab questioned the political nature of *Piano Solo #1*, I chose to downplay these associations. Instead, *Piano Solo #1* tries to limit its scope to that of attitudes towards composition, rather than the social and political implications that can be drawn out from these attitudes.

Therefore, rather than providing the first example of a socially engaged work from my portfolio, *Piano Solo #1* is brought up in this chapter to explore the interactivity that the work provokes. To recapitulate, OSL attendees were handed coloured cards and invited to call out numbered questions in lieu of a traditional question-and-answer section at the end of my presentation. And as such, it is clear that *Piano Solo #1* is an interactive work, rather than a participatory one, for two key reasons. Firstly, this interactivity does nothing to collapse the distinction between performer and audience that both Bishop and Turino suggest is key for a participatory artwork, as although the piece disrupts the usual role and experience of an audience in a composition seminar, it still relies on an audience occupying this position in order for it to be effective. Secondly, the contributions of the audience (the calling out of numbers that relate to points from *Piano Solo #1*'s commentary) were already heavily coded by me in advance, and the instructions that I give to the audience (to call out the numbers on the card) offer only small variations in the content of the piece. In this situation, a cooperative audience does not have the ability to substantially alter either the nature of the work or its direction. Therefore, this situation shares a number of similarities with the interactive performance created as part of the Open Symphony initiative - a work introduced in section 4.2.2.

However, that *Piano Solo #1* is not truly participatory is not a criticism of the work. In fact, to produce the confusion and disassociation that the piece seeks, it is necessary for audiences to follow my own instructions, as it would be impossible to recreate this effect if an audience were invited to construct their own process for reaching this disorientated state. Therefore, it is arguable that *Piano Solo #1*'s success is dependent on its rejection of a truly participatory aesthetic, and it is from this position that it is able to articulate various polemics on traditional approaches to harmony and discourse within new music contexts. However, to be clear, I would not consider this work to be socially engaged, and certainly not when compared to pieces that appear later in this thesis.

4.6 *The Experimental Composition Clinic* (2020, incomplete work)

On the other hand, whereas works like *Piano Solo #1* utilise processes that may have been used effectively to explore social issues if this had been the aim of the piece, *The Experimental Composition Clinic* directly engages with psychosocial impacts - the psychotherapeutic and social impacts described in section 1.11. However, as the *The Experimental Composition Clinic* was never fully completed, the piece appears in the Appendices to this thesis, rather than in the portfolio of submitted compositions. Yet, despite being incomplete, the work remains a useful resource in illustrating my development of a participatory and psychosocial approach to composition, and the collection lays a foundation for later practice.

The introduction to *The Experimental Composition Clinic* states:

> *The Experimental Composition Clinic* is a collection of experimental-music therapy exercises for the general public. Specifically, it is the case that these participatory pieces for private performance are primarily aimed towards positive wellbeing outcomes, rather than foregrounding artistic outcomes. As such, these works are informed by clinical interventions, primarily taken from within the fields of positive psychology and mindfulness-based psychotherapy. Through the application of this research, *The Experimental Composition Clinic* presents exercises which illustrate an early exploration towards *experimental*-music therapy exercises - musical therapy exercises built upon the post-conceptual foundations of relational aesthetics, sound art, media theory, and performance art, rather than taking root within the canons of the Western Classical tradition, popular music, or improvisation practices[195] (all of which illustrate the predominance of shared performance structures in Western music therapy[196]). [197]

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[195] Bruscia, K. E. (1989). *Defining music therapy*. New Braunfels, Texas: Barcelona Publishers. Edwards, J. (Ed.). (2016). *The Oxford handbook of music therapy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 610.
[196] Ibid. *x*.
[197] Moorehouse, A. (2020). *The Experimental Composition Clinic*. Unpublished.

As can be seen through the collection's introduction, as well as the references it makes, *The Experimental Composition Clinic* presents my first attempt to combine research from psychotherapeutic interventions (taken predominantly from positive psychology and mindfulness-informed psychotherapy practices) into a set of over a hundred post-sonic open-scores (here framed in opposition to more Classically-informed approaches to music therapy) to be realised in private by performers, with the hope of provoking beneficial changes to wellbeing.

Additionally, in order to increase the likelihood of these works' successes in this regard, potential performers of the scores are first asked to complete a survey of character strengths[198] - a resource used in positive psychology to uncover the (positive) personality traits that are most pronounced in any individual. The collection's open-scores are then labelled with these personality traits (see Appendix 7 for examples), and performers are invited to engage specifically with the scores that correspond with their own character strengths, with the reasoning being that these links would make it more likely that the scores would have a positive impact on performers' wellbeing. In a similar manner, works are preceded by a description of who they are most suitable for - such as the level of musical education that is ideally required to realise a score, the interests with which works engage, or the number of participants a score can accommodate.

Through these means, *The Experimental Composition Clinic* can be considered to be truly participatory - the verbally-notated open-scores delegate much of the responsibility for realising the works to the performers, and many of the creative elements of each work are left undetermined. In addition, the work is explicitly psychosocially engaged, and the pieces in the collection each reference clinical applications of positive psychology[199] or mindfulness-based psychotherapy[200] as well as a performer's character strengths to seek out beneficial alterations to participants' wellbeing. In this respect, and coupled with the other indications that each score offers as to its appropriateness for any individual, each individual piece is highly targeted.

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[198] The VIA Character Strengths Survey. [Webpage]. https://www.viacharacter.org/account/register.
[199] Parks, A. C., & Schueller, S. (Eds.). (2014). *The Wiley Blackwell handbook of positive psychological interventions*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.
[200] Segal, Z., Williams, M., & Teasdale, J. (2018). *Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for depression*. Guildford: Guilford publications.

In the end, it was the precision of the collection that led to it being left incomplete. I realised that the specificity of the individual works meant that for the collection to offer a substantial number of compositions (say, 8-10) for any single individual, there would have to be hundreds upon hundreds of scores in total. And, while not inconceivable, this number felt daunting in terms of the amount of time this composition would take and the discipline that would be required to bring so many scores up to an acceptable level of quality. It would have been a huge project to commit to, and one that I realised I began at too early a stage of my research. Furthermore, the work was very much conceived in opposition to the primitive understanding I had of music therapy at the time, and, as I became more familiar with a wider selection of music therapy practices and literature, I became less comfortable working from this reactive position. Additionally, over the next few years of my study, and after I had spent more time working with SEN populations, I believed I had discovered approaches to a psychosocially engaged practice that felt like a better fit, and these will be detailed later on in this thesis (for example, in section 4.8). For now, this introduction to *The Experimental Composition Clinic* provides both an early iteration of a psychosocially engaged approach to post-sonic open-scores, as well as another illustration of the interactive and participatory models that my practice utilises.

4.7 *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* (2020)

Where are we Going? and What have we Done?, first introduced in section 3.9.2, is another composition that is built upon a participatory aesthetic. Specifically, the work utilises a 'survey-score' - a text-score that invokes and appropriates the form of an informal email request, in order to encourage a large number of composers to engage with the question 'What has your music done?'. The variety and creativity of responses that the survey-score provoked illustrates the agency that the respondents had in determining the nature, tone, and form of their replies, as well as the artistic value of these pieces of writing. However, since the work primarily deals with the question of impact, a more thorough investigation of these elements of the work are included in a later chapter.

4.8 *H-E-L-P (and Music)* (2023)

As mentioned previously, from 2020 onwards I began intensively working with SEN populations, and this had a significant effect on my compositional practice. *H-E-L-P (and*

Music) is a substantial collection of compositions that were created from within these SEN contexts, and the work has already been discussed at length in *Tempo*.[201] Therefore, much of the following introduction to this work is taken from this source. Additionally, *H-E-L-P (and Music)* explores the themes of impact and performativity in at least as great a detail as it explores the theme of interaction, so although these topics will be touched upon briefly in this introduction, the bulk of the analysis with regards to these later themes will instead appear during Chapters 3 and 4.

4.8.1 Introduction

While working on *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, and sifting through the composers' evaluations of the impacts of their work, I began directing and redirecting the survey-score's question towards my own compositional activity. In particular, I became concerned with the efficiency of the pieces I had recently been writing, and what my practice was doing. Specifically, although I had been composing pieces with the primary aim of providing participant-performers with the opportunity to strengthen their views of their relationship with themselves and with others, it became clear that in actuality the pieces were poorly executed. Many musical elements (and often my own vanity) obstructed my psychosocial intentions, even though I deemed these to be the most important impacts of my work. After this realisation the questions became: why am I writing concert music if these are my goals? Is a new-music audience my preferred audience? Why am I composing alone if my focus is on the experience of others? And latterly: what more can I do? After some consideration, I decided to work with SEN (special educational needs) children, in order to become directly involved with a population I wanted to help.

The following three years were immensely rewarding. I worked in many kinds of SEN schools, for various music charities and disabled children's services, with post-trauma populations, neurodivergent populations, children in care, children who had been abused, children with terminal illness and children with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

The result was a wealth of experiences that uncovered neurodiverse and atypical perspectives on music: how different childhood populations experienced music and what kinds of (new) music they seemed to experience in a significant way. To this end I utilised adapted forms of graphic scoring, text-scores, improvisation prompts, participations and

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[201] Moorehouse, A. (2023). Where Are We Going? and What Have We Done?. *Tempo*, *77*(305), 7-16.

sound-art exercises that either provided children with the foundation for more musical work, or helped to reinforce positive relationships with me, others, or themselves. In this context, a primary focus on the experiences of these children, rather than on the specifics or sustained incorporation of musical elements in my interactions, also afforded me the opportunity to not compose, and to instead help in whichever way I felt appropriate at any time, even recognising the limitations of music in some moments and providing something different altogether. Music-based interactions form the basis of my discussion in the remainder of this section, but they were substantially outweighed by interactions that contained no recognisably musical elements.

As I worked with these children, I became happier with the outcomes of my practice and found it easier to answer the *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* question (What has your music done?), but two new issues presented themselves: first, how might I document and discuss the psychosocial impacts of my work within the context of my doctoral research, without compromising institutional ethical guidelines; and, second, how could I articulate the insights I had gained as a composer of new music, while working alongside vulnerable and protected groups of children, without compromising relevant safeguarding practices?[202]

In discussion with my supervisors, we recognised that my identity as a composer–researcher prohibited some potential forms of documentation for my practice and its evaluation (particularly with regards to determining and generalising psychosocial outcomes), but we also recognised that this identity simultaneously afforded me some liberties. Specifically, as a composer, the most durable resource that I had available to me was the act of scoring. By putting information in the form of a score, I was able to document and infer conclusions and insights in ways that might have been deemed problematic, from an institutional research perspective, in other forms. For example, a quasi-scientific paper that presented my pieces as clinical research (eg. Piece A had this impact on Participant A) would likely have raised more concerns than artworks that articulate similar impacts while remaining within my area of expertise, and preserving a degree of openness in relation to

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[202] Clearly, in the case of my specific research with SEN children, there is a great deal of overlap between the intentions of institutional research guidelines and the intentions of child-safeguarding measures. However, in a general sense, there are considerations that make the prediction or the evaluation of a piece's psychosocial impacts problematic within the context of institutional research, and these are applied universally, not only while working with protected populations.

the uses of the knowledge generated and the interpretation of this knowledge. Subsequently, a collection of pieces named *H-E-L-P (and Music)*[203] forms the primary documentation for my practice, with each piece containing two elements: a narrative account of the work I did with each child and a handwritten text-score composed in response to these interactions.

Throughout the collection, the intention is for the relationship between these two elements of each piece to be symbiotic: the text-scores offer a more generalised or abstract deployment of the musical situations presented in the accompanying narrative. And, at the same time, the text-score's presentation alongside these narratives frames their instructions and invites a certain kind of consideration for how the work should be performed. Even in cases where the links between the narrative account and the text-score are more ambiguous, it is hoped that readings and performances of these scores will always be informed and accompanied by the written material that precedes it. To this end, the collection also makes clear that anyone performing an interpretation of any of these scores must have already familiarised themselves with its accompanying narrative, and so too must any audience that encounters one of these performances. In short, the pieces are always attached to the narratives of the children who brought the works into being, although in future performances the practicalities of how to implement this requirement are left undetermined. Moreover, because the pieces link back to my employment with protected childhood populations, these performances necessarily involve performance rather than participation. Indeed, these pieces articulate individual, neurodivergent and post-trauma experiences of music in which participation is not a possibility; they can only be performed. Temporally, the pieces are scored interpretations of my previous, and now inaccessible, work with these children; ontologically, the experiences of these children were similarly inaccessible to me, even while I was in their company.

4.8.2 Interaction and Participation in *H-E-L-P (and Music)*

Above, the participatory nature of the collection can be seen. In a similar manner to *The Experimental Composition Clinic*, *H-E-L-P (and Music)* produces a series of text-scores that are realised by individual performers or groups of performers, and in each case the performers must make a series of creative decisions (based on their interpretation of the

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[203]Moorehouse, A. *H-E-L-P (and Music)*, unpublished score (2023).

narrative accounts) that flesh out the substance of any realisation. Additionally, the work is explicitly socially engaged, as the pieces' narrative accounts each articulate an instance where I used music in educational or therapeutic contexts while working with SEN populations, and these accounts are intended to encourage realisations of the text-scores that produce similar psychosocial impacts.[204] This process then, when viewed in its totality, provides an illustration of a socially engaged practice that also affords the opportunity to produce autonomous art. From my own perspective, these take the form of the text-scores I produced myself, while for future performers of the work these would take the form of their performances that the collection's text-scores prescribe. The addition of these autonomous elements to my work with SEN populations exemplifies the proposed fifth stage addition to the CSS framework discussed in section 4.3.5, as these text-scores represent my own evaluations (specifically, a generalisation of the musical elements that had proved useful, significant, or interesting) of the interactions I had with SEN children during my various employments, and these interactions are remediated once more through further performance.

However, there is discussion to be had when deciding whether the interactions I had with SEN children were participatory, and whether these interactions (rather than the narratives they have been condensed into) form part of the artwork proper. For example, in each of these interactions, I was in a position of authority in comparison to the children (and young adults) I worked with, and while this could perhaps preclude the collapsing of distinctions between participants that both Bishop and Turino claim is required for an artwork (or art process) to be viewed as participatory, section 4.2.3 also makes the argument that an enabler, or lead performer, is required to initiate any participatory work, or else works simply wouldn't exist. Yet, this situation is made more complicated by the roles I was always fulfilling as a paid employee in each context, with various goals directed to me by the organisations and colleagues I was working with.[205] Additionally, while each of the narrative accounts in *H-E-L-P (and Music)* presents an adaptation, instrumentalisation, or the creation of musical resources in the pursuit of psychosocial or educational goals, the children I worked with were often unaware of these processes.[206] In this sense too, while the

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[204] And, by seeking these impacts, the scores aim to guide performers towards the benefits (and fulfilment) that can be afforded by pursuing a psychosocial approach to composition.

[205] And these overlaps will be discussed further in the chapter on impact.

[206] Although the institutions I worked for all had at least some understanding of my research.

pieces were created specifically for or with individual children, it could not be claimed that all of these processes were collaborative. For example, in 'PB', while the ear-piece could be viewed as a non-sequitur in relation to my role as a teaching assistant - consisting as it does of a piece of new music that is conventionally-experimental from a musical perspective[207] (albeit one deployed in an unconventional context), it can nonetheless be seen to reinforce the relationship-building and behaviour modelling that was very much part of the remit given to me by the school. And, while PB was able to alter the nature of the piece through his responses to various forms of ear-touching, he would not have recognised the work as a piece of music. Again, many of the implications of this friction (or lack of) between my role as a researcher and employee will be unpicked in Chapter 3, however they are worth raising here in order to uncover and problematise the participatory nature of these interactions,[208] as well as illustrating another instance of these themes running through many of the works in my portfolio.

4.8.3 Found Performance

Here, it is perhaps useful to briefly introduce the notion of 'found performance', in order to tie together several threads of this thesis. Stuart Wood, an independent scholar whose research appears again later in this thesis, introduces the term at the apex of an art tradition that first conceptualised and introduced found objects and then found sounds, with Wood also referencing the work of Duchamp and Cage.[209] Here, found performance is the label of Wood's methodology that frames both patients and professionals in care settings as performers, and also frames their interactions as found performances. Wood posits that this 'aesthetic sensitivity in the workplace of care can recalibrate the balance of power between resident and staff member; to perform differently the roles of viewer, viewed, listener, listened to, carer, and cared for'.[210] Specifically, Wood argues that such a perspective 'would ascribe a more active role to the traditional objects (materials and equipment) or

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[207] As one example, see Robin Hoffman's piece in *Notations 21*. Sauer, T. (2009). *Notations 21*. New York City, New York: Mark Batty Publisher. 107.

[208] In other words, whereas an approach to evaluating socially engaged practices informed by Bourriaud would perhaps criticise these works through these means, one informed by Bishop would be open to locating the value of the work in other areas.

[209] Wood, S. (2017). "Found performance": Towards a musical methodology for exploring the aesthetics of care. In *Healthcare*, *5*,(3). 59. And links can also be drawn with Fluxus scores that positioned the perception of everyday or commonplace phenomena as significant artistic experiences.

[210] Ibid. Section 8.

participants (patients and users) of healthcare. It would suggest that those objects and participants co-construct the meaning and provision of healthcare'.[211] Wood acknowledges that while such an approach is common within music therapy, it is less common within healthcare more generally. My own practice, specifically *H-E-L-P (and Music)* also deploys a similar model, and one that goes some way to unpicking the complexities of the relationships that the collection articulates and proposing a model for how meaning was co-created in the various interactions that the collection presents.

4.9 Pieces in the Appendices that utilise Interactive and Participatory Processes

Finally, it is worth categorising some of the interactive and participatory processes found in the works that appear in the Appendices to this thesis, in order to illustrate the breadth of these processes that I've explored in my creative practice, even if these pieces are not presented in the submitted portfolio of compositions.

Specifically, it is the case that *(Please) Don't Feed the Trolls* (Appendix 3) and Zidane Larson's piece from *'Can You Not?'* (Appendix 4) both exhibit another iteration of an interactive audience - in both cases, material is cued by pre-coded audience gestures. Whereas, *Symphony Number None*, and Raja Maya's bumblebee piece from *'Can You Not?'* (also both Appendix 4) present processes that are participatory, even if they haven't been realised materially.[212]

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter has served to explore the interactive and participatory processes present in my compositional practice, as well as the forms of social engagement that they often illustrate. This exploration has been primarily informed by writing on these subjects from Bishop and Bourriaud, while an attempt has also been made to reconcile the differences between these two author's approaches through the addition of a proposed fifth stage to the CSS framework. Again, the validity of such an addition has similarly been evidenced through an

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[211] Ibid. Section 7.
[212] To clarify, if *Symphony Number None* were to be performed conventionally (ie. materially), it would lose this participatory element. However, by prescribing that the work must only be performed in orchestral rehearsals, this prohibits the attendance of any audience - whose presence that would result in a conventional performance.

evaluation of my own work, specifically *H-E-L-P (and Music)* - a substantial collection of compositions that will be discussed at greater length later in this thesis.

However, while this chapter has explored the nature of the interactions that are enabled and embodied by my compositional practice, the chapter has generally failed to engage with the impacts of these working methods. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, I posit that the frameworks that Barrett, Bishop, and Bourriaud provide, frameworks which have been used to analyse the interactive and participatory elements of my creative practice, all remain 'a few steps removed from the immediacy of experience itself'.[213] Specifically, I believe that the authors' respective approaches to musical analysis, socially engaged practice, and participatory work all fail to address the 'real',[214] immediate, and tangible impacts that I pursue in my own practice. In other words, while the potential meanings of a performance, and the meanings of various forms of interaction and participation are well articulated, their impacts are glossed over: what did which performance do, and to whom? It is my belief that these questions are integral to the evaluation of socially engaged art, yet the documentation, interpretation and criticism of works from this tradition rarely engage with these topics. In fact, in both socially engaged sound practices and composition more widely, the issue of impact on individuals is left largely untouched - and this in turn provoked my work on *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*.

Therefore, in the next chapter on impact, these discussions will be addressed in greater detail, and specifically, attitudes and resources will be introduced from music therapy in order to analyse the impacts of my own compositional practice. Through these means, it will be argued that this approach to composition begins to embody one that is increasingly psychosocially engaged - a practice that is mindful of its psychosocial impacts in a manner that is distinct from many socially engaged or experimental-music works.

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[213] Moorehouse, A., Matthews, H., & Maia, O. (2023). Post-sonic Perspectives on Socially Engaged Compositional Practices: Composing 'after sound' and beyond music. *Organised Sound*, *28*(1), 93.
[214] See section 1.1.

5. Theme 3: Impact

5.1 Introduction

In the conclusion to the previous chapter, the point was made that socially engaged art practices often neglect an evaluation of impact, in favour of discussions of the meaning and value that lies in the participatory and autonomous processes that these artworks utilise. Therefore, in terms of my own practice, and specifically in the pursuit of a psychosocial and impact-focused approach to composition, I recognised that my own work needed to make a subtle departure from contemporaneous socially engaged practices, and to broaden the scope of the research that informed my work. In this chapter, this process will be covered in greater detail, with the links my practice shares with music therapy introduced as one of this chapter's key subjects, and this chapter documents how such research was integral in the development of a specifically *psychosocially* engaged approach to open-score composition.

However, in advance of those discussions, this chapter will first provide an overview of how impacts are discussed by composers in contemporary music, primarily through a more thorough analysis of my own composition *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* (first introduced in section 3.9.2) and the composer-responses it generated.

5.2 Composer Responses to *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*[215]

The collected composer-responses to *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* offer a variety of illustrations of how individual composers engage with the impacts of their compositional practice, and the impacts with which they choose to engage. Every iteration is instructive, resulting in a cumulative impression of the British Music Collection's living composers and evidencing how they construct their identities through the narratives they present. Taken collectively the responses also embody an animated and idiosyncratic dialogue surrounding measures of value in the arts, with many composers explicating one measure before disassociating themselves from it entirely and moving on elsewhere.

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[215] Again, the first parts of this discussion are taken from Moorehouse, A. (2023). Where Are We Going? and What Have We Done?. *Tempo*, *77*(305), 7-16.

A significant number of composers evaded or declined the survey's question - 'What has your music done?'. Some composers said they were too busy to reply; some perhaps simply forgot to respond; and some argued that considerations of impact are not a composer's responsibility. These responses fail to address the issue of 'how' composers engage with the impacts of their work, instead focusing on the 'if' and the 'when'. However, many more respondents provided detailed answers covering a broad range of impacts: environmental, political, financial, emotional, sexual, spiritual, psychological, and relational. Yet, despite the breadth of their initial explanations, respondents generally went on to reduce their articulation of these impacts, either explicitly or implicitly, to the impact of their creative practice on the wellbeing of themselves and others - the psychosocial impacts of what they do. For example, environmental impacts can be seen to terminate in feelings of guilt, as in Clay Gold's response below, or financial impacts in feelings of satisfaction, worth or dissatisfaction; emotional impacts either on themselves or others can be seen to result in feelings of connectedness, purpose and value, and even intellectual impacts were often overshadowed by feelings of gratification, fulfilment and pleasure.

Clay Gold's response to the question 'What has your music done?' is a good example of this process, and illustrates how various concerns eventually led them away from traditional composing entirely:

> There was a time when 'making' music was like riding a bike. Now it
> is like flying an aeroplane.
> I don't mean that making music is more complex now than it was,
> but its impact on the earth's resources is heavier. Once upon a time
> its impact was reduced to the production of a vehicle, a musical
> instrument, and anything beyond that, the operation of the vehicle
> was not detrimental to the environment (perhaps the replacement
> of worn parts – it's negotiable).
> These days however, many musical instruments require electricity
> and/or amplification. We live in a noisy world and we want to be
> heard. Composers, even those who work exclusively with acoustic
> instruments, write and produce with computers; they store music
> and promote their work online.

I read that a single Google search uses the equivalent resources of driving a car forwards and backwards 10 metres. Arguing about whether this is true or not, misses the point.

Once, following the sound of music would lead to a musician. Now, most likely it will lead to a loudspeaker.

The world is heavy with information, and music is ambiguous information. Music is wonderful, powerful magic. It is also unnecessary and ubiquitous.

I don't know what my music has done other than add weight to the world. I haven't made any new music for three years, except inside my head as I ride my bike.[216]

Where are we Going? and What have we Done? illustrates that composers were either intentionally pursuing practices that engender meaningful wellbeing effects, or that they perceived wellbeing effects in general (both positive and negative) to be the most prominent impacts of their composing, as is clear from Linda Lamon's response to the survey's question:

What my music has done is achieve what I set out for it to be – and that is to try and make a difference to humanity and for it to be used as a communication tool for the good.

For example, in 2015 it brought people together throughout the world when my song Rainbow of Light, performed by soprano Katerina Mina, was used as an official anthem for the UNESCO International Year of Light. The piece highlights the fact that we may not be alone in the universe and that the rainbow could contain the answer to the many unanswered questions humanity is still asking.

Previous to this, 'The New Woodland Song' was performed by community choirs to raise awareness of the urgent need for the afforestation of native woodlands and my library and festival work

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[216] Moorehouse, A. *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*. (2020). 4.

with children's workshops engaged youngsters from babies to ten, with real instruments and singing.

When Manchester applied to host the Olympic Games, my music was pivotal in raising hope for local people when my song Fly The Kite For The City was performed and broadcast.

My songs have also been used to raise funds for charitable causes such as the homeless, NHS Together and wildlife organisations.

Finally, what my music has done for me personally is to give me a sense of purpose, which in turn has created wellbeing and connectiveness [sic] to wider social groups, leading to collaborative opportunities with other musicians. It has also taught me that there is no age limit or barriers when using your gift to inspire others.[217]

In short, composers are often pursuing psychosocial impacts through their creative practice, and we know this intuitively, yet these topics are rarely broached within the institutional discourse on composition. For example, even published discussions of the *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* composers' own practices generally ignored, de-emphasised or dismissed the psychosocial impacts that these same composers offered as the crux of their compositional practice in this project.

An acknowledgement of these omissions is not, however, intended as a criticism of the *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* composers. Instead, these contradictions are highlighted in order to encourage an exploration of the kinds of discussions that composition's contexts can afford and enable, as well as what kinds of discussions they prohibit or discourage and, by extension, what kinds of knowledge, expertise and insight are buried if the impacts of composition are neglected in formal discourse.

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[217] Ibid. 18.

5.3 Composition as Research, and this Context's Impact on Impacts

The previous section highlights how although the *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* composers often position wellbeing impacts as a prominent aspect of their compositional practice, an acknowledgement of these impacts is often absent from published discussions of their work. I would argue that this likelihood is all the more common for composers who conduct their practice as research within institutional contexts.

There are a number of possible explanations for this reticence. Perhaps composers are hesitant to engage with the psychosocial impacts of their work because of a reluctance to burden their work with the activist associations of socially engaged art. Alternatively, for some composers, it may be advantageous to discuss and construct their practice in a way that relegates the importance of response and reception in favour of the pursuit of a pioneering (and disinterested or dispassionate) novelty or perfection, even if this construction may contradict a composer's primary intentions for their work. Or, for composers who conduct their practice within the context of a university, it is possible that they are discouraged by the prospect of gaining the institutional ethical approval that accompanies work that explicitly explores its psychosocial impacts, perhaps fearing that this process may curtail their creative freedoms or pigeonhole their work into areas they feel it doesn't belong.[218]

To this end, the remainder of this section will deal specifically with the claim that many composers may be hesitant to engage with these institutional structures that deal with research ethics. In these situations, neglecting psychosocial impacts in formal discussions of compositional practice may be a pragmatic choice for composers, especially if this decision is made in order to avoid the lengthy and bureaucratic process for gaining institutional ethical approval. This process became the focus of one of my own works - *The Music Box* (first introduced in section 3.9.3) and an evaluation of this work will be continued here as an illustration of why composers working within institutions may wish to refrain from drawing attention to the psychosocial elements of their creative practice.

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[218] And a number of PhD composers who I spoke to, whose work touched upon various para-musical impacts, often articulated this specific concern.

5.3.1 *The Music Box* - an Exploration of Institutional Research Ethics

Section 3.9.3 recounts how *The Music Box* was primarily conceived as a response to the bureaucracy of institutional research ethics and the process required to gain ethical approval for my own research projects and compositional practice. At the time, my own research was subject to fairly rigorous scrutiny from university staff who were perhaps concerned with the links my research shared with wellbeing, psychosocial impacts, and music therapy. And, while this nervousness was understandable, I took issue with its wider implications (and *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* was partly designed to illustrate that wellbeing and psychosocial impacts are the concern of every composer, and that these impacts generally provided the crux of why they compose). Therefore, I devised *The Music Box* as a blunt demonstration of how music can not be placed in a box - as the invisible performers nonetheless provide audible sound that the wooden structure can't completely obstruct.

The introduction to the project, taken from *The Music Box* 'Documentation Pack' (and reprinted in 3.9.3) and referencing the documentation materials it contains, makes the claim that 'Further distribution or dissemination of these materials, in any form (apart from in cases approved by The Music Box Membership), is strictly prohibited',[219] and this element of the work will be explored in greater detail here.

Specifically, it was the case that the process for acquiring permission to view *The Music Box*'s 'Documentation Pack' was designed in order to mirror the processes I experienced as I secured full ethical approval for the later stages of my PhD research. However, to save time for readers of this thesis, the appropriation of this process will only be described here, whereas it was enforced for those who made efforts to view *The Music Box*'s documentation at the time of its performance.

5.3.2 The Process for Acquiring Access to The Music Box Documentation Pack

To initiate the process for acquiring access to the electronic materials that document *The Music Box*, applicants were directed to send an email to the project's email address: themusicboxcommunications@gmail.com. Then, once an email had been received, applicants received a reply from this email address that provided them with a link to a form titled 'Application to Access 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack' (Appendix 8), and these

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[219] Moorehouse, A. *The Music Box*. (2021)

applicants were advised to complete this form in order to receive the project's documentation. In addition, applicants were informed that their application would be reviewed at the next (monthly) meeting of The Music Box Membership, shortly after which a decision would be communicated to them regarding the outcome of their application. Generally, the length of time between an applicant submitting an application form and the applicant being granted access to the 'Documentation Pack' was between 3-4 months, with applicants often being asked to clarify things they had written in their application forms, and having to wait until the next monthly meeting of The Music Box Membership to have their clarifications reviewed and approved. Additionally, even once their application had been approved, applicants then had to schedule a 48-hour window during which they would be granted access to the 'Documentation Pack'. This documentation pack was then sent at the beginning of this 48-hour window, and the files were configured to self-destruct[220] after 48 hours had elapsed. A record of the typical exchanges involved in this process is provided in the Appendices of this thesis (see Appendix 9).

It is probably clear which elements of this process were lifted (and occasionally exaggerated) from my own experience of gaining ethical approval for my doctoral research,[221] and although this appropriation was intended playfully, and the novelty of this experience usually led to it being well-received by the applicants who were put through this process, it was nonetheless prompted by the frustration that I associated with my own experience of gaining full ethical approval for my research. As such, the work is reactive on both the level of its performance, as well as the process it requires of applicants in order to view its documentation. However, a criticism of these elements of the work is that it is clear that the work does little to address the issues I had with research ethics, it simply repeats them.

Over time, the institutional critique that *The Music Box* levels at research ethics has become a less pronounced element of my practice.[222] Even while reluctantly jumping

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[220] After 48 hours, the materials (which could not be downloaded), became inaccessible.

[221] And a record of this process is provided in the 'Documentation Pack' submitted as part of this thesis' portfolio of composition.

[222] However, this was an area I researched fairly extensively at the time, and unsurprisingly I found a number of similar complaints from various academics, of which many appear in Calvey's book on the ethics of covert research. Calvey, D. (2017). *Covert research: The art, politics and ethics of undercover fieldwork.* Los Angeles: Sage Publishing. For example, Hedgecoe posits that ethics review committees ultimately 'prioritis[e] the reputational protection of their host institution over and above academic freedom and the protection of research subjects'. Hedgecoe, A. (2016). Reputational risk, academic freedom and research ethics review. *Sociology*, *50*(3), 486. Murphy and Dingwall claim

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through the hoops that were placed before my own pursuit of ethical approval, I recognised that the process was wholly well-intentioned, as were the staff who were supporting it. Yet, in my own opinion, I felt that the process was ill-suited to creative research, and my experiences initially left me wary about discussing my work in ways that may initiate this process in the future.

5.4 Invoking Music Therapy: Approaches to Practice and Frameworks for Evaluating Impacts

In any case, after completing *The Music Box* and *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, I began searching for alternative contexts with which to inform my developing psychosocially engaged practice, and my own engagement with the 'real', tangible, human impacts I was pursuing through my compositions. Subsequently, I began to direct my attention towards the field of music therapy, and engaged with the discipline in a number of different ways in order to ascertain its relevance to the desires I held for my own practice.

5.4.1 Approaches to Practice

As mentioned previously, as well as reading a wide selection of texts from the music therapy literature, I also began interviewing music therapists to gain a better understanding of the field. Additionally, I directed the *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* question - 'What has your music done?' - to a number of music therapists. And, while a selection of these responses are provided in the Appendices (see Appendix 10), here it is perhaps enough to note the relative ease with which the music therapists evaluated, recognised, and engaged with the impacts of their work in comparison to the composers. In fact, the aspect of the question that the music therapists contested most frequently was its implication that music was 'theirs', and this became a recurring theme across the responses.[223]

Over time, many attitudes from music therapy impacted my practice. As an example, although for the previous few years I had intended for my practice to be socially engaged, it

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'it is time to reclaim research ethics from the bureaucrats. Murphy, E., & Dingwall, R. (2007). Informed consent, anticipatory regulation and ethnographic practice. *Social science & medicine*, 65(11), 2231. And Schrag outlines how an ill-suited biomedical model of research governance now informs research from disparate fields. Schrag, Z. M. (2010). *Ethical imperialism: Institutional review boards and the social sciences, 1965–2009*. Baltimore, Maryland: JHU Press.

[223] To be transparent, this discussion is raised in two of the composer-responses to *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, however it could not be argued to be a common theme. Additionally, these composer-responses largely address the issue of possession from a philosophical perspective, rather than a pragmatic one.

was only after my introduction to music therapy literature that I began pursuing a practice that was *psychosocially* engaged. Specifically, it was the case that the music therapy literature and documentation that demonstrated these impacts encouraged me to pursue similar goals in my own work.

Furthermore, as I became more familiar with the role of the music therapist, there were elements of the theories that underpin this identity that I began to introduce into my compositional practice. Clearly, from a theoretical and practical perspective, music therapy is client-focused, and music therapists are taught the importance of a therapeutic relationship, of being attuned to a client, of possessing an openness and acceptance of a client and their responses, and how to adapt their practice based on what they perceive. While iterations of all of these traits can arguably be located in the identity of a composer, these are generally not present to the same degree, nor all at the same time. And, even in socially engaged art, although these elements of practice may be considered, the relative lack of documentation that details this consideration makes a prominent focus on these elements harder to locate. For these reasons, I found this music therapy approach to be a refreshing addition to my own work, and in my own practice it is best illustrated by the narrative accounts provided in *H-E-L-P (and Music)*.

While many elements of music therapy practice and literature have greatly influenced my own compositional activity, there are understandably elements of this practice and literature that are less suited to a comparison with my own aesthetic. For example, although there are nuances in the relationships music therapists share with the Classical tradition, as well as there being a great many who take exception to music therapy's relationship with this tradition, it is fair to say that on the whole music therapy practices place a significantly greater emphasis on the Western Classical tradition than any other. This is not intended as a criticism,[224] especially considering the awareness with which music therapists often handle their treatment of these materials and their recognition of the biases that these materials can produce. Additionally, this emphasis on the Classical tradition is perhaps largely inevitable when the vast majority of Music Therapy courses in the UK

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[224] As this thesis alluded to earlier, I was initially much more critical of contemporary music therapy practice (for example, see Moorehouse, A. (2021, June). Representation, Radicalism, and Music "After Sound": A Composer's Perspective on the Music of the Future in Music Therapy. *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy* (Vol. 21, No. 2).). However, over time, having formed closer relationships with practising music therapists and becoming more familiar with the literature that exists beyond the field's key texts, I felt uneasy with the strength of my initial criticisms.

require an undergraduate degree in Music as one of the requirements, and it is the case that most of these undergraduate courses foreground content that either revolves around Classical music or approaches to music that are informed by this tradition.

Therefore, with regards to my own practice, one that pursues a post-sonic departure from the Classical tradition, my work departs aesthetically from the majority of music therapy practice, which, even when utilising other musics, often considers these from an analytical perspective primarily informed by the Classical tradition.

5.4.2 Frameworks for Evaluating Impacts

However, it would be remiss to claim that my practice presents a reinvention of music therapy practice. Clearly, there are precedents within the field that bear a closer resemblance to my own work than others, and to illustrate this point this next section will introduce two frameworks from music therapy that I have used to evaluate the impacts of my own compositions. As such, the appropriateness of these frameworks to my own research articulates some of the commonalities between my own research and existing music therapy practice. The first of these frameworks - outlining five styles of self-presentation in participatory contexts, is provided by the music therapist Brynjulf Stige.

5.4.3 Stige's 'Five Styles of Self Presentation'

Developed through the author's observation of participatory workshops at an accessible arts festival in Norway, Stige presents five styles of self-presentation that the author observed in this context.[225]

The first category Stige identifies is one of 'non-participation' - the author's label for an absent participant. Next, comes 'silent participation' - which is defined by a participant being present but not joining in, before Stige introduces the label of 'conventional participation' to describe the actions of a participant who participates in an orthodox manner. Then, Stige identifies the style of 'adventurous participation' to describe a participant whose actions challenge the course an activity takes, albeit in a manner that is then accommodated by the group. Finally, Stige introduces the label of 'eccentric

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[225] Stige, B. (2010). A Society for All? The Cultural Festival in Sogn Og Fjordance, Norway. In Stige, B., Nasdell, G. and M Pavlicevic, *Where Music Helps: Community Music Therapy in Action and Reflection.* Abingdon: Routledge, 115–47. This framework was also discussed in Moorehouse, A., Matthews, H., & Maia, O. (2023). Post-sonic Perspectives on Socially Engaged Compositional Practices: Composing 'after sound' and beyond music. *Organised Sound*, *28*(1). 92.

participation' to describe a transgressive participation that disrupts the course of an activity in a way that is not accommodated by the group. However, as well as identifying these five styles of self-presentation, Stige also emphasises how close the relationships are between each classification, and the ease with which a participant can move between many different styles of self-presentation during a single activity. Furthermore, Stige's observations illustrate that there's no requirement for this movement to be linear, and it is also the case that repeated behaviours may be associated with different styles of self-presentation depending on the nature of the behaviours being sought across different activities during a single session. For these reasons, Stige's framework is a useful resource for evaluating the instantaneous impact of participant's actions and contributions, rather than seeking to describe the form that these actions take.

This fluidity and precision, itself a product of music therapy's inevitable preoccupation with the instantaneous experience of a participant, illustrates how evaluatory frameworks such as Stige's may provide points of departure for an expanded analysis of participation in socially engaged art practices. And, in turn, these frameworks may supplement readings which provide greater objective insight into the implied social or therapeutic value of such artistic practices. Stige's approach to observing, categorising, and evaluating participation is pragmatic, quantifiable, and impact-focused, and it places its emphasis on every single participant, each of whom must be observed over the entirety of an activity for their participation to be comprehensively categorised. In my own practice, while I have utilised Stige's models in the evaluation of participatory processes, I have also used the author's framework to analyse participatory products - art objects, pieces of writing, or sound works that were the product of participatory processes. For example, by subtly adapting each of Stige's labels, I was able to quantify the engagement I received from the *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* composers as they sent in their responses to the survey-score. This process will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter, however for now it is useful to recognise the potential for Stige's model to be used to quantify participant engagement as expressed in creative (and autonomous) contributions as well as in evaluating the impact of these contributions, in addition to the appropriateness of Stige's framework for the evaluation of more conventionally participatory activities. The potential for these kinds of evaluations is especially useful with respect to the proposed fifth stage addition to the CSS framework that was outlined in sections 4.3.1 to

4.3.5 of this thesis, and the combination of these two pieces of research invites the evaluation of autonomous art objects generated through participatory processes - an evaluation that builds further bridges between Bishop and Bourriaud's approaches to locating value in socially engaged art.

5.4.4 Wood's 'Matrix of Content'

Additionally, while Stige's evaluatory framework may help facilitate an elaborated analysis of the categories of participation in participatory works, complementary frameworks also illustrate who these participants are, and Stuart Wood's 'Matrix of Content' provides one such example.[226]

To illustrate his matrix, Wood aims to find the range of the networks implicated during the practice of music therapy in nursing care homes. And, after first illustrating the impact of care home music therapy sessions on the core constituents of residents, families, and staff, Wood expands his analysis and locates 'constituencies of interest' as diverse as:

- the various consultants and music therapy supervisors privy to the health-care evaluation forms generated by the music therapy interventions taking place in the care home
- the sales and marketing employees who use their knowledge of music therapy sessions to promote the ethos of their organisation to families of prospective residents (either aurally, through dialogue, or visually through photographs)
- the viewership of video recordings of the work hosted online
- the impact of these materials on the training and development of staff working at different care homes
- the translation of the music therapy interventions into healthcare statistics, music therapy research, and PR materials for music therapy charities
- and the impact these materials had upon those considering studying music therapy, or donating to a charity, (as well as the new work which was subsequently created or facilitated by these final constituents of interest)

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[226] Wood, S. (2016). *A matrix for community music therapy practice*. New Braunfels, Texas: Barcelona Publishers. 44-61.

Wood concludes that the context of community music therapy 'proliferate[s] beyond the direct experience of [the] music, the professional interests and concerns of the music therapist, [and] even the needs of the residents in the care home'.[227] In short, in terms of the framework's relevance to my own creative practice, Wood's Matrix of Content has the potential to vastly expand the frame that contains a socially engaged situation, and this reflexivity is enviable in comparison to analyses of socially engaged practices which often gloss over the financial, pedagogical, and material reverberations sent spinning by artists working in social contexts.

5.4.5 Conclusion

The first half of this chapter has begun with a discussion of the evaluations composers make of their music and the impacts they recognise, primarily through a brief analysis of two of the composer-responses from *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*. The point was made that composers generally de-emphasise the psychosocial impacts of their work in formal commentaries of their practice, and potential reasons for this neglect were explored. These were predominantly articulated through a brief foray into research ethics, and a recognition of my own appropriation of these processes in *The Music Box*. Finally, the chapter introduced two frameworks from music therapy in order to tease out an alternative approach to evaluating impacts in socially engaged practices, with the implication being that these may be similarly useful in appraising impacts within the field of composition more generally, as well as foreshadowing the purposes they have served with regards to my own psychosocially engaged, participatory, and post-sonic practice. To this end, the remainder of this chapter will consist of commentaries on my work that revolve around these themes - a discussion of the impacts of my practice and an exploration into how these evaluations were conducted.

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[227] Ibid. 57.

5.5 *Spacefaring Sailor* (2020)

In order to set the scene for the approaches to impact that are located in some of the later and more substantial pieces from my submitted portfolio of compositions, this chapter will first begin by introducing another piece that is instead presented as an Appendix to this thesis (see Appendix 11). Specifically, *Spacefaring Sailor* is unique in the deliberate disinterest I showed towards its own reception and effects.

The work, which consists of a model sculpture, a collection of quotations, and an MP3 player preloaded with songs, exists as a eulogy to Gordin Bones - a SoundCloud artist with whom I was collaborating at the time of his passing. The model represents an image from one of his songs ('Spacefaring Sailor'), while the quotations are taken from comments left on Gordin Bones' SoundCloud page, and the MP3 player is preloaded with the artist's music. All of these elements were contained within a shoebox that I handed to James Saunders with the instruction to pass the box on to whoever he saw fit, without ever mentioning to me where the box ended up. In this respect, *Spacefaring Sailor* is unique in comparison to the remainder of my practice in terms of the neglect it shows towards its impacts and reception. However, this neglect was adopted in order to remove more of myself from the work, and to allow the piece to exist as a monument to Gordin Bones' legacy, rather than as an attempt to further my own.

5.6 *This Piece Is Not Its Name, Piano Solo #1, Symphony Number None, Archive: Socially Engaged Practices in Contemporary Music (Part 1)*

While these four pieces don't quite neglect their impact in the same manner as *Spacefaring Sailor*, the works still fail to engage with the effects they produce in any significant or substantial manner. Instead, the focus of each work is its performance (or imagined performances), and while their reception was of interest to me, each piece's documentation does little to record these elements. For this reason, these four pieces offer an apt illustration of my compositional practice before *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, and my work before this project also shares a similar approach to impact as that which can be identified in many of the composer-responses I received during the project. Therefore, it is hoped that by raising the limitations of these four pieces here, a stark

contrast can be drawn between these works and the post-*Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* compositions that appear across the remainder of this chapter, in order to articulate the effect that this project had on my practice and the influence it had on my approach to impacts.

5.7 *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*

5.7.1 Analysing *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* Using Stige's framework

After completing the survey-element of *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, my experience of the work and the effect of reading the composer-responses encouraged me to analyse these responses themselves. In doing so, this exercise marked the point when my compositional practice became significantly more impact-focused. The first evaluation I completed with respect to these composer-responses was achieved using Stige's categorisations of five distinct self-presentation styles, and I applied these (with some adaptations) to the 267 survey invitations I sent to composers.[228] My initial evaluation resulted in the following results:

	Absent Participation	Non-Particip ation	Conventional Participation	Adventurous Participation	Eccentric Participation
Number of Composers	123	45	74	34	6

In this analysis, the term 'absent participation' was used to refer to composers from whom I received no response, and the label of 'non-participation' refers to composers who articulated a reluctance to answer the survey's question (even if they ultimately addressed the question).[229] As Stige makes clear, participants' behaviour can move through a variety of

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[228] This figure represents the total number of email invitations I sent to composers. However, on many occasions, I contacted composers directly through contact forms on their website. When these composers replied, I was able to log my own invitation, however when these composers didn't reply (and since I didn't log these numbers at the time I was sending out the survey), these composers do not form part of number for the total invitations sent as I can't be sure of how many composers fell into this category. As such, the percentage of 'absent participants' is certainly higher than stated later on, although I am not sure by how much it is higher. For this reason, I have chosen to present the total number of composers I have records of contacting, rather than providing an approximate figure that includes composers I contacted through their website, but who ultimately did not reply.

[229] This is in contrast to Stige's own styles of self-presentation, where the label 'non-participation' is used to describe an absent participant, whereas in this analysis, the label is applied to participants who articulated their desire to not participate, even if they did ultimately acquiesce.

different stages over the course of an activity, and I utilised a similar approach here - with the participation labels being used to refer to behaviours that composer responses demonstrated, rather than only giving one label to each response.[230] Therefore, in a similar way, while I considered some composer's responses to be conventional in terms of the form their writing took, the content of their writing may have been unconventional (or adventurous), and the formality of their writing may even have been eccentric. In each case, these categorisations and judgements were made by comparing individual responses to the groups' responses as a whole, rather than comparing them to my own preconceived assumptions of the kind of responses I was expecting, or the kinds of responses I had been hoping for.

5.7.2 Interpretations

When making sense of the picture painted through this evaluation, the most significant figures seem to be those relating to the number of absent participants, as well as the number of composer-responses that contained elements of non-participation. Totalling 168 participants, this cross-section of the survey represents almost 63% of the composers who were contacted. And, while this percentage may not appear significant initially, it is worth contrasting these figures with those that Stige's framework produced when used to analyse the music therapists' responses to the same survey question.[231]

	Absent Participation	Non-Participation	Conventional Participation	Adventurous Participation	Eccentric Participation
Number of Therapists	0	7	5	1	0

While the number of music therapists I contacted (12) was significantly smaller than the number of composers I contacted, it is nonetheless striking that all of them replied. Therefore, I'd argue that the inference can be drawn that 123 composers didn't miss my

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[230] Except for the 'absent' participants, who only occupy this category.
[231] While a number of these responses are provided in Appendix 7, a number have been omitted. However, all of these omissions were responses in which music therapists politely declined to respond in full, due to being preoccupied with their own practice or writing projects.

communication, and it is more likely that in general the decision not to reply to the survey was a deliberate one. The likelihood of this outcome is reinforced by the fact that the therapists were also located in a similar manner to these composers - through online indexes and registers of UK music therapists, and the contact details that I was able to source through these documents or by 'googling' the names of these therapists.

Therefore, while I acknowledge that I am not in a position to verify the conclusion that a number of composers would have deliberately chosen to ignore my correspondence, it is an interesting thought-exercise to proceed with this view, and to tease out some of its implications.

Specifically, I would be comfortable making the assumption that a number of composers felt unable, uncomfortable, or reluctant to discuss or approach the impacts of their practice. As, while a comparison between the number of 'absent' composers and the 'absent' music therapists provides some illustration of this likelihood, so does the fact that a large number of composers who did respond to the survey articulated these difficulties or their own reticence. Additionally, this conclusion is perhaps also reinforced by the number of composers whose responses contained 'adventurous' or 'eccentric' elements (40 out of 144, or 27.78%), in comparison to the number of music therapists whose responses were categorised similarly (1 out of 12, or 8.3%). Again, I am wary of the desire to make sweeping generalisations, but I believe it is prudent to acknowledge that the composer-responses varied in tone, content, and form to a more significant degree than the music therapists' responses, and that this is perhaps illustrative of their difficulty in approaching an evaluation of the impacts of their practice, their reluctance to do so, or the novelty that this exercise presented for them in comparison to the music therapists.

5.7.3 Conclusions

Stige's framework enables an analysis of *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* that articulates the hesitancy with which composers approached the question of 'what their music had done'. There could be many reasons for this hesitancy - perhaps some were too busy, some struggled to answer the question, some didn't see any value in the exercise, and perhaps some missed the email. There are a variety of possible explanations, and my analysis of the responses doesn't lend itself to drawing concrete conclusions or

comprehensively analysing discourse.[232] However, where Stige's framework is particularly useful, and particularly relevant to this thesis, is in terms of the value it represents to evaluating engagement in participatory art processes specifically, as well as the adaptability and directness it affords. In the case of *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, this evaluation of the project's art objects (the composer-responses) provides an interesting perspective from which to interpret these materials, as well as articulating an example of the processes by which I adapt Stige's framework for my own evaluatory purposes across my practice in general.

To elaborate, since Stige's framework places a significant focus on the behaviours, actions, and outputs of participants (and their impacts), and I have used his framework in other areas of my own practice, even if not all of these are discussed at length in this thesis. For example, while working in music education, I continue to use Stige's framework informally to evaluate engagement in group exercises.[233] The framework provides me with a conceptualisation of how to identify the kinds of activities that are engaging, for whom, and when. Furthermore, when assessing creative work that has been produced in these contexts, Stige's framework also informs the development and progression of these projects. In contexts where individual participants are tasked with responding creatively to various prompts (as can be seen in *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*), categorising these responses as 'conventional', 'adventurous', or 'eccentric', as well as the number of 'non-participations', provides an invitation to consider whether activities are engaging enough, as well as where a group or individuals may be inclined to take their work next. In some contexts, as in the analysis of *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, Stige's categorisations are adapted, whereas in others they remain the same. However, from situation to situation, Stige's conceptualisation of participation necessarily invites a detailed consideration of how participants respond in any context, as well as encouraging a consideration of the impacts of these responses. In this way, Stige's framework is impact-focused - it evaluates the impacts of participatory practice while also enabling a discussion of how these impacts shape future practice. And, through these means, Stige's research has enabled the development of an impact-focused approach to my own compositional activities.

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[232] Which would arguably be a thesis in itself, and one far removed from my own specialism.
[233] Such as in *Symphony Number One*, which appears in the Appendices of this thesis (see Appendix 5).

To be clear, I have not exhausted the uses of Stige's framework. Similarly, Stige's framework is not the only piece of research (from music therapy or elsewhere) that may be used to focus attention on participatory processes in composition or socially engaged art practices. Instead, the intention of this section has been to illustrate how this process can work, as well as to articulate some of the benefits it may afford, through an exploration of the evaluative functions that Stige's framework has provided for my own compositional practice.

5.8 *H-E-L-P (and Music)*

5.8.1 Analysing *H-E-L-P (and Music)*'s SEN interactions using Wood's 'Matrix of Content'

While *H-E-L-P (and Music)* doesn't explicitly utilise Stige's framework, it does retain an impact-focused approach that has been informed by complementary music therapy research. Specifically, Wood's 'Matrix of Content' (see section 5.4.4) was integral in prompting me to evaluate my own practice, and to generate an awareness of the stakeholders affected by the roles I was occupying while working on *H-E-L-P (and Music)*, as well as the impacts various mediations of the work could, and did, produce.

In Wood's evaluation of the 'constituencies of interest' and outcomes implicated in his own work in a nursing care home, Wood considered various traces left by his practice. These included: the health-care evaluation forms he was instructed to complete; documentation of his work and its use in training videos and promotional materials; conversations he had with various employees at the care home; and the translation of elements of his practice into healthcare statistics and music therapy research.

In turn, I decided to analyse each of the SEN interactions that were adapted into the narrative accounts that accompany *H-E-L-P (and Music)*'s text-scores in a similar fashion, as a means of unpicking my own roles in each of these contexts and uncovering the potential impacts of my practice. In addition, this evaluation also provided the means by which I could explore the ethical implications of my practice from a perspective that was distinct from that necessitated by my university in order to navigate the process for ethical approval, and I ultimately found this perspective to be a better fit. As such, although my own analyses differ slightly in nature from those encouraged by Wood, it is very much the case that Wood's matrix was used as a loose template for my own evaluations of my work. An electronic copy

of one of these evaluations in relation to my work with 'PB' is provided below (and a larger version of the evaluation is provided in Appendix 13).

Fig. 2 'PB' - Evaluation of (Potential) Impacts
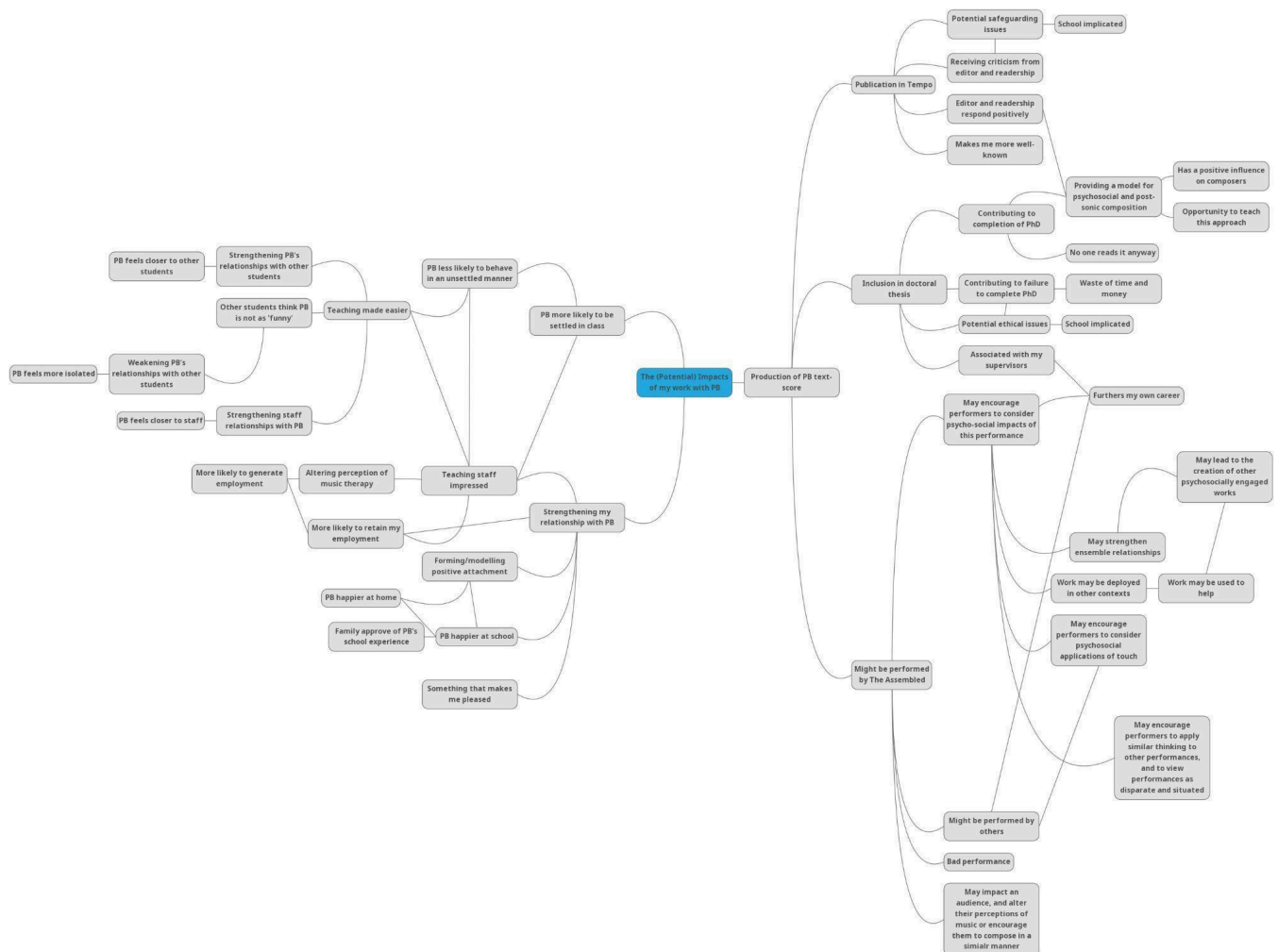
While these evaluations of the SEN interactions articulated in *H-E-L-P (and Music)* were never exhaustive, they were nonetheless important documents that I updated repeatedly as pieces developed. These evaluations vary in their content from piece to piece, with their particularities influenced by the employment role I was carrying out, as well as the intended purpose/s of each specific piece. However, in every case, the aim was to both predict and document the impacts of each interaction, as well as the potential impacts of the text-scores produced in response to these interactions. In this respect, this process illustrates one of the ways that the collection is explicitly impact-focused.

For example, using Wood's 'Matrix of Content' allowed me to map the potential impacts of my work with PB for various constituents of interest and the relationships between them - from PB's family, to his classmates, his relationships with staff at the school, and my own relationships with these colleagues. However, in addition, towards the right-hand side of the diagram, various impacts are introduced relating to my own career, the progression of my PhD, and the potential for future performances. I believe these are important aspects to consider, as due to the context within which I worked, it is perhaps advisable to be forthright and self-aware about the benefits the work may have ultimately provided for myself. In some respects, the work may be considered exploitative, and, while the above evaluation of impacts doesn't address this potential criticism directly, Wood's matrix does encourage a transparency regarding these financial and careerist aspects of the work - elements that are rarely articulated in relation to specific socially engaged artworks and their specific impacts.[234]

5.8.2 Conclusion

However, as well as making use of Wood's 'Matrix of Content' in the pursuit of an evaluation of its impacts, the collection as a whole also aims to predispose its performers and audiences to focusing on the theme of impact. When taken collectively, the narrative accounts repeatedly and determinedly identify the impacts of my interactions with SEN children, and particular attention is drawn to psychosocial (and occasionally education) impacts achieved using various music resources. Then, by prohibiting the performance of any of the accompanying scores by any performers unfamiliar with these narrative accounts, and by stipulating that the audience of any of these performances must also be familiar with these accounts, these impacts are foregrounded at every stage of the work's realisations. In this respect, the collection militantly draws attention to these elements of my own practice, in the hope that this focus will remain for both performers and audience in future performances, while still leaving a great deal of creative scope with regards to the form any performance could take. In other words, the collection stipulates the nature of the impacts of its performances, hopefully without prohibiting the variety of these performances themselves. Importantly, this allows the collection to pass over the agency of determining

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[234] Although these discussions are regularly held within the context of socially engaged practices on a general level.

how to help (with music) over to performers and audiences themselves, rather than implying that this expertise remains solely with myself and located within my own approaches to composition.

5.9 *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* - Responses to the Survey-Scores

The previous section offers the rationale by which *H-E-L-P (and Music)* hopes to encourage its performers and audience to consider the psychosocial impacts of creative or musical practice. This desire is also articulated in *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* through my own responses to the composer-responses - elements of the work that have yet to be discussed during this thesis.

Located on every other page, my own responses to the composer-responses punctuate the collection using a variety of mediums - personal emails, text-scores, pieces of creative writing, article excerpts, dating profiles, and reflections on the collection itself. Occasionally, my own individual responses relate directly to the composer-response that precedes it, however even in instances where this is not precisely the case, all of my own responses are included as a comment and reaction to the composer-responses in general. This is one of the processes by which I came to label the work as a survey-score, as I utilised the composer-responses as a set of prompts for my own creative work, or for the inclusion of existing work.

With this in mind, it is perhaps unsurprising that many of my own responses to these composer-responses deal with the theme of impact, as this thesis has already outlined the effect the project had on my attitudes towards this element of composition. However, my own responses engage with this theme on many different levels, and in the following section a few of these instances will briefly be discussed. Even if this process is not exhaustive, it is hopefully illustrative of many of the trends that recur throughout my responses to the composer-responses, and of the relationships they share with the subject of impact as well as the aims that they intend to pursue.

5.9.1 *STOP (start)* - **Page 5**

STOP (start) consists of a text-score that, as its commentary explains, encourages composers to momentarily pause their creative practice in exchange for financial remuneration. In this way, the score reformulates composers' self-evaluations of their practice into a performance, and a commissioned one at that. However, the commentary provided in *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* overstates the extent to which the work has been realised. In reality, the work was never performed as written - I discussed the piece with a number of composers, and although many of them chose to perform the work, this was never in exchange for any payment. This omission was primarily due to the close relationships I shared with each of the composers I discussed the piece with, and the hesitancy with which either one, or both of us, felt towards giving or receiving money. Additionally, I was never actually brave enough to 'commission' performances of *STOP (start)* from composers with whom I had no personal relationship, as it felt mean to approach someone and ask them to stop doing something that they may love, even if only momentarily, and arguably with good reason. Therefore, the commentary to *STOP (start)* exaggerates its own reach in order to increase the chances of it being performed without requiring me to fund these performances (and without me being required to act in a way that made me feel guilty). However, the intent of the work is as written in the commentary, and the impacts of the work materialised in the discussions I had regarding the piece with composers I knew, and in the informal performances that these composers realised.

Other text-scores are included in *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, and many of these explore similar themes. Examples include *START (stop)* (page 19) and *Bury your head in the sand, and sing a beautiful song* (page 141).

5.9.2 Article Excerpt introducing Stige's 'Styles of Self-Presentation'

On page 47 of *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, an article excerpt is provided that introduces Stige's 'Styles of Self-Presentation'. The excerpt was taken from a draft of an article that was submitted to an academic journal, although the section was cut during the peer-review process. However, the section's inclusion in *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* is typical of the form a large number of my responses took - a redeployment of various analyses I had written on the subject of impact in music, and post-sonic approaches to composition. Clearly, the intent behind the inclusion of these pieces of

writing is to expose readers of *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* to the ideas that these articles introduce.

5.9.3 Creative Writing on the Subject of Impact

In addition, many of my own responses consist of pieces of creative writing that allude to a discussion of impact in more subtle ways. Examples include 'Weighting on the Forest Floor' (page 5) and a fictional transcript from a composition seminar (pages 49, 51, and 53). Although the links these works share with a discussion of impact are often fairly oblique, they exist in order to gently reinforce the focus that the collection places on these discussions, while simultaneously providing the collection with variations in form and tone, and a break from the reprinting of large chunks of academic writing.

5.9.4 Private Communications

Many of my own responses to the composer-responses also include private correspondence, such as the personal emails found on pages 99 and 103. These conversations introduce a number of the impacts of my own compositional practice that are normally kept private - such as reflections on performances, financial discussions, and offers of collaboration. By foregrounding these communications in the collection, the intent is to provoke a recognition of these aspects of compositional practice. Additionally, these disclosures of my own communications regarding my creative practice, as well as the inclusion of text such as my dating profile, previous addresses, and other pieces of personal information, are included in order to reveal private information regarding myself. This hopefully has the effect of providing some balance in this regard, rather than presenting a collection that foregrounds the composer-responses (and the personal information many composers disclose) while sharing no personal information concerning myself.

5.10 *The Experimental Composition Clinic*

Finally, it is worth briefly signposting the links *The Experimental Composition Clinic* shares with the theme of impact, despite most of this analysis appearing in the chapter on interaction (see section 4.6). This is the case because of the approach the collection takes towards participation - by using a survey of 'Character Strengths' alongside supplementary information to match participants to appropriate scores, the participatory model *The*

Experimental Composition Clinic invokes is intrinsically attached to the impacts it hopes to provide to participants. As such, there is little to add in this chapter, beyond a recognition of the symbiotic links this approach to interaction also shares with the theme of impact.

5.11 Conclusion

This chapter began by introducing the composer-responses to *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* in order to explore how a large group of Anglophone composers chose to discuss (or to not discuss) the impacts of their work. A brief analysis of these responses made the point that although composers regularly brought up the psychosocial impacts of their practice in *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?*, these articulations were often absent from discussions of their work that could be found in other contexts. I put forward the notion that part of the reason why composers may be hesitant to talk about these impacts of their work was the positions many composers occupy within higher education (either as students or staff), and a desire composers may have had to avoid initiating the bureaucratic exercise of applying for ethical approval.

The chapter then went on to detail my own experience of this process through a discussion of my performance-protest *The Music Box*, before going on to introduce two music therapy frameworks that I utilise in my own compositional practice to explicitly pursue evaluations of the psychosocial impacts triggered by my work. Specifically, Brynjulf Stige's 'Styles of Self Presentation' and Stuard Wood's 'Matrix of Content' were introduced in order to illustrate the relevance of contemporary music therapy research to the evaluation of socially engaged music practices and composition. Finally, the chapter concluded with an analysis of how other pieces from my portfolio deal with the theme of impact, in order to demonstrate the effect that *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* had upon my compositional approach.

Over the course of this chapter, various discussions of my own work have hinted towards the novelty that I believe my approaches to impact have taken, and this notion will be picked up in the following chapter. In relation to the theme of 'Performativity', efforts will be made to demonstrate the extent to which my own compositional practice deviates from contemporary composition, and to draw out which areas of my research are the most original. Through these means, the case will be made that elements of my compositions are proactive and performative, and that later compositions from my portfolio (predominantly

H-E-L-P (and Music)) represent the arrival of my creative practice at a point far beyond the reactive works that were composed before *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?.*

6. Theme 4: Performativity

6.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters of this thesis have revolved around the themes of reaction, interaction, and impact, and a narrative has been drawn through these chapters to illustrate the development of my own post-sonic and psychosocially engaged practice. Specifically, an introduction to Fluxus and contrarian attitudes to composition in the first chapter concluded with the assertion that in my own practice, a similar attitude was an insufficient tool in pursuing the changes I wished to exact through my music. Then, in Chapter 2, an analysis of interactive, participatory, and socially engaged art practices led to the introduction of the CSS framework from the community arts. This framework was then adapted for use in socially engaged art contexts through the addition of a proposed fifth stage that incorporates the creation of autonomous art and encourages artists to provide (and disseminate) their own reflections on participatory endeavours. Finally, Chapter 3 introduced two frameworks from music therapy practice to illustrate how this research offers the ability to analyse the 'real' impacts of creative practice in a tangible way.

Through these explorations, amendments, and additions, a line has been traced into my most recent iterations of a post-sonic and psychosocially engaged practice, and this chapter will outline the most novel elements of these compositions. These elements will be foregrounded in order to articulate the performative nature of these works alongside a brief introduction to performative art - works that aim to manifest the changes they seek in the world. As such, this chapter presents compositions that are hopeful, affirmative, and proactive - works that directly address the criticisms that have been levelled at historical practice (and my own practice) over the course of this thesis, and channel these critiques into transformational ways of working. The methodology of the works discussed here will also be compared with the work of Agnon and the Artist Placement Group, alongside various definitions of the performative taken from a range of research fields, in order to analyse the implications of working from each of these positions and the value that I believe my practice possesses.

Initially, adopting this working position necessitated a difficult transition from my previous approach to composition, and I sketched out many compositions simply to learn

how to occupy this new outlook of being hopeful about, and through, music. *Hope* (2021)[235] articulates one of these sketches, and hopefully sets the tone for the remainder of this chapter, which begins with an introduction to various notions of performativity.

6.2 Performativity in Language and Art

In the philosophy of language, performative utterances (or speech acts) are sentences which not only describe change, but also bring this change into being by acting upon the reality they describe. The example that has always stuck with me is that of a vicar pronouncing the marriage of a couple - an instance which adds a ceremonial air to these phrases that grant a promise in the same instant it is made.

Citing Ericka Fischer-Lichte, Robert Luzar identifies a similar performative turn in the art world that took hold in the 1960s. As in the case of speech acts, in art too these performative works were transformational, and Fischer-Lichte argues that these works have a particular impact upon relations. Luzar summarises how performative art and theatre can transform 'challenging, complicating, and provoking thoughts not merely about oneself [...] but also about unconscious biases about other people (eg. terrorists to be feared, helpless victims to be saved). In time [...] one can be transformed internally, substantially, and irreversibly'.[236]

As an example, Luzar introduces *Auslander Rauss! Schlingensiefs Container (Foreigners Out! Schlingensiefs Container)* by the Austrian artist Christof Schlingensief:

> In this provocative work, 'others' as foreign migrants (played by
> actors) participate in a mock reality-television show, which all
> happens in a container that acts as a media set but in public, in the
> heart of Vienna, Austria. Over a week, the 'foreigners' go through a
> process of tests which result in selecting each one to leave. However,
> the actors playing as foreigners also remain ambiguous as to whether
> they are actually deported from Austria. Overall, the aim of the work

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[235] This piece has a convoluted and largely irrelevant backstory involving a collaboration with Uri Agnon and Eleanor Westbrook. However, despite the introduction of another pseudonym, the work is again my own. LotBot. (2021, March 20). *Hope (2018), Charlotte Mahon* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=Frw5-1Y_hqQ&list=LL&index=34.

[236] Luzar, R. (2022). Drawing and Performativity. *Drawing: Research, Theory, Practice*, *7*(1).6.

is to provoke public audiences in expressing a range of sentiments – indifference, solidarities, disgust, dissent and so forth. Audiences are indirectly tested for their values/thoughts around humanity, pulled between far-right and left-wing and so-called moderate leanings.[237]

However, Luzar also critiques contemporary forms of art that claim an affinity with the performative without engaging with inequities. While affirming that the performative turn took hold in a period defined by 'social, economic, cultural, and indeed *class struggles* [original emphasis]'[238] such as various Civil Rights movements and the protests of May 1968, David Swift's identification of a performative radicalism 'is one direction that complicates this narrative'. In summarising Swift's ideas, Luzar states:

Performative radicalism is, as he explains,'the emergence of a type of left-wing politics that is not primarily motivated by affecting real change, and is better understood as less of a political movement and more of a form of identity or enjoyable past-time'. [...] the performative radical in contemporary art, to put it bluntly, is someone identifying themselves in the morality of 'doing the right thing' while, paradoxically, not doing enough.[239]

Luzar continues by identifying the ambiguity of performance alongside notions of the performative in contemporary art, questioning - 'When an artist does something like drawing and/or performance, and also wants to engage with issues like structural change, justice, class struggle or inequality, how engaged are they really?'. Luzar goes on to illustrate how the production of many contemporary performances, although they may offer the illusion of direct engagement, ultimately service Capitalism's 'economic performance-machine', whereby artist-entrepreneurs produce work that simply quenches the market's desire for entertainment. [240]

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[237] Ibid. 6-7.
[238] Ibid. 9.
[239] Ibid. 9-10.
[240] Ibid. 10.

Here, we can draw parallels with Agnon's critique of 'preaching to the choir', as well as Matthews' indictment of a music solely 'about' social change, and Bishop's championing of an autonomous art that engages directly with reality over participatory works that blithely offer non-hierarchical practice as an alternative to provocative art or political transformations.

Clearly, as this thesis has pointed out - good intentions only get you so far, and each of the three previous chapters on reaction, interaction, and impact have all presented arguments that revolve around this criticism in relation to the tone, structure, and evaluation of artistic practice, alongside examples of my own practice that either reinforce these tendencies or move beyond them. In this final chapter, *H-E-L-P (and Music)* will be analysed in greater detail to uncover the elements of the collection that are proactive, as well as to demonstrate how the collection engages directly with reality, and ultimately how it illustrates a performative approach to composition that hopes to effect material and significant change (as opposed to another iteration of performative radicalism that feigns these transformations). And, in this respect, it can be argued that the mechanisms and aims that the performative approach articulates can be read as a direct challenge to the kinds of work that Swift and Luzar criticise.

6.3 The Social Contexts of *H-E-L-P (and Music)*

6.3.1 Precedents, and The Artist Placement Group

The context in which *H-E-L-P (and Music)* was composed, as I worked various roles in the social care and SEN education sectors, is unconventional for a composer, if not without precedent. Furthermore, the general contexts in which I was working are the same as those occupied by many music therapists and community musicians, and although it could be claimed that my roles were rarely explicitly musical, it would be reductive to imply that a music therapist or community musician's role always is. However, while analysing the context in which *H-E-L-P (and Music)* was composed in relation to socially engaged art practices specifically, the work of the Artist Placement Group provides a useful comparison and precedent.

The Artist Placement Group was formed in 1966, and is generally 'considered to be the brainchild of John Latham', a mixed-media artist who retained links with Fluxus during

the 1960s.[241] One of his most infamous works - *Still and Chew*, illustrates the Fluxian approach many of his works took, consisting as it does of a performance given by Latham and his students in which they collectively 'masticated' a copy of Clement Greenberg's influential *Art and Culture* borrowed from the library of the school at which Latham was employed.[242] Together with Barbara Steveni, who co-directed the Artist Placement Group, the APG ambitiously sought to make impacts in contexts far removed from the art world or the typical reach of art institutions, and during its lifespan Stevini and Latham placed artists in a wide range of corporate bodies and government institutions.

As summarised by Bishop, the APG was

> Premised on the idea that art has a useful contribution to make to the world, and that artists can serve society, not by making works of art, but through their verbal interactions in the context of institutions and organisations.[243]

Specifically, with regards to the aims of the APG, a Departmental Head at the Civil service offered the following description of the APG's goals:

> APG exist to create mutually beneficial association between artists and organisations in industry, commerce, and the public service. Their intention is not that of the traditional relationship of patronage. Rather, they seek to have an artist involved in the day-to-day work of an organisation. The latter may be expected to benefit in a variety of ways. These may vary from contributions to the creation of some concrete object to new ideas about work methods . . . APG's aim is an attempt to bridge the gap between artists and people at work so that each may gain from the other's perspectives and approaches to an activity.[244]

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[241] Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. New York: Verso Books. 163-177.163.
[242] And this performance ultimately cost him his job. Ibid. 164.
[243] Ibid.
[244] Ibid. 165.

These artists were generously paid by the companies and institutions in which they were placed, and these contexts varied greatly with examples including British European Airways, the National Coal Board, London Zoo, British Steel Corporation, and Esso. Similarly, while the contexts in which artists were placed varied to a significant degree, so too did the impacts of their residencies. Stuart Brisley, who was placed on the shop-floor at the Hille Furniture factory, illustrates the potential scope of these impacts, with the artist variously passing workers' complaints onto management, painting machinery in the colours of workers' favourite football teams, introducing manoeuvrable notice boards to transmit information around the factory, and making sculptures out of the factory's products.[245]

Periodically, the APG hosted exhibitions that displayed the artistic outputs generated over the course of these engagements, as well as artworks produced by artists after their residency had elapsed. These works were often presented alongside documentation of the APG's aims and activities, and accompanied by 'live' meetings between APG members and invited organisations that were held in the art galleries that hosted APG exhibitions (although members of the public were not invited to participate in these exchanges).

The public and critical reaction to these exhibitions was often unenthusiastic. For instance, Bishop notes how: a number of artists who were placed by the APG took a dim view of these exhibitions; the APG exhibition at the Hayward Gallery in London was the worst attended in the gallery's history; and exhibitions were frequently criticised for their 'dry impenetrability and corporate appearance', with many of the artworks the exhibitions presented being derided for the similarities they shared with 'company publicity' materials.[246]

These critiques paved the way for an indictment of the APG from a political perspective as well as an aesthetic one. Bishop identifies how one of APG's exhibitions 'prompted an anxiety because it seemed insufficiently distanced from the political conservatism that the corporate world connoted; indeed, it seemed to signal collaboration with - or capitulation to - the managerial, rather than critical distance towards it'.[247] And, while the Marxist critic Peter Fuller recognised that 'getting companies to agree to sponsor artists who were there explicitly to work against the profit motive was no small

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[245] Ibid. 167.
[246] Ibid. 168-170.
[247] Ibid. 170.

achievement', he also felt 'the APG were naive to place an artist in an organisation and declare him automatically to be a free agent'.[248]

In part to sidestep these criticisms, over the 1970s the APG sought to place artists primarily in government departments rather than private businesses. As one example, Ian Breakwell was placed at Broadmoor Special Hospital alongside a team of architects to produce a report into how to improve living conditions at Broadmoor. And, the artist's documentation of the 'squalid' living conditions he encountered contributed to a national scandal and a government enquiry.[249] However, despite the success of the Broadmoor placement, eventually the Arts Council of Great Britain, which had been funding the APG, removed their funding, and in 1973 unilaterally claimed the 'sole governmental right to be funding artists', effectively putting an end to the APG's activities.[250]

While reflecting upon the APG, Bishop concludes that

> APG's activities go straight to the heart of contemporary debates about the functionality of art, the desirability (or not) of it having social goals, and the possibility of multiple modes of evaluation. It seems indisputable that APG sought to give the artist more power within society, rather than empowering workers on the lower rungs of the organisation where placements were held. To this extent, its goals seem more perceptual rather than social [...][251]

Here, similarities can be drawn with Luzar's interpretation of the performative radical in contemporary art. Luzar identifies situations in which performative radicalism consists of

> someone identifying themselves in the morality of 'doing the right thing' while, paradoxically, not doing enough; instead of rethinking the ontological mode of an identity, one remains fixated on what

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[248] Ibid. 170.
[249] Ibid. 172.
[250] Ibid. 175.
[251] Ibid. 174.

they want for themselves, and others who share their (identity) values and opinions.[252]

In the case of the APG, it can be argued that the group's ultimate goal was to improve the standing and perception of artists. And, although Ian Breakwell's placement at Broadmoor Special Hospital seems to counteract this view, it perhaps instead demonstrates that although APG's artists were free to pursue social or transformational impacts, instances such as these were generally endeavours pursued by artists at their own discretion, and as such they illustrate the autonomy given to them by the APG rather than articulating impacts that APG were unilaterally pursuing.[253]

6.3.2 H-E-L-P (and Music)

There is clearly an argument to be made that elements of the APG's activities veer away from the transformational potentials of performative art, and begin to approach aspects of Swift's notion of performative radicalism. However, before entering into a discussion of the performative aspects of my own compositional practice, it is worth comparing the APG's context with that illustrated by *H-E-L-P (and Music)*.

In *H-E-L-P (and Music)*, my work in social and educational contexts shares similarities with the APG's shift away from residencies in private corporations and into various governmental departments. Additionally, the role APG artists occupied as an 'incidental person' able to articulate alternative perspectives due to their artistic occupation shares some similarities with the way in which I approached my own employment roles. However, the roles I occupied in *H-E-L-P (and Music)* depart from the general APG model in a number of ways.

Firstly, while the APG placed artists into situations in which they were recognised as artists by both themselves and the institutions they worked within, my own employment was primarily extra-musical. For example, although the majority of employers, clients, and

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[252] Luzar, R. (2022). Drawing and Performativity. *Drawing: Research, Theory, Practice*, 7(1). 10.
[253] This conclusion is a little reductive, and there is a case to be made that Steveni and Latham each had different priorities for APG. As Bishop states, whereas Steveni was largely responsible for placing artists, and oversaw the shift away from residencies at private corporations at the start of the 1970s, in 1977 Latham sent million-pound invoices to the British government for 'services rendered', which, even though intended as a provocation, nonetheless illustrates Latham's inclination to translate artistic practices into monetary value. Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. New York: Verso Books. 174.

colleagues I worked with retained a knowledge of my doctoral research (or at least of my musical background) and often encouraged me to allow my areas of interest to guide the work I did, I was nonetheless expected to pursue psychological, sociological, and educational impacts that varied depending on the nature of the roles I was employed to fulfil. As such, in most cases, I was not primarily an artist, a researcher, a composer, or a musician. Clearly, this represents a departure from the precedent of the APG: whereas they aimed to place 'incidental people' into various institutions, it was more the case that I brought my own incidental areas of interest into the employment roles I was contracted to fulfil. And, although this may sound like something of a novelty, this is not an uncommon phenomenon within the context of social and educational work across the country, although it is arguable that my areas of interest were perhaps somewhat novel.

Secondly, due to the nature of the roles I was occupying, I was always working directly with children and young adults, the vast majority of whom had SEN needs. In this way, my work was always inherently relational, and engaged with psychosocial impacts on the level of the individual. This is in contrast to the work of the APG artists, who, when they did approach these kinds of impacts, did so while placed within systems within which they were thus able to provoke systemic change (even if the value and political implications of these changes were the subject of a number of criticisms[254]) rather than individual ones. For example, even in the case of Ian Breakwell's placement at Broadmoor Special Hospital, the artist was preoccupied with pursuing an elevation of the general living standards of Broadmoor's patients, rather than working with them in a personal capacity. As such, due to the close relationships I shared with the clients with whom I worked, and the roles I was obligated to fulfil, it was the case that I was embedded within the institutions in which I worked in a fairly traditional manner (certainly from a contractual perspective), rather than joining these institutions as an incidental person, appendage, or accessory to these contexts.

6.4 Autonomous Art in *H-E-L-P (and Music)*

However, despite the differences noted in the previous section, there are similarities between the way the APG approached the documentation of their artist placements and the

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[254] And it is arguable that many early APG placements ultimately sought to improve the social standing or perception of artists within the fields of commerce and private business.

methods that I have used in *H-E-L-P (and Music)*. As mentioned above, the APG held various exhibitions that presented materials from the artists who participated in the APG's placements. And, while these exhibitions were considered of secondary importance to the APG (who did not stipulate that participating artists had to submit materials for exhibition upon the completion of their residency), they nonetheless illustrate the latent desire in socially engaged art practices to present and document work in artistic forms, or within art contexts. Through these means, the APG exhibitions also illustrate the proposed fifth stage of the CSS framework that was introduced in section 4.3.6 of this thesis.

H-E-L-P (and Music) provides similarly autonomous works - pieces (made up of narrative accounts and text-scores) produced as reflections on the relational elements of my employment roles. The pieces are adaptations and remediations of these relational elements that mirror the processes by which many APG artists contributed material for the group's exhibitions. However, as musical works, my own reflective compositions are disseminated through a collection of scores, rather than exhibited in the kinds of forms that are more closely linked to the gallery arts.

6.5 Performative Composition

Yet, through reaffirming the appropriateness of a musical label for *H-E-L-P (and Music)*, it seems logical to search for precedents in the field of composition specifically. However, in terms of a performative approach to composition, historically Western art music has sought to deny its performative potential, with Christopher Fox pointing out how

> For most people music is, I suspect, always about something. Most music is there to serve a function, as we celebrate, mourn, dance, worship, fall in and out of love. In this respect the concert music of the Western Classical tradition is an outlier, with its preludes and fugues, sonatas and symphonies, all of them resolutely refusing to admit to any purpose beyond the working out of their own formal processes; music is itself and that's quite enough already.[255]

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[255] Fox, C. (2023). SOMETHING ELSE. *Tempo*, *77*(305), 3-4.

And, as Barret points out, contemporary music has inherited a critical vocabulary that often denies its performative (and transformative) potentials in a similar manner. For example, this phenomenon can be identified in a journal article by another author titled 'Introducing the Issue of Performativity in Music',[256] as, while the writer acknowledges that in 'music study generally, the concept of performativity has been introduced slowly', the text primarily goes on to explore the facial expressions and somatic gestures performed by the pianist Lang Lang in renditions of Liszt's *Liebestraum*, written in 1850. Additionally, a complementary text goes on to define performativity in music as not only including

> the artist's/artists' production of sounds and movements, persona (stage presence), competence, approach, and style, but also influential factors such as the acoustics and style of the venue, the arrangement of the stage or arena, audience seating, the lighting, and the contributions of the director, technicians, back-up artists, make-up artists, event organizers, entrepreneurs, audience, and patrons; indeed everyone involved in the process of bringing a performance to fruition.[257]

While approaches such as those illustrated by the above text are of value, they go some way to articulating the tendency in discussions surrounding performativity within music to take up a model of performativity that is far removed from the world-transforming ideal championed by Luzar in relation to contemporary art practices. Furthermore, this musical approach to performativity illustrates how the subjects of these performative analyses are often still pieces of music from the Classical tradition, and that these analyses are conducted with a certain kind of performance in mind. By extension, the focus of these analyses is that of performance, rather than composition (even if the two are intrinsically linked).

However, there are better precedents for my own performative compositional practice, and perhaps unsurprisingly examples can be found in the work of one of the figures whose ideas (and criticisms of various politically engaged composition practices) have

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[256] Davidson, J. W. (2014). Introducing the issue of performativity in music. *Musicology Australia*, *36*(2), 179-188.
[257] Kartomi, M. (2014). Concepts, terminology and methodology in music performativity research. *Musicology Australia*, *36*(2), 189-208. Abstract.

already informed this thesis. In his own compositional practice, Uri Agnon - author of 'Preaching to the Choir', scores an orchestral work titled *Or Never*,[258] in which each individual musician's participation at various points of the piece is dependent on the answers they give to questions that engage with the climate crisis. For example, for the question 'Are we going to beat the climate crisis?', which can be found in bar 23 of the piece, musicians only play this passage if they answer in the affirmative. The work is littered with questions such as these, and strikingly, performers of *Or Never* explain how they were prompted to change their world-views or behaviours through their repeated engagement with these themes in rehearsals of *Or Never*. Additionally, by projecting these questions behind the orchestra during public performances of the work, the piece foists accountability onto the orchestral performers while also inviting audience members to judge the orchestra on their collective and individual actions (which in turn provokes the audience's consideration of their own environmental impact).

Here, we can identify a more appropriate precedent for the kind of performativity that *H-E-L-P (and Music)* pursues. Both pieces pursue politically or socially engaged impacts, and invite an audience to change their world views and attitudes towards the themes the works explore. For Agnon, *Or Never* is politically engaged with the climate crisis, and the work's questions invite both performers and audience to take stock of their conscious and unconscious actions and attitudes, as well as the impacts these actions have on the environment. Crucially, these questions (and by extension, the workings of the piece) are made accessible to an audience through the projection of these elements on a large screen behind the orchestra.

On a general level, *Or Never* mirrors many of the aspects of *H-E-L-P (and Music)*'s intended performances. For example, my scores invite performers to explore the psychosocial impacts of music-making, and to evaluate their own attitudes to these impacts, through the focus the collection places on my interactions with SEN children and the means by which the text-scores foreground these kinds of impacts. In this respect, it could be argued that the text-scores question the performers on their attitudes towards the impacts of their music-making and their conceptualisation of musical impacts, while also asking them to devise performances based on these themes. Additionally, while not as explicit as

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[258] Agnon, U. (2022, June 17). *Or Never, by Uri Agnon (trailer)* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=PCfFYdyu8QM.

Agnon's projected material in *Or Never* (which allows the processes that inform the work to become completely transparent to an audience), *H-E-L-P (and Music)* similarly offers an audience some awareness of the context for what they are witnessing, as the collection stipulates that the narrative accounts provided alongside each text-score must be articulated alongside any performance of these scores. Therefore, in this way, audience members are granted access to the supplementary materials that necessarily frame performers' realisations of the open-scores. Through these means, we can see how both *Or Never* and *H-E-L-P (and Music)* first encourage performers to engage with the themes and attitudes that the works desire, before then providing audiences the means by which to frame the performers' actions in a complementary manner.

Such work is fairly novel within the realm of contemporary composition, and is arguably the product of the recent kinds of criticism that myself and Agnon direct towards existing socially and politically engaged music practices. Another author mentioned earlier in this thesis, Harry Matthews, provides an additional illustration of this phenomenon, with his criticism of new music simply *about* a social cause backed up by his own approaches to composition that deal with subjects such as environmental access and the politics of trespassing in a more pragmatic manner.[259]

Through this introduction to these works, as well as taking into account my own thesis, it can be argued that socially engaged music practices (and specifically ones that share an affinity with the tradition of socially engaged art practices) are relatively novel. As the two recent *Organised Sound* specials on socially engaged sound practices, and a panel session on 'The Socially-Engaged Composer'[260] given last year at the 7th SIMM-posium illustrate, while there is a growing desire to analyse, define, and quantify these kinds of engagements in specifically musical contexts, these endeavours are at an early stage and it is generally difficult to find instances of composers or compositions grouped together under this banner and its various subsets. However, works such as *H-E-L-P (and Music)* and *Or Never* present recent examples of works that could fall into and illustrate one of these labels

[259] Moorehouse, A., Matthews, H., & Maia, O. (2023). Post-sonic Perspectives on Socially Engaged Compositional Practices: Composing 'after sound' and beyond music. *Organised Sound, 28*(1), 92-96.
[260] Pairon, L. (2023, Mar 14). *'The Socially-Engaged Composer' - SIMM-posium #7 (London, 12-14.12.2022)* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=OxNTJsFPDcI.

- socially[261] engaged works that invoke performativity in order to guide both performers and audiences towards an evaluation of their own actions, attitudes, and biases.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the theme of performativity through an investigation of performative art and music, as well as a discussion of my own practice. The chapter began with an introduction to definitions of performativity as they are found in the philosophy of language and art. Additionally, David Swift's notion of performative radicalism was contrasted to these conceptions, as well as the discourse on performativity in music performance. Then, the chapter explored a case study of the Artist Placement Group - an ambitious project organised by Barbara Steveni and John Latham that sought to place artists as incidental persons in large businesses and institutions. The performative aspects of these activities were analysed in relation to the contexts outlined at the beginning of this chapter, before the chapter then moved onto a discussion of performative composition through an exploration of works by Agnon and myself. Through these analyses, the argument was put forward that there is a growing body of compositional practice that is performative, of which my own collection *H-E-L-P (and Music)* - the collection that I believe articulates the most convincing and successful instance of a post-sonic and psychosocially engaged practice across my portfolio, presents but one example. Next, in the conclusion to this thesis, the framework that *H-E-L-P (and Music)* articulates will be investigated on a general level. Additional works that follow a similar template will be sketched out, and imaginary compositions will be articulated in order to illustrate some of the other potentials of a post-sonic and psychosocially engaged approach to composition and open-scoring, and the contexts in which they may be deployed.

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[261] Although Uri refers to his work as politically engaged. Private correspondence.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Post-Sonic and Psychosocially Engaged

The previous chapters of this thesis have hopefully presented a post-sonic and psychosocially engaged approach to composition, with its construction being articulated in relation to four main themes. In the first chapter, my compositional practice was introduced around the theme of reaction and the precedent offered by the art group Fluxus and the contrarian positions they occupied in the 1960s. With respect to my own creative practice, the compositions that were analysed in this chapter included critical works on the subject of harmony and the forms composers use to discuss their creative practice, as well as works which challenged more contemporary notions such as Barrett's conception of a post-sonic framework for musical analysis. However, the conclusion was drawn that these works failed to provide an alternative to the approaches that were criticised, and many works simply repeated the problems that were identified, rather than putting forward a coherent solution. Therefore, over the following three chapters, frameworks and research from the fields of the community arts, music therapy, and performativity were implemented in my own creative practice in order to provide proactive solutions to the deficiencies I had recognised in Chapter 1.

In Chapter 2, this research took the form of the Collaborative Stories Spiral - a framework for guiding non-hierarchical collaborations between researchers and communities that was offered as a model for socially engaged art practices. This framework was adapted to include the addition of a proposed fifth stage which encouraged artists to produce autonomous artworks that offered the chance to evaluate participatory processes while simultaneously satisfying a desire for authorship that was argued to lie latent in socially engaged practices, and these evaluations took the place of the formal academic dissemination encouraged by the CSS researchers. In proposing this fifth stage, the chapter also sought to reconcile Bishop and Bourriaud's theorisations of socially engaged practices. Next, this fifth stage was identified in an analysis of Brona Martin's community composition *Sowing Seeds*, before also being recognised in my own practice - primarily in the psychosocial collection *H-E-L-P (and Music)*. This chapter also introduced the various

interactive and participatory models that my own practice utilises, and contextualised these processes within Bishop's and Turino's conceptualisations of participatory art.

Next, in Chapter 3, the question of impact was addressed in greater detail. Initially, composer responses to the survey-score *Where are we Going? and What have we Done?* were introduced in order to examine the means by which composers approached (or distanced themselves) from the psychosocial impacts of their work. The effects of institutional research contexts on these discussions of impact were explored, and my own composition - *The Music Box*, was analysed in relation to this context. Then, frameworks from music therapy - specifically Stige's 'Styles of Self Presentation' and Wood's 'Matrix of Content', were used to evaluate my own creative practice and the participatory processes identified in the previous chapter. It was argued that these frameworks had the ability to guide focused observations of the impacts of participatory processes and to expand the frame that generally contains a socially engaged art situation - offering greater insight into the impacts and implications of these practices.

Finally, Chapter 4 introduced the notion of performativity, firstly in relation to its usage in the philosophy of language, before focussing on its use in discussions of performative approaches to contemporary art. The case study of the Artist Placement Group was introduced in order to situate these discussions, and the critical reception of this work was introduced through the writing of Bishop. The argument was then made that the Artist Placement Group's activities, despite originating in a decade characterised by social upheaval and class struggles, nevertheless shared similarities with the notion of performative radicalism and approaches to socially engaged practice that could be argued to promote the perception and status of a group of actors (specifically, artists), rather than being socially engaged in a truly substantive manner. At this point, links were drawn with the writing and compositions of Agnon, a composer whose creative practice was examined in order to show how Agnon instrumentalises his criticism of contemporary composition tropes in his own politically engaged practice. Again, my own compositional practice was argued to occupy a similar position, and *H-E-L-P (and Music)* was compared with the performative aspects of Agnon's practice specifically.

Throughout this thesis, *H-E-L-P (and Music)* has often been positioned as the exemplary iteration of a post-sonic and psychosocially engaged approach to open-scoring - the most successful attempt from my portfolio at evidencing a novel psychosocially engaged

compositional model. It combines 'real', direct social engagement with performative, transformational impacts, as well as a decentred aesthetic and a two-pronged approach to participation that marries an attuned and adaptive approach to working with clients alongside the production of autonomous artworks. This process, when viewed in its entirety, articulates one of the most original elements of my research and practice, and a significant departure from existing socially engaged art practices (as well as contemporary and experimental music practices).

However, I do not believe the context of *H-E-L-P (and Music)* to be the only context in which this model may be useful. To this end, the remainder of this conclusion will sketch out other contexts in which this approach may be utilised, as well as the benefits such an approach to composition may afford and some of the problems that may be encountered in pursuing such a practice. Furthermore, while it may be argued that more works that follow this model should have been submitted in the composition portfolio that accompanies this thesis, it is worth pointing out that *H-E-L-P (and Music)* was composed off the back of three years' field-work, with the collection articulating only a fraction of the experiences, encounters, and interactions that together informed the production of the work. Therefore, this approach to composition, while articulating what I believe to be the apex of my doctoral research, also provides the model with which I expect to compose for the rest of my life, and the following section will offer the kinds of departures that I expect my future practice to take.

7.2 Further Practice and Research

Firstly, upon completion of this doctorate, I intend to resume work on *The Experimental Composition Clinic* - the incomplete collection of highly-targeted text-scores first introduced in section 4.6 of this thesis. It was noted that for this work to be successful, and for it to feature a significant amount of compositions for any single individual, the collection would have to consist of hundreds of text-scores in total, and it is my intention to ultimately complete this work, while also expanding its remit and potentially including contributions from other composers and practitioners. I hope that the work will eventually become a huge collection of pieces that document aspects of my musical and artistic work with various populations and articulate the impacts that these interventions have had. For example, I

expect that the collection will feature sections of scores and exercises that are aimed towards providing meaningful benefits to people with autism spectrum diagnoses, attachment disorders, and neurodevelopmental conditions, with these scores being informed by my continuing work with these populations and the impacts that the musical resources I deploy afford. To this end, I also hope to work with a wider range of individuals, including adult populations and the hearing-impaired, in order to expand the uses I find for (new) music and the contexts in which it can be used. Although it sounds glib and perhaps overly-ambitious, I want to understand how many, many different populations experience music, and to produce a collection of scores and exercises that provides articulations of these perspectives and multiple points of departure for how to instrumentalise a decentred and post-sonic conceptualisation of music in the pursuit of psychosocial aims.

Additionally, while I expect to continue to embrace working within contexts in which I am not designated a specifically-musical role, I also wish to begin pursuing a socially engaged composition practice in which music does provide the primary focus for what I am expected to provide. I intend to pursue a practice similar to Brona Martin's *Sowing Seeds* - long-form collaborations that encourage participants to develop their own approaches to music-making and articulations of what music (and their identities) mean to them. Specifically, while *H-E-L-P (and Music)* illustrates a variety of situations in which I prescribed or adapted musical forms for others, I also want to pursue practices in which I can facilitate this exploration for others - to allow them to uncover and experiment with the musical forms that may have meaningful impacts for themselves and to encourage them to pursue the reasoning for why various forms feel significant and why this may be the case. To this end, I have recently begun an employment contract as a music tutor at a post-16 SEN arts provision in York, and I am hopeful that this will provide an ideal context from which to explore a practice such as this.

Furthermore, while a pedagogical aspect of this imagined practice can likely be identified already, this is also something I intend to pursue more explicitly. This past summer, I was employed as an SEN coordinator for a residential music camp that primarily specialised in Classical music tuition. I found that the SEN experience I had allowed me to flourish in this role, and the perspectives I had on Classical music (and what lays beyond it) enabled me to offer novel approaches to musical composition and performance that were warmly received by the other members of the camp staff, who often asked me to instruct them on how to

make the camp more accessible (musically and otherwise) for the campers who had SEN diagnoses or differing tastes. Upon the completion of this PhD, I hope to fulfil a similar role in school contexts - offering guidance to teachers in SEN schools (many of whom do not consider themselves musical) on how to provide musical exercises which may enrich their student's school experiences without requiring any significant musical expertise. Since the pandemic in particular, the arts-based areas of school curriculums have been somewhat neglected. Subsequently, many of the schools in which I have worked have asked me to provide music curriculums, deliver school-wide interventions and workshops, and to work on music with individual students, and this is something I hope to pursue further in a more targeted manner over the coming years.

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Appendices

*Piano Solo No. 1* Commentary

1. The piano has to burn because I don't use prescribed pitches. **2.** The piano has to burn because I don't know how to work with prescribed pitches. **3.** I have to build a model piano because I don't want to burn a real piano. **4.** I have to build a model piano because I don't write for Classical instruments because the instrumentation module was always full and I now I don't have any desire to learn those things anyway. **5.** The model piano has to be small because I am lazy. **6.** The model piano has to be small because I have no space to build it. **7.** The model piano has to be small because I don't want to make a big statement. **8.** The piano has to burn because I only met these people last week and I have to make a statement. **9.** I have to burn my own piano because this is a reflection of my approach to harmony, rather than an idealised version of how I think other people should approach harmony. **10.** I don't want to burn a piano that is not mine because I think people should use harmony and pitches if that's what they would like to do. **11.** I am jealous of people who can use prescribed pitches, because I love harmony but I can't use it. **12.** I will build a piano that sets on fire if you play it because that is a metaphor for my harmonic ineptitude. **13.** The piano has to burn because then it will be visually indeterminate. **14.** I have to build the piano so that its construction is indeterminate. **15.** I will have to put automated filters and modulators on the song so that is sonically indeterminate. **16.** I will choose to play 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' because I googled 'songs about fire' and it came up. **17.** I will choose to play 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' because it is funny and self-depreciating because really I just want to write a half-decent piano tune y'know. **18.** I will choose to play 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' because I want it to be clear that I don't hate harmony or people that use harmony. **19.** I will choose to play 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' because the first section of the clip paints me as being a martyr for not wanting to use harmony. **20.** I will choose to play 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' because it is about wanting to be loved. **21.** I will choose to play 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' because it is about wanting to be loved and I'm hoping that people don't see this as an aggressive gesture, bcos I would like to be their friend. **22.** I chose 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' because it reminds me of an undergraduate project I did. **23.** I will choose to play 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' because the wind masked all the pretty sounds of the piano burning. **24.** I will choose to play 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' instead of the piano-burning audio because only I should be allowed to hear the sounds of the piano burning because only I made the model piano. **25.** The video of the piano burning is duplicated because the brief said I had to use two harmonic elements. **26.** The video of the piano burning is duplicated because I am a noob and I held the phone on my camera in portrait instead of landscape. **27.** The video of the piano burning is duplicated because I was thinking about the blue cup/red cup thing people were talking about last week. **28.** The cut in the video of the piano burning is because it was too windy to set the piano on fire without protecting the flame so I needed both hands to light it. **29.** I needed to use both hands because I was too lazy to put a back on the piano to protect the flame from the wind. **30.** There was so much wind because I live in Twerton and it is ALWAYS windy there what the heck is going on. **31.** There was so much wind because my landlord would have been annoyed if I burnt the piano in the house. **32.** I had to burn the piano outside because I am scared of my landlord. **33.** If I put a back on the piano then I wouldn't have been able to take out the lighters under the keyboard when I realised that was *a bad idea*. **34.** The piece is really a commentary on piano-burning in general, which is either a frivolous ritual in Western militaries, or a polemic on the Classical

Tradition in performance art/new music, or an improvisatory gimmick, or maybe something else. **35.** The piece is really a commentary on piano-burning in general because it questions ownership and agency and why people think they can burn something that they didn't make and they don't really own. **36.** The piece is really a commentary on piano-burning in general because it questions ownership and agency and even though Annea Lockwood says you must use a piano that is broken why does that mean you can burn it. **37.** I had to speed up the video of the piano burning because it was too long for the brief. **38.** I had to speed up the video of the piano burning because it looked more interesting that way. **39.** I had to pitch-shift the recording of 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' so that it didn't get taken down by the YouTube copyright algorithm. **40.** I had to time-stretch the recording of 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' so that it didn't get taken down by the YouTube copyright algorithm. **41.** I had to manipulate the recording of 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' to show how edgy I am. **42.** I had to manipulate the recording of 'I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire' because really I wish I could manipulate my own prescribed pitches. **43.** I had to make a video of the piano burning because that would show that I don't want to write anything modernistic/absolute/harmonic/neo-Classical. **44.** I had to write this commentary out because when I talk too long in front of people my voice starts shaking. **45.** My voice starts shaking when I speak for a long time in front of people because I used to have a stutter and I get scared I will start stuttering again. **46.** I wrote this commentary because it is a good way of introducing myself, and showing that even though I can be a contrarian I am generally an okay human really. **47.** I wrote this commentary to make explicit the forms of mediation that absolute music chooses to ignore. **48.** I wrote this commentary because I think music in academia should be more personable and transparent. But I will lie lots and lots during this commentary because I think harmony is a fabrication too. **49.** I'm writing this commentary because I wanted to say that when I was doing my MA, I spoke a lot with my supervisor about narrative and harmony. And we both agreed that they're both entirely based on perception, but whereas narrative is the perception of form, harmony is the perception *and* evaluation of form, so any perception of harmony has an extra layer of subjectivity and judgement, especially due to its associations with consonance (*consonantia*, like in Joyce/Aquinas/Dedalus). **50.** I will write this commentary because I want to say that narrative and harmony are interesting, because as composers we can work with narrative without necessarily having to evaluate it. And even if you write a score, then you are only working with narrative, you're not dealing with harmony, because harmony is the experience of the narrative. And in that respect, the brief of this composition shapes part of the narrative, but it doesn't impact upon the harmony, and the realisation of this performance manipulates narrative whereas this commentary helps create an illusion of harmony in areas where it was not considered. **51.** I wrote this commentary because I wanted to say that when I compose, it's all done very playfully, and the decisions are made very quickly and without too much thought. And that creates a narrative of the work. And then the harmony is constructed afterwards, in commentaries and explanations, or in someone's experience of it. So as a composer, I push back the evaluation of harmony as far as I can along the process, which is not unusual and that's the basis of most experimental or indeterminate music. **52.** I wrote this commentary because most of the time it feels like composition courses aren't about learning how to arrange material, they're about learning to justify why you have arranged material in the way you have, and there are ways of arranging material that mean you don't have to make as many justifications, but this is not how criticism should work and when criticism works in this way it is important to examine why it is working in this way and who these blind spots serve/exclude (*Unmarked/After Sound)*. **53.** This commentary is incoherent because meaning is subjective and exclusionary anyway. **54.** This commentary is incoherent because this is only a sketch of a conceptual piece, rather than a proper conceptual piece. **55.** This commentary is a little like Sol LeWitt's statement on wall drawings, and it is also a bit like some of Cage's lectures, amongst other things. **56.** This commentary is hypocritical because that way hopefully everyone can find something in it that they agree with. **57.** This commentary is over soon because I need to make dinner. **58.** I hope there are no questions, but if there are that is okay and I will pretend to be happy to answer them. **59.** I've been reading about Paul DeMarinis lately and he built a lot of instruments and he agrees that 'harmonies are just passing hints at an order that can only exist in the mind', which is a

nice way of putting things. **60.** *Piano Solo #1* is for James McIlwrath bcos he did a collaboration called 'This Piece is Not About You' with Pip Booth and he performed some viola music, then on a screen behind him I think he projected all the thoughts/anxieties that came into his head whenever he performed. One of the phrases that came up was that he performed because 'he wanted people to want to be him'. I thought it was refreshing that he articulated that. **61.** The different coloured cards represent 4 different commentaries I wrote for this piece - red on friday, yellow on saturday etc. **62.** The different coloured cards are imagined commentaries written by four of my friends about this piece - red was Marcus, yellow was Bella etc.

Appendix 2

Example of the Coloured Cards used in OSL for Piano Solo #1
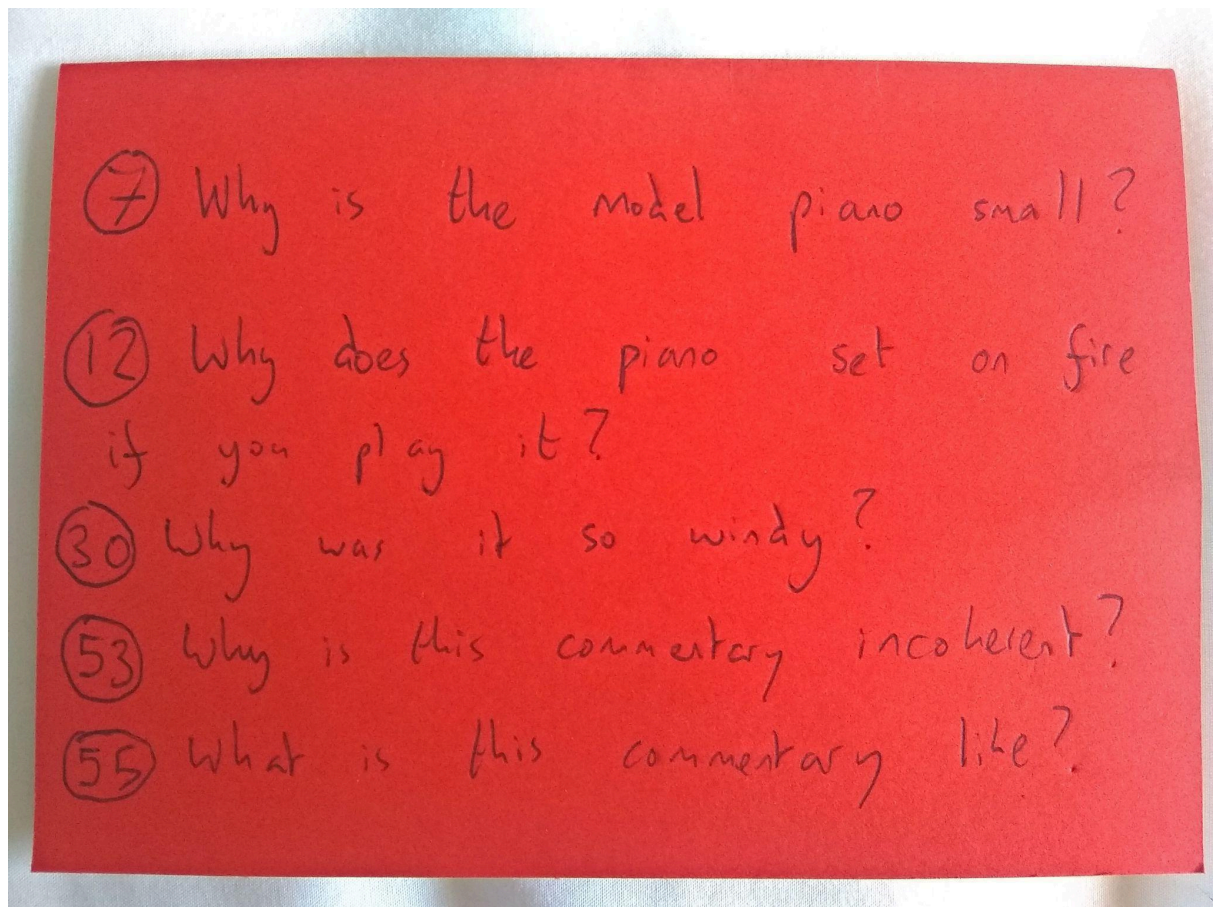
(Please) Don't Feed the Trolls

**Wear a disguise to an online seminar you've been invited to.
Don't break character.
Prepare material in advance, and only speak when spoken to.**

<u>Commentary</u>

(Please) Don't Feed the Trolls is part of an ongoing exploration into alternative performance structures, and this piece utilises an interactive audience who may or may not provide precoded cues for the presentation of material. The length and content of the piece are all dependent on these audience gestures, and if no cues are provided then no material will be performed. The construction of this piece is informed by works from Ian Baxter, Andy Ingamells, and the Mood Conductor Framework developed at Queen Mary University.

Aside from these indeterminate and participatory elements, the piece explores the themes of identity and anonymity online, Heiner Goebbels' *Aesthetics of Absence*, and the ficto/critical strategies of Gerrit Hass (particularly the absurdist methodologies used to challenge dominant critical discourse tropes within academia).

Ultimately, the work is a celebration of disruption as a dramaturgical device, manifested in the creation of an (unusually polite) internet troll. It is an adaptation of a piece in *The Experimental Composition Clinic* - a collection of participatory exercises for private performance which move towards an experimental-music therapy primarily informed by relational aesthetics, music-after-sound, media theory, and performance art (as opposed to the classical tradition, improvisation practices, and popular song). *(Please) Don't Feed the Trolls* is also part of an ongoing series of pieces written in response to the texts selected by the Bath Spa and Southampton University Doctoral Reading Group.

'Can You Not?': Non-Performance in New Music

Introduction

Evocative as it is, 'non-performance' within the contemporary contexts of classical music remains undefined. It is attached in turn to the informal performances of Romantic symphonies, or the imaginative realisations of conceptual works, and is often conflated with private performances, participatory works, observation-as-performance, and incomplete performances or works for non-humans. *'Can You Not?'* will argue that non-performance is the manipulation of form, rather than content, and will chart the roles of performer and audience in musical works which reject the necessity for either one or the other.

Specifically, the case studies presented in this paper have been selected to celebrate the contradictions, amalgamations, and abstractions offered to musicians who deliberately obstruct their own performativity, in order to illustrate that the negation of conventional performance practice, rather than an aggressive or dismissive gesture, can be a revolutionary motioning towards a world which need not be as it seems. As such, the pieces examined in this text are far from canonic, instead offering examples which shine a light onto what is *not happening* in contemporary music, rather than what we already know to exist. *To reinforce this, works have been selected from composers who were under the age of 25 when their pieces were completed, and it is also the case that these pieces were all written between the beginning of 2018 and the end of 2019.*

Audience Participation

Zidane Larson is a musician and performance artist, *currently based in Manchester. For the past year, they have been performing an unnamed work based on audience interventions across high streets throughout the North of England.* Specifically, since the 3rd of June, 2018, Zidane has spent daylight hours on Saturdays seated on the ground, with a toy piano sat in front of him, and an upturned flat-cap set in front of the toy piano. Their location throughout the city is determined by chance, though the apparatus Zidane uses to pick locations is such that it generally selects pedestrian areas with high foot-fall, as it relies on the data generated by thefts from retail premises. Once situated, Zidane waits patiently for a passing member of the public to drop a coin into their hat, at which point Zidane plays a clanking rendition of *'Amazing Grace'* on the toy piano. As Zidane writes:

'When I moved to Manchester, I was struck by the number of homeless people throughout the city. Part of me wanted to help, *and the public donations I take are passed onto a local charity.* But part of me wanted to understand too, and the piece is primarily an

articulation of the conflicts attached to empathetic gestures in
art.

Between criticisms of delegated performance, the problematisation of social
hierarchies or implied structures of power in community-arts, and accusations
of appropriation or unacknowledged privilege, you reach the point where
every artistic response you come up with can be negated by a philosophy of
ethics. It often feels as though this hyper-intellectualisation of
morality ultimately results in inaction, and this piece is a
reflection of these tendencies; this work is dependent on validation from
members of the public, so it is often the case that I will spend a whole day sitting silently
on the streets of Manchester, being no use to anyone.

While elements of Zidane's work could be argued to negate late-capitalism, religion,
identity-politics, and a whole array of symbols and structures, it is poetic that
ultimately the unnamed work is perhaps best read as a generalised
critique of criticism itself.

Performance for Non-Humans

Aaron Moorehouse is a British-Asian artist from Leeds. He studied
composition with Roger Marsh and Andy Ingamells, and his first
orchestral work (titled *Symphony Number None*) is a work for the
private rehearsals of a symphony orchestra. Each of the score's instrumental
parts is full of complex staff notation made up of precise rhythms and prescribed pitches,
all marked with dynamics ranging from '*ppp*' to '*pppppp*'. Meanwhile, although the piece
is conducted, the conductor works from a separate sheet of text-based instructions, as a
full score for the work does not exist. In this respect, the
material sounds of the piece are similarly elusive, as all
performers must wear foam ear defenders whenever material is
either performed or rehearsed (though knowing for certain when one
action or the other is happening is made deliberately ambiguous). The
justification for this absence of sound is articulated with a handwritten-inscription which hangs over each of the
scores - a quotation from La Monte Young arguing that 'it didn't seem to me at all
necessary that anyone or anything should have to hear sounds and
that it is enough that they exist for themselves'. Aaron explains that:

'The piece is similar to a lot of my works, in that it tries to be
lots of things in order to illustrate the subjectivity of
complexity, the illusionary and exclusionary nature of harmony,
and the meaninglessness of meaning. Commentaries to my pieces work
in similar ways, and I often retrospectively attach a slew of
associations to completed works in order to show that nothing
means anything anyway. I do this to prove a point that new-music composition
courses aren't about learning to arrange material, they're about learning to *justify* the
arrangement of material, so I find it interesting to play with which compositional devices
and aesthetics can be invoked in order to escape (or invite) the necessity for justification

in academia. Similarly, if aesthetic consistency and self-awareness
are the only barometers of success, then I use my work to explore
where the frame for this consistency ends. Can constant
inconstancy be successful? I'm just another clichéd postmodernist,
really.

As such, *Symphony Number None* is alternately making the point that
I think new orchestral works are needless, that humans are selfish,
and that despite all this I still want to write an orchestral work because I am
vain. It also asks questions about sustainability and material waste, gate-keeping, and the
codification of noise, as well as the wider audiences of sound - as the quiet orchestral
material is used to exaggerate the presence of pitches which fall outside the range of
human perception. The piece also questions the assumptions of absolute
music, as ultimately it strips away sound to reveal a musical
experience which is introspective, affirmatory, and satisfying for
the orchestral players. The piece similarly investigates concepts surrounding mediation,
authorship and authenticity, Western art practices in general, and lemons, and Lemmings, and maybe it will mean
some different things tomorrow if I need it to, too.'

Incomplete Performance

Kia Clark is a composer from Sheffield. She studied a BA in Music and has gone on to compose
for the now-defunct medium of Vine, even though the platform she utilises has been shut
down. Vine was a video-sharing social media network, where users
would upload short snippets of original video (vines) that were
capped by the platform at a duration of seven seconds. The
application became hugely popular, especially with teenagers,
though a frequent criticism of the content format was that it was indicative of
the reduced attention-span of millennials, with the implication being that this
corresponded with a lack of motivation in Generation Z. *Kia argues against this*
interpretation, explaining that:

'I found these presumptions to be close-minded and needlessly disparaging. Rather than
promoting carelessness and laziness in its users and creators, I believe Vine encouraged
hyper-analytical thought processes whereby tone, content, narrative, and harmony all had
to be evaluated, deduced and composed in just 7 seconds. Vine is the illustration of a
modernised efficiency and awareness of material, and anyway, people seem to
be fine with Haikus.

I've chosen to continue to compose occasional works which are exclusively for Vine - I've manipulated
archived versions of the application in order to send the vines I create on a journey towards their own
cyber-disintegration. I find it cathartic, especially as a young composer
whose audible works are rarely performed, as it reminds me of the
enjoyment I get from composing, and the autonomy I can still
afford to that pursuit. Lately, I've been recording one second of
audio for each day of the week, and every Sunday I'll mesh these
snippets together, and post the package off on its way into

cyberspace, without listening to the sounds myself. I like to imagine these little musical collages existing as bubbles somewhere in another world - bubbles which have yet to be popped by the provocation of perception or the necessity for affirmation.'

Kia acknowledges that her vine compositions draw somewhat on Jennifer Walshe's *THMOTES* project - text-scores disseminated through the Snapchat application, while Kia's pieces also extend the eulogisation of discarded media forms into the 21st century. However, whereas the gradual irrelevance imposed upon analogue media mediums has been a process its disciples have been able to delay, the death of Vine illustrates the brutality of internet-media executions - with millions upon millions of experiences and communications deleted (to all intents and purposes) as a single switch sends a server into its slumbering disservice.

Participatory Works

James McIlwrath is a composer and performer from Bangor. He completed an undergraduate degree in Music at the University of York, and is currently studying an MA in Experimental Performance at The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. His text-score titled *'There are at least 20000 buses'* consists of the following two phrases:

> Bring an assortment of musical instruments to a bus stop
> Start a band

'I remember watching an episode of *Antiques Roadshow* before I wrote this piece. The programme features members of the public, who bring along family heirlooms, trinkets, and other memorabilia to stately homes across rural England. The objects are then examined and evaluated by a selection of kindly experts of various antiquities.
It's a fairly benign show, with the familiar glaze of late-afternoon BBC2 charm seeping softly through it.
Anyway, during this episode, an elderly gentleman bumbled along with a very old map of London, which his own great-grandfather had purchased on the occasion of his first trip to the capital more than 200 years ago. The gentleman seemed a little nervous about appearing on television, and as he showed the map to the cartographer, the expert asked a few questions to ease the tension. He asked whether the gentleman had brought anyone along with him to the show, and the old man's eyes lit up as he said his wife of 65 years was here. The camera panned to the lady in question, and she went on to tell a very matter-of-fact story about how the pair of them had 'just started chatting at a bus stop and things went from there really'.
I decided to write a text-score to capture this imagined-nostalgia for a time before my time, when people might have once spoken to one another.'

While the first half of the score is a nod towards the Antiques Roadshow format, and the imagined or elusive histories of certain musical instruments (James himself plays viola), the second instruction-phrase deals more explicitly with ideas of community: taken together, the two contrasting phrase-lengths visualise the physical journey to the bus stop. However, a contradiction persists. And after the performer, dawdling, drags the cumbersome objects to their destination, they stand confused as to how to interpret the piece's participatory instruction. This deciphering is by far the most challenging of the two tasks, and this indecision and alienation is illustrated by the lack of punctuation at the end of the score.

Imaginative Elements

This next piece is the only composition with a material presence online (it appears in Jamie Allen's *Imaginary Sound Works* archive), and it is only included in this analysis due to, as well as in spite of, its complete anonymity. *The text, posted in April, 2019* (which incidentally makes it the only composition from this once-burgeoning imaginary archive to fall within the historical parameters of this study), reads as follows:

Postcoital cacophony

Couples record themselves making love with a hand-held recorder. The unedited files are sent to a discreet collagist, who layers hundreds upon hundreds of these files together in ProTools. The results are broadcast for five minutes on BBC1, just after 'Look North' and before 'The One Show'.

Like most of the other compositions presented in this analysis, *Postcoital Cacophony* is similarly obsessed with mediation, as the couples' love-making is transposed from medium to medium by various technologies, organisations, and individuals, before finally being broadcast in the five-minute slot usually occupied by a regional weather bulletin at 6:55pm, just before programming returns to a homogenised national listing (coincidentally titled *The One Show*). The piece also encapsulates contemporary reflections on the digitisation of pornography and the dissemination of an abundance of amateur erotic material, anonymity and identity, voyeurism and the performative elements of social media, and regional and domestic communities and relationships. As such, it is appropriate that *Postcoital Cacophony's* existence is almost entirely metaphysical.

Private Performance

Gaia Blandina is a sound artist and cellist from Sicily, who has lived in Yorkshire since 2012. She is currently undertaking a PhD at York's Contemporary Music Research Centre, where she creates

interdisciplinary works exploring Deleuzian concepts of difference
and repetition. Her exhibition-installation *Baby Come Home* centres
around ideas of displacement, homeliness, and impermanence, and
consists of more than 60 tents set out across a disused church.
Inside the tents are objects, images, actors, sounds, and insects,
while members of the public are free to duck in and out through
each of the zippered entrances. The piece is a direct response to a
report from Help Refugees UK, which detailed the necessity for
donated tents in Calais - where the police were confiscating or
destroying the temporary housing of refugees during forced site
'evictions'. The exhibition's tents were donated to this cause after
the July 2019 installation closed to the public.

'I was initially interested in investigating spaces, and how we
inhabit them, or how they inhabit us. And the sense of home, of
what is home? How do we inhabit spaces, how spaces reflect on us,
how we become in a space and what does a space become when and how
we inhabit it? What do we put in a space, how do we use it, and can
public spaces be homes? How do we act in a place that is not home,
how do we act in a place that is home? Do we need a home?
Tents was the solution: 48 of them, two person camping tents, in
the stained glass centre, in York, on Micklegate, a beautiful
church with a bell tower. The tents were full or empty, accessible
or not, filled with various objects, various bodies, human bodies,
machine bodies, living and non/living bodies, ipads with Instagram
stories on loop, real living insects in plastic boxes, dying
insects in plastic boxes, dead insects in plastic boxes, fake
rubber insects in plastic boxes, edible gummy insects in plastic
boxes, flashing lights, lights with sensors, walkie-talkies,
security cameras, a knitting station, a poetry station, a collage
station, a smashing plates station, a sleeping human body, an
interactive human body, a bubble wrap bed, something to listen to,
something to talk to, and so on.
But when you enter the church all you can see is tents, and the
first thing that comes to mind is: camps, refugee camps, refugee
crisis.'

Observational Performance

Raja Maya is a composer from Bradford, who moved to Manchester for her studies. Her score
- *Bumble:Be(e)*, takes the form of an A5 sheet of card, which is titled, and
accompanied by blank spaces for texts and drawings. Raja abandons these
scores in communal areas across her university campus, and during the
summer she occasionally sets them on miniature wooden easels next to the
bodies of dead bees. The reverse of these scores contain instructions which

allow participants to send their completed scores (or photos of their completed scores) back to Raja.

'This piece is a reflection on the absence of sound, and a meditation on the interpretations imposed upon symbols; a few of the other composers on my course use emojis in otherwise conventionally-classical scores. `Bumble:Be(e)` also examines mediation - the piece came about last summer, as every day I would walk to the train station and the pavement would be littered with bees, some dying and some already dead. I'd get distressed, and when I spoke about this with my friends, we all mentioned that we'd seen a post circulating on Facebook saying how you could revive some of these bees with a sugar-and-water solution. We all agreed that we had found this advice reassuring, although ultimately none of us had ever gone to the trouble of actually enacting this intervention. As such, this piece is primarily another introspective exercise (*although I've been sent some achingly-detailed portraits of dead bees*).

When I think about the piece, it reminds me of movement, wandering and wondering, and people in transit. It reminds me of the Arianna Grande concert in Manchester, the American artist flying here from the states, the bomber at Victoria station, and my friends who are still having therapy to help move on, or past, or with, or through, the things they saw that night. It reminds me of the days after the event, the resurrection of the Manchester worker-bee as a symbol of hope and resilience, and my housemate who died in a Manchester hotel room on the night of a Tinder date, with a bee tattooed on her shoulder. It reminds me of the dating app Bumble, emblazoned with bees, which spiked in popularity after the Manchester bombings, it reminds me of the buzz of my phone, and it makes me think about death and destruction, communication and guilt. For me, *the piece represents rhizomes, speculative realism, the environment, and a hive of inter-connectivity between places and people and technologies and media and things*. The piece is about be(🐝)ing.'

Postscript

Zidane Larson's name was created by a random-name generator, though coincidentally, this is also the name of a YouTube channel posting football highlights. However, **Gaia Blandina** and **James McIlwrath** are real musicians, and their works referenced here exist (though the commentary to Jim's piece has been fabricated). **Aaron Moorehouse** also exists, and he wrote this essay, though he doesn't believe in some of the justifications he included in his commentary for *Symphony Number None* (which is a real piece he has yet to complete).

Kia Clark is another random-name, though one chosen because it evokes Aaron's memories of a girl he still has feelings for, and although Kia's piece doesn't exist in its entirety, fragments of the work are contained within other pieces by Aaron. Both *Postcoital Cacophony* and Jamie Allen's *Imaginary Soundworks Archive* exist online, and the score remains unedited. Furthermore, *Postcoital Cacophony* is anonymous, and, despite its references to the North of England, the score was not written by Aaron.

Raja Maya's name and piece are both fictional, and although her biography is based on fact, it is an amalgamate of two biographies, one of which is Aaron's.

Aaron is the only artist here who is self-referentially non-performative, and Gaia is the only (identifiable) artist who at the time of writing was over the age of 25, though it is true that all the material pieces included here were written between 2018 and 2019.

Throughout this essay, gradations of grey highlighters are used to hint towards a clause's ficticity, while statements left against a whiter background are more sincere. This element of the text is included as a not-so-subtle hint towards the limitations of canons and categorisations, and an acknowledgement that not everything can be put in black and white.

Finally, it is worth explaining that this piece of writing is the second incarnation of *'Can You Not?',* the first being a conventionally-canonical exploration into a definition for non-performance. This second version of *'Can You Not?'* was created following discussions with Andy Ingamells, and it exists as a response to Bradford Bailey's criticisms of Jennie Gottschalk's *Experimental Music Since 1970*. Inevitably, this essay also takes heart from Jennifer Walshe's imagined Irish Avant-Garde, the writing of John Cage, and the broader field of ficto-criticism in general.

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Symphony Number One

(For ensembles of more than 15 children, and assorted instruments)

Instructions

Children are divided into between 5-10 small groups with a minimum of 3 children in each group, depending on how many children are present.

Then, groups are asked to come up with three sounds for their group to perform (eg. a percussion sound, a vocal sound, and an instrumental sound).

Once all groups have chosen their sounds, this material is cued in a variety of different ways - first, with the whole ensemble changing from their first sound to their second sound on the cue of the conductor (and the same for the second to third), then with the transitions of individual groups being cued by the conductor.

Eventually, these groups are dispersed, and children are free to make their own decisions as to when they move onto their next sound. Walking variations of the piece may also be introduced.

Once familiar with the process, the piece may be completed in smaller groups, or with solo parts. In addition, any number of variations may be added, and more agency given to the children as they become more comfortable with making creative choices and more adept at performing collectively. Children may also be offered the chance to fulfil the role of conductor.

This is a story about me and Zayn Malik (2020)

https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=NVngV7-cp_I

So yeah, this is a story about me and Zayn Malik, which sounds far-fetched, but bear with me on this. And I had to record it just because I used to have a stutter when I was growing up, and I think I must still have a lot of latent anxiety about communicating verbally, so if I tried to do this live it would be twice as long. And it's already going to be long enough already I think. Anyway, yeah, so Zayn! He's most well-known for being part of One Direction, a boy-band who were formed by Simon Cowell on The X Factor in 2010. And they went on to become probably the biggest boy-band in the world for a few years. Now, they were put together as a super-group on the show, made up of five individual contestants who hadn't quite made the cut as solo acts, so they were from all over the country. I think Liam was from Doncaster, and Harry Styles was from Bedford or somewhere down South. And as it turns out, me and Zayn went to the same high school together, though he's two years older than me. We grew up in Keighley in West Yorkshire. It's a former market-and-mill textile town that runs down into Bradford a few miles down the road, and it got caught up in the 2001 Bradford riots. One on side of these riots there were South Asians and the Anti-Nazi League, while on the other there were members of the BNP, and the National Front. It was confrontational but there wasn't much fighting as such, it was more the case that each side would torch the other's properties and businesses, and the fire-bombing of the Manningham Labour Club is one of the most recognisable images from the rioting. Meanwhile you had the West Yorkshire Police Department running around trying to keep a lid on things. My dad worked for the local police at the time, and on the Sunday evening before another night of rioting he drove a police riot van through Ravenscliff Estate in the city centre, blasting 'We Gotta Get Out of this Place' by The Animals over the tannoy, and all the residents came out of their houses to dance in the streets. There's still a lot of racial tension in Bradford and Keighley, even though there isn't that much violence. It's more like a restlessness that has to be forcibly restrained, and it leads to a hostility that permeates a city which is still segregated to all intents and purposes. And it was the same when I was at school. I went to Tong High School in Bradford and it's fairly small - there's around 1000 pupils of mixed ethnicities. And in the classrooms anyone would talk to anyone, and so I had lots of mates who were from the Asian community, and lots from the white community. But it was different at break times, when everyone had to go down to the tennis courts and there'd be a few different year groups sharing each. There was one entrance to the tennis court when I was in year 7, and the middle of the entrance lined up with the posts that held up the tennis nets which ran down till the end of the courts. And so as you walked into the courts, all the white kids would go off to one side, and all the Asian kids would go to the other. And there wasn't any fighting, or any real antagonism, it was just segregated and people kept themselves to themselves, and during classes would be when white kids would talk to Asian kids and have a laugh and things. Anyway, I was mixed-race, and there were maybe 20 of us in total across Key Stage 3, which is like made up of 11-14 year olds. And every break time, we'd stand just inside the entrance to the tennis courts, before the first post, and that was the area where we all hung out. But again, we weren't being marginalised, it was just how things were, and if you identified as being mixed-race then you hung out at the entrance, whereas if you identified as being Asian, maybe even if you were mixed-race, you'd hang out with the Asians, and if you identified as a white kid even if you were mixed-race then you'd hang out with the white kids at break time. So it was self-imposed segregation and there wasn't hostility because everyone hung out together in classrooms, and as we'd be standing at the entrance to the courts you'd get fistbumps from the Asian kids you knew and white kids you knew as they walked past to go to their side of the court. And so me and Zayn first met because we were both in this group of mixed-race kids standing at the entrance to the courts. He was in year 9, and I was in year 7, but he didn't look the same as he does now of course. For starters he was really short, maybe 5 foot until he

was 14, and then he started to grow and now he's 6 foot something I think. And he was obviously a good-looking kid but because he was so small he was recognised as being the short kid more than anything else, especially because he moved to the school in Year 8, and by year 9 he still didn't know as many people, and he was a bit of an outsider even in our little group of mixed-race kids, like he didn't feel like one of the older kids. He just was a very quiet, unassuming kid who didn't really have many friends yet, though it didn't seem as though he was getting picked on by anyone either. Anyway, because of all these levellers, and I was quite lanky when I was 11, we ended up talking a lot at the entrance to the courts. We weren't best mates or anything, because my best mates from school were the people I had classes with, and it was presumably the same for him too, whereas this group of mixed-race kids was quite a subdued kinda friendship really, with a level of formality to how we interacted with each other. But, out of that group, I probably spent most of my time talking to Zayn, and we got to know about each other's families, and he really loved his mum especially I remember, and we spoke about football and that and ambitions, and like all of us he wanted to get out of Bradford and do his own thing one day. But most of the time we talked about music, which was his big thing. I remember when I first mentioned that I played piano and from then on he just started talking about music and going on and on, y'know he was really enthusiastic about what he was listening to, and what he liked, and he had really good taste - much better than mine, and every now and then at break time he'd come up and he'd be like 'yo dude, you've gotta hear this' and he'd send me some hip-hop or rap over bluetooth and he'd give tips for how to listen to it. So for some it'd be to wait until it was dark and then play it through your headphones in bed, or for others it would be something to play through speakers in the morning if you're having a hard time waking up. And so over time, I remember all these little snapshots of his relationship with music that he shared with me, and it ended up that we'd both be playing the same songs before school in the mornings, and falling asleep to the same tracks. But aside from that, we still weren't particularly close, and we didn't hang out after school or anything, and at the end of Year 9 for him, he moved up to the 10-11 court and I had another two years in the Key Stage 3 one. And that was just how things happened, and we'd say hi when we saw each other around school still but he'd be with friends from his year and I'd be with friends from mine. And that's how things were for a while, and I didn't think much of it.Until in year 8 was when everyone started slowly getting facebook. Most of us had had MSN Messenger before, and MySpace, but Facebook was the one that everyone jumped on, and whereas on MSN you might have 30 contacts, and MySpace maybe 50-60 connections, Facebook was the one where you'd connect with people from different years, kids who you recognised rather than necessarily knew, and so everything expanded a little bit. And me and Zayn became facebook friends, and we'd chat a little bit, mainly just him sending me tunes still, which I appreciated, and occasionally catching up about family and school and it seemed like he was properly settled in by this point and getting into a bit of the good kind mischief with kids in his year, like the things that show that you're included, and he got in a bit of trouble for bringing a BB gun into school at one point. But yeah, that's how things continued for a while: we'd say hi at school, but mainly we'd be catching up every now and then online, and throwing each other music to listen to.Then towards the end of year 9, when he was 16, so he must have been in Year 11, he messaged me being like 'yo, do you have the code for A13?', and I said I did, and he asked me to meet him there the next day. And A13 was a music practice room where the self-employed instrumental teachers would come and teach during the day. But there wasn't much enthusiasm for that kind of thing, and they didn't have much equipment, like no pianos or anything, but there were a few school guitars that they had in there, and I was having lessons with the guy who came and taught guitar, so I had the code to get in. And we met the next day and he told me about this X factor audition. Only his mum had known about it, and I didn't even know he sung, but he'd went along to Leeds for the first audition, which is still a couple of auditions before the theatre auditions which are recorded for television, and he said he'd been invited back for the next one. So he said he wanted to do some extra practice of his songs he was preparing. And from then on, during first break we'd pop up to those practice rooms and check if they were free. And if they were, he'd practise his singing, and I'd play some chords on the guitar, then we'd do our own things at lunchtime.

And his two songs were Let Me Love You by Mario, and We Just Gotta Get Out of This Place by The Animals. And I understood why he'd chosen the first song because that was something quite cool, but the second one seemed a bit weird, and I was like why the one by The Animals, and he said it was one of his mum's favourites and he wanted to sing it for her. And each time he went to auditions he'd say his first choice was The Animals song, but they kept on asking him to sing the song by Mario instead. And he got through the first audition, and the second, and the third, and the whole time he made me promise not to tell anyone at school about it, and he only told his mum and dad, and his older sister. So I told my friends I was teaching him guitar, and no one asked too many questions and together we kept all the X Factor stuff under wraps. And he got through to the first round of the tv auditions held in the theatres, and he got invited to the Manchester ones.And he got through again, and came back to school for a little while before boot-camp, which is when his first audition was televised in the UK. And it was so surreal because of course the school exploded, and Zayn was already over in LA at Simon Cowell's house. And obviously, he got eliminated as a solo singer, and Harry, Louis, Niall and Liam all did too, until Simon grouped them together as a boy-band and gave them another chance to go as a group to the live finals, and the rest, as they say, is history. And he never came back to school, but not out of laziness or arrogance, he moved down to London so that all of the band could be together to practise during the week, before each live show. And ITV put them up in some accommodation, and offered to pay for tutors for them to keep up with their A-Levels but obviously they all wanted to give the competition the best shot they could, so they'd just rehearse and rehearse and rehearse. And I'd message him good luck before the shows, but we weren't really that close and it felt natural that when everything took off we just drifted apart, and he deactivated his facebook when the attention became too crazy. And when I mention I knew him, people are always like 'omg why aren't you still in touch'. But everyone at my school went to school with Zayn Malik, and he's still friends with who he used to hang out with, but there's no reason for him to cart around 1000 other pupils with him in his entourage for the rest of his life. And it's been over a decade since it all happened now, too.

But he's been in touch a couple of times. The first time, he rang me up out of the blue after X Factor was over, and he said thank you for helping him practise his songs, and we laughed about how the whole time they never let him sing 'We Gotta Get Out of This Place', and joked that if we'd spent all that time just practising the Mario song then maybe he'd have gotten through as a solo artist in the first place. And he mentioned that I should get in touch if I needed anything, but I was just really pleased for him and everything he'd already achieved, and I'd got my offer from uni, and it was nice to feel as though we'd both gotten out of Bradford. And the second time was a few years ago, when he found me on facebook and messaged me with a private account he had with his name spelt incorrectly. It was a few weeks after he left 1D, and he messaged me a photo of his arm, with a new tattoo with the title of The Animals song - 'We Gotta Get Out of This Place', and he wrote a little caption saying he was still running away from things. But I think he's quite happy now, and he's expecting his first child in a few weeks. So that'll be nice. But yeah, me and Zayn.

Example scores from *The Experimental Composition Clinic* (2020, incomplete work)

1. **Gratitude Étude**

   Gratitude Étude
   Suitable for: those who have received formal education in experimental music
   Signature Strengths: Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence, Creativity, Gratitude, Love

   Think of a lecturer, colleague, or peer who has had a prominent impact on your compositional aesthetic. Write a text-score that best sums up their attitudes towards experimental music which have had the greatest positive impact on your own work. Post your score to them, along with a dedication or explanation if desired.

2. **Stars**

   Stars
   Suitable for: anyone who has received a acoustic musical instrument as a gift
   Signature Strengths: Curiosity, Fairness, Gratitude, Open-Mindedness, Perseverance

   Late at night, record a series of random pitches on your chosen instrument. Each pitch should be produced as quietly as possible, and sound for as long as possible. Layer up takes of this material without listening to the results, and when you are too tired to continue, playback the amalgamated audio. Sleep, decide tomorrow whether to tidy up the audio, or repeat the process, or whether to send it to whomever gave you your instrument.

3. **A Song for Sound and Silence**

   A Song for Sound and Silence
   Suitable for: composers or conversationalists
   Signature Strengths: Curiosity, Fairness, Integrity, Love, Open-Mindedness, Perspective, Social Intelligence, Self-Control

   'At times, the texture of a silence is best left undisturbed, as a shared silence can give birth to a deepening of expression.'

   Structure a conversation with someone you know well, in a way that affords them the opportunity to talk about themselves, and to provide an overwhelming majority of the content.
   Try to refrain from verbal gestures which simply reinforce your own presence, and be wary of the urge to fill silences with speech. Instead, respond more precisely to the body language of the other, in order to perceive invitations to offer dialogue, and when you feel uninvited consider whether an interjection is necessary within the context of this task.

When you feel invited to speak, sway towards questions at least most of the time. If you generally struggle to think of what to ask, keep monitoring the other's body language, and ask them further about the subjects that animated them the most.

4. The Road Less Travelled

The Road Less Travelled
Suitable for: two or more walkers
Signature Strengths: Bravery, Enthusiasm, Humour, Leadership, Perseverance, Purpose, Self-Control, Teamwork

During the appropriate leg of a familiar journey, take turns to count how many steps forward you can take with your eyes closed. While one walks, the other supervises. As you alternate, attempt to beat your own previous score, and provide encouragement for others when they beat their own score.

Application to Access 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack

This form must be completed in order to formally request copies of the performance's accompanying electronic materials. Once this request has been received, it will be considered at the next meeting of The Music Box membership (held monthly), and the request will either be accepted or rejected as the panel see fit.

* Indicates required question

Full Name of Applicant*

Your answer

Occupation*

Your answer

Professional Affiliations (if applicable)

Your answer

Brief Overview of the Application: Describe your reasons for submitting a request to access 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack*

Your answer

Disclosure of Intent: List the ways in which 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack will be used by the Applicant*

Your answer

Disclosure of Relations: List any (known) pre-existing relationships the Applicant has with The Music Box membership*

Your answer

Disclosure of Potentials: List any potential negative impacts (for the Applicant themselves, or for any pre-existing relationships they may already share with members of The Music Box membership) that may result from the Applicant's receipt of 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack*

Your answer

Disclosure of Possibilities: To the best of the Applicant's knowledge, will receipt of 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack cause harm to the Applicant or have negative consequences for them that exceed those experienced in everyday life?*

Yes

No

Disclosure of Preparedness: To the best of the Applicant's knowledge, will receipt of 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack raise any issues which should be the subject of ethical consideration and/or review?*

Yes

No

Disclosure of Dissemination: Does the Applicant intend to share the contents of 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack with anyone who has not submitted an Application to Access 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack*

Yes

No

Consent: I (the Applicant) consent to my responses being considered by The Music Box Membership, and I confirm that the responses I have provided are accurate to the best of my abilities.*

Yes

No

'Application to Access 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack' - Example of Typical

Correspondence

21 Sep 2021

Hi Aaron
Please can you send me the documentation for the project?
Thanks
P*

27 Sep 2021

Dear P*,

Thank you for getting in touch.

There's a short form that needs to be filled out in order to access 'The Music Box'
Documentation Pack.
Here's the link: https://forms.gle/qbb6wwBVp11E1GHAA

From there, the full panel will review your application at our next meeting and we'll take
things from there.
Also, I can see that you know Aaron, which isn't a problem but please make sure to disclose
the nature of this relationship on your application. Otherwise it will be rejected.

Sincerely,
DT

8 Oct 2021

Dear P*,

Just to confirm that we've received your application form.
The panel are next due to meet on Tuesday the 19th of October, and I'll be in touch shortly
afterwards.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,
DT

Dear P*,

Thank you for your patience with the application process, the Music Box Membership met yesterday and we discussed your responses at length - thank you for cooperating.

We are happy to move things forward so long as you can provide clarification on the following point relating to the Disclosure of Preparedness question (reprinted below):

Disclosure of Preparedness: To the best of the Applicant's knowledge, will receipt of 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack raise any issues which should be the subject of ethical consideration and/or review?

You answered 'Yes' to this question, and the membership have requested that you clarify the ethical issues that you believe may be received by your receipt of 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack, in advance of receiving the Documentation Pack.
If you could provide some elaboration in a reply to this email, I'll pass it onto the Membership at the next monthly meeting.

Yours sincerely,
DT

21 Oct 2021

My ethical concerns relate to the conflict of interest I raised as Aaron's PhD supervisor. I think it is probably fine and I'm just being careful, but my dual role as a recipient of the Documentation Pack and someone involved in Aaron's wider project made me question receipt of the materials. At this stage I don't know what the materials are though, so my concern may be unfounded.

Thanks you for your careful consideration of my application, which is very much appreciated.

P*

25 Oct 2021

Dear P*,

Thank you for your prompt and considered response, it's much appreciated.
The membership next meet on the 23rd of November, and I'll be in touch shortly after with an updated outcome.

Sincerely,
DT

Dear P*,

Thank you for your patience.
The membership met yesterday, and approved your Application to Access (APA) the Documentation Pack. I'd like to thank you again for providing the clarifications we requested.

The next stage in the process is a lot simpler, even if it takes longer to explain:
To summarise, the Documentation Pack exists as a single-copy document, but in electronic form, as we only want one person to be able to access it at any one time. So, if you if you write back to me with when you'd like to be in possession of the Documentation Pack, I'll send it out to you in a scheduled email (as long as the Documentation Pack is 'available' during this period).
And, as this is your first time viewing the Documentation Pack, you're currently only able to request possession for a maximum of 48 hours.
Once you've made this request, the Documentation Pack will arrive as a PDF that will self-destruct at the end of your allotted time.
Then, if you'd like to view the Documentation Pack again after your possession period has elapsed, you will be required to fill in another APA. However, further approvals will result in you being granted access to the Documentation Pack for longer periods of time.

Any questions, let me know.
Sincerely,
DT

6 Dec 2021

Please could I request access beginning on Monday 20 December.
Many thanks

P*

8 Dec 2021

Dear P*,

Thanks - looks good with our schedule.
You'll receive an email with a link to the file at 00:00 on the 20th.
Then the file will expire at 00:00 on the 22nd.

Sincerely,
DT

8 Dec 2021

Great, thanks

P*

20 Dec 2021

Dear P*,

As requested, here's a link to 'The Music Box' Documentation Pack.

https://digify.com/s/ukIKIQ

To access the file, you'll have to enter your email address (P*.P*@gmail.com).

Please take some time to read the recipient contract which is printed on Page 3.

Sincerely,
DT

21 Dec 2021

Thanks. I have now accessed the documentation.

P*

22 Dec 2021

Great stuff - glad things worked out.
Your copy of the document has expired now, in any case.

If you'd like any further information, you're welcome to pass any requests or questions onto me, and I'll bring it up with the membership at one of our future meetings. I'm also here for any general enquiries.
But as I mentioned before, to view the documentation pack again you'll need to complete another APA.

All the best for the holiday period.
Sincerely,
DT

The music therapists' responses to 'What has your music done?'

Hi Aaron,

Here goes... I am not sure I even get close to the meaning though! Probably best to play it rather than say it.

What has my music done?
It has moved and shaked,
connected and rejected,
brought tears and guffaws,
made me look and made them heard,
it has hated and it has loved,
it has vibrated and it has silenced,
made them alive and made me live.

Sounds really interesting to me - happy to go ahead.

Here is my answer:

My music has helped to improve communication, interaction, self-esteem and confidence.

My music has contributed to a safe space to open up

My music has provided calm

My music has provided motivation

My music has encouraged movement

My music has brought me down to my client's levels to interact in a way suited to them

My music has become "our music"

Hope that's ok!

All the best,

I washed my hands rigorously and gowned up.
I was told I could not bring my instrument into the ICU; the guitar would have to wait outside. Armed with the only instrument inseparable from my person, my voice, the doors of the ICU were opened for me.
I entered another world, a world of continuous beeping machines, heavy breathing ventilators, squeaking wheels of surgical trolleys going back and forth from one patient to another, the click clack of heels on a hard floor, the cacophony of sound could have almost resembled a John Cage composition, or better still a number with Bjork from Dancer in the Dark. However, the sounds continued in their own monotonous fashion neither developing

dynamically or rhythmically.

At first it was difficult not to get emotionally pulled into the scenario of the young patients immobile and "sleeping", hooked into various machinery. Most were in a "natural" coma other in a medically induced coma. I concentrated on the task in hand, to bring a musical dimension into this sterile land and its inhabitants.

The nurse's transmission for my first patient was clear, a young sixteen-year-old girl who was in a traffic accident and who had arrived a few days before. Her mother was having difficulty accepting the scene, in shock, she was unable to look at her daughter and sat by the bedside looking down at her shoes.

I went up and asked the mother if she would mind if I sang a short song to her daughter, she nodded slowly, I wasn't sure if she had taken in my words. Giving her a reassuring smile, I took a deep breath, moved closer to the teenager and cautiously started to gently hum; "Summertime" by Ira and George Gershwin.

Once I felt assured that the humming wasn't having an adverse effect on the young girl, I sang slowly the first verse, almost in time with the rhythm of her breathing.

I noticed straight away the rapid eye movement and a slight twitching of the fingers of the left hand, I continued, playing with the melody and harmony of the song.

By now the mother had lifted her head up and was now gazing at her daughter, as if she suddenly recognised her for the first time. There were some more slight microscopic movements of the hand and foot from the girl.

Then I was taken by surprise, the mother spontaneously took her daughter's hand and hummed along with my singing.

I continued to the end of the song, then I quietly walked away.

The music had left its almost intangible mark.

I'm trying to figure out what 'my music' means before I get to what it has done. Every music I meaningfully encounter feels like 'my music' in a sense:

There's music other people wrote and I play. Which I perceive as loyally voicing their ideas through the filters of my interpretation, thus making it my own in some ways.

There is music I listen to or used to listen to, which feels mine in the sense that I intimately relate to it. Meaning, there are pieces that are deeply ingrained in my life experiences as well as in the development of my musicianship. So the music was given to me and the listening experience is my own.

There is music I improvise with others which feels more like 'our' music than 'mine'. A lot of the music I improvise or compose is done in support of other people and their music. As a piano teacher (which I have been most of my adult life) my music was meant to support my students' learning and as a music therapist my improvisations are mostly led by the clients' needs (or at least what I think they are).

So I would say that my musical creativity is strongly focused on relationships with others, and mostly in a supportive capacity.
I do compose for myself from time to time, but strangely that is the part of 'my music' which I have the hardest time relating to with ease.

So I think my music has deepened relationships with others, created relationships, gave me a chance
to explore the world through its sounds (whatever that means), it changed and grew (and is still
doing that)

What has my music done?
Well…it did nothing wrong, I hope :)

As a therapist I find this a difficult question to answer as I do not feel the therapist ever owns the music. It is not 'my' music, but music created within a therapeutic relationship, using the musical ideas presented by the client and with their feelings and needs at the centre of the musicking (Small, 1998). Therefore, perhaps we could think about what the act of musicking can do.

The act of musicking in the therapy room can 'do' many things. I have found that active music making has created moments of joy, excitement, intense emotions and spontaneous creativity. Creating music together offers an opportunity for a client to experience themselves in relation to others and, in a group setting, explore family relationships. Often in a session I find myself acting as a container for the client and I am able to offer their emotions back to them in a more understandable form. For example, improvising a song using the musical words and ideas that are offered by the client in the moment. Sporadic thoughts given form musically help to make sense of the internal world of the client, for the client.

Music making offers opportunity for a client to make use of many cognitive functions which we can then use to find other activities suited to the client's ability. Singing a pre composed song offers opportunity to utilise sustained attention and semantic memory. If I then add in a vocal harmony and a client continues to sing the tune they are showing capacity for inhibitory control as they stay on their own line. It is important to note here that every time we sing a pre composed song it is different. We may use different instruments, key, articulation, speed, intention all created spontaneously within the therapeutic relationship.

Musicking can provide shared moments of joy. A group may experience joy together whilst creating a piece of music. They may also experience other intense emotions together and mirror musical sounds and ideas that show they have bene heard by others in the group.

I feel it is important to think of the music being created by the members of the group or one to one client with the therapist's role being that of a musical facilitator, holding the musical ideas and feelings of the client in mind.

Small, C. 1998. Musicking. Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press.

Spacefaring Sailor (2020)

Spacefaring Sailor is the title of a track by the SoundCloud musician Gordin Bones (GORDiN BONES), a track that became something of an epitaph for the artist after his death. It's also the name I chose to give to one of my own pieces - a shoebox containing allusions to Gordin's music.

Gordin, whose real name was Jeffrey Gustav Broman, was an American artist who, from the summer of 2011 onwards, took to SoundCloud to release his songs, typically one a week and posted on a Sunday evening. He was perennially encouraging to other creators working on the platform, and by the time of his death, on Halloween in 2012 at the age of 26, he left a significant following with a sense of loss and confusion. As such, his final pieces - which became increasingly lucid in their references to suicide, served as grieving places where his collaborators, supporters, and a handful of characters who knew him in real life would share stories, memories, and eulogies: an open obituary which has managed to preserve a community subsequently displaced by the commercialisation of the SoundCloud music platform. My shoebox piece is an articulation of some of these themes, and an affectionate attempt to continue to promote Gordin's music.

Construction

1. Work began on this piece after I admitted to my composition supervisor that the half-understood philosophical texts I was currently reading, though interesting in of themselves, seemed less useful as tools to shape my own creative practices. James was nonplussed, and with his hands he mimed the action of placing metaphysics in a box of things which may feel more appropriate to utilise further down the line. Feeling reassured, I took this as an opportunity to make use of what was presently in my 'box', which for a number of years had been the music of Gordin Bones, and I'd often found myself thinking about containing his work in one of my pieces.

2. I decided to structure the work around *Spacefaring Sailor* - a particularly poetic song taken from the middle of Gordin's discography, which contains the lyrics:

> Spacefaring sailor I will be,
> One day when I'm dead.
> All the stars are smiling at me,
> Death don't seem so bad.

These words offer a conciliatory predetermination, as well as child-like and celestial imagery, which draws parallels with some of my own work.

3. I took as my starting point a make-your-own-ship-in-a-bottle kit, which was intended to produce an American Armed Schooner Hannah. Tiny, fiddly, and coming with more than 70 small parts to assemble, the kit came with some predictably ambiguous instructions. I laboured happily through the first half of the construction, before I reached the point at which I was supposed to build the rigging and attach the sails.

4. The 5 sails had to be cut from a strip of fabric, then tied to the rigging and masts with pieces of thread. However, these threads had to pass through minute holes in the bulwark which I had already mistakenly obstructed over the course of my near-sighted construction. Theoretically, this whole system is then collapsed, and attached to a tool which, when pulled, erects and unfurls the ship's sails once it has been placed inside the glass bottle. However, unable to understand the process by which any of this occurred, I decided to build my own sails for the ship and to do away with the glass bottle - in a similar manner to how I had cast aside my philosophical texts for the time being. Incidentally, the glass bottle is now filled with spirits of a different kind.

5. Therefore, instead of sails, the finished ship was completed with a single spindly wooden mast, on which there was room to hang a sail of twelve twinkling and tinkling miniature silver bells which I had also made. These bells served to accentuate the ship's fragility and vulnerability now that it had been stripped of its intended glass dwelling. Then, in the centre of the ship's deck, I attached a human figure made out of paper clips: crouching, with his head in his hands.

6. I had originally intended to fill the ship's glass bottle with a sparkling sea of white stars. However, I now chose to instead attach these to a canvas which would be a background for the spacefaring sailor scene. The canvas materials all hold associations with Gordin's work: shavings from a silicon memory stick of his music; fragments of a CD of his songs; glass beads; dust from a Mars meteorite; pieces of a lunar meteorite; sequins, beads, and (more) sand. The canvas was made of cardboard, and I attached a stand to the back which would allow it to support itself.

7. So, I had three pieces - the paper-clip Gordin on his ship, the space-scene canvas, and a set of twelve bells which could be attached individually to the mast. Then, realising the work would one day need transporting, I began building a box to protect its contents.

8. I chose to make use of the packaging that came from the original DIY ship, though I lined it with bubble-wrap, and glued down a bottle-cap to keep the silver bells in their place. I gently set down the ship and the canvas inside the box, and filled the rest with carefully-folded transcriptions of comments from Gordin's final SoundCloud track - *There's a Red Planet Lonely*. Finally, I copied the audio file of *Spacefaring Sailor* to an MP3 player, and placed this in the box with a pair of headphones.

9. In order to provide some clarity, I inscribed Gordin's name, the chorus lyrics of *Spacefaring Sailor*, and the canvas materials onto the side of the box. I also placed an A6 card into the box, which contained fragments of contextual information (for

both my own work and Gordin's) that have been rearticulated over the course of this commentary.

10. Then, after waiting a few days to see whether my housemate would eventually move the shoebox for her new shoes to the recycling box in the kitchen (or whether she'd forever leave it by the front door where they were delivered), I placed the ship's box inside the shoe box, and filled the rest of the shoebox with crumpled-up lyrics from each of Gordin's songs.

11. I closed the lid, and scrawled 'fragile' in four places, before taking it on the bus to university. I'd told James that I'd leave it on his desk, but when I entered the music department, I saw him in the foyer where he was watching a Gamelan performance. After it had finished, he spotted me and we had a quick chat, then I handed him the box and left to do some piano practice. He took the box home and left it on his desk.

12. And that is the end of my knowledge of its journey. Myself and James have spoken about the box's contents, but as to its current location I'm none the wiser, having asked James not to mention whatever became of the box's situation. I'd always intended to present a piece about Gordin Bones in an academic context, but usually felt conflicted as to how to incorporate his music with mine in a way that felt appropriate, without it becoming a reflection of my own vanity, or an self-defeating act of plagiarism. As such, it began to feel like the most sincere way to articulate loss, would be to truly let something go, and to let Gordin do his own spacefaring thing…

References

The *Spacefaring Sailor* shoebox is a further exploration of what you can, and can't, put into a box. This follows on from similar themes in my paper *Can You Not?* - an essay which investigates elements of alternative performance practice in contemporary music, and which attempts to index existing works within a novel framework. However, rather than dealing with categorisations, *Spacefaring Sailor* deals with memory and loss.

This work makes explicit reference to Schrödinger's cat and Robert Morris' *Box with the Sounds of its Own Making* through the piece's self-containment, whereas less refined allusions are made to Viking Ship Burials, Demo CDs, and vases of ashes. The piece also takes heart from two contemporary works - a non-verbal score from James McIlwrath (who gifted me a bouncy ball without any explanation, and two months later told me that this was one of his durational performances), and a piece by Kia Clark (a fictional composer from *Can You Not?* who sent her compositions to inaccessible corners of defunct website domains).

Finally, it is the case that this commentary attempts to illustrate features of the shoebox piece. For example, the writing is intentionally misleading in order to pass my own frustration at the DIY ship's instructions over to any reader of this text. Also, 12 bullet points are used to mirror the twelve bells attached to the sail. Meanwhile, elements of private performance and incomplete performance are transposed into this commentary in order to invoke ficto-critical theory. This piece of writing is the only documentation of this piece, aside from a transcript of

a conversation I had with James Saunders, which exists for academic purposes as a way of legitimising some of my claims of intentionality. This commentary is deliberately brief.

Spacefaring Sailor **(2020) - James Saunders' Transcript**

So, erm I first heard about the box when Aaron emailed me about it rather mysteriously saying, er he had something to leave in my office for me, erm, and, which was instantly an interesting thing, I was very curious about it and quite excited having seen other things he's made so far, so, er, I, because we've been a bit disrupted with er access to campus and things going on, the day I was in, I was standing at the back of the Gamelan concert, in the gallery at the MIchael Tippett centre, erm, and turned around and Aaron was standing there with a cardboard box, which he gave to me, and that was it, didn't say anything else about it at that point. We had a very quick chat, and I said I won't open it now, erm, because I'll look at it later, and he seemed to say that was a good thing to do, the way to do it. And, I should do that, kind of, erm on my own really, so I took it back to my room, left it there for a little bit, for the rest of the day, and then bought it home along with a very, very big cardboard box which I needed for another piece. So I was sat at home that evening, this was Monday the 16th of March, and had a moment, I just sort of sat, and did an unboxing - kind of YouTube style, just opened the lid and had a look inside. I was quite surprised to see what was in there, it was a collection of what felt like, sort of packing materials that you get in a mail order, amazon order or something like that, bits of cardboard, which on closer inspection seemed to be lots of bits of screwed up, quite high-quality, thick paper, and I had a rummage around and had a quick look at those, and then found what looked like an instructions sheet, but also a card with some kind of glittery stars on it which looked quite nice, and a few other bits and pieces and devices, so I had a quick look at the card itself, and read a bit about the starting point for the piece, about the songs, and the song texts, and at that point - seeing the recorder, and other things, I thought right, I need to spend a lot more time with this, so at that point I stopped, closed the box, and put it to the side of my desk.

So the box sat on the corner of my desk for probably a week, erm, partly cos I had a strange time, quite busy, but also partly because I wanted to spend, find the right time to explore it, rather than just grab it in a moment when I had some time. Erm, so it took longer than I had anticipated to do that, partly through kind of inertia myself. So last time I sat down by myself, quite late, it was about, erm quarter past eleven, half past eleven at night, erm everyone had gone to bed, so everything was quiet, so it was nice and I sat on the sofa to look at it, erm, I'd been intrigued by it, I had as I said before, kind of opened it and looked inside to see what was roughly in there, and thought okay this looks fun.

So I sat down and opened the box, and the first thing I did was (I'm just kind of doing this at the same time just to remember my actions), opened up the bubble wrap bit, had a quick look, I had an inspection of the silver shiny card-thing, and I also, erm, read the text which was the first thing to do. It was interesting when I read the bit on the back 'my supervisor reassured me it was okay to keep philosophical out of my work for now' I can't remember saying that actually - I wonder whether I did that, but then often I think with the things you're saying I'm never entirely sure whether this was real or imaginary. So I may, that may be, I don't know, a real me or a sort of fictional me. And I think given the experience of the essay that you wrote, I think erm, I'm also now slightly apprehensive about what's real and what's not - so I'm probably committing less to things as I read them as a result of that cos I'm slightly aware of their more, erm, kind of, sort of, not sure, erm provisional that's the word I'm trying, provisional nature. So I read through the text, and on the back, erm, and looked at

things that you are definitely involved in - meditation, communities, death, and then this music of Gordin Bones who I didn't know anything about. At this point my understanding was this was highly likely this was another invented person so I kind of proceeded with that assumption. Erm, and, er, but also the processes at play in your work as well.

So I read the biography of him as well and I thought okay well, y'know, this could be real, I suddenly thought - 2011, SoundCloud wasSound Cloud active then, is that real and it made me sort of again, and so a lot of the time as you can see, I was sort of trying to work out to what extent this was a fictionalised account or a real one. I saw the website at the bottom, erm, I know people use cargo collective so I thought okay this could be real, erm and then didn't follow that up at that point obviously. So the next thing I did was erm, I read through all of the flat pieces of paper, which was quite, y'know, it was a really erm, kind of poignant, series of texts seeming to, having read the biography, they seem to be, erm, kind of, YouTube comments, SoundCloud comments, that sort of thing, people reflecting on what they've heard, and the situation of this guy dying as well. Erm and I found that, again, erm the more you read of it from people who've just discovered him, through to people who obviously worked with him for a long time, and known him, it was very moving sort of experience reading through that. So I went through all of those, and then, erm, I picked out not all actually but a selection. I looked at the, so the next thing I did was I looked at the boat, which is beautiful, I was trying to work out whether you'd made it, erm, or whether it was something you'd kind of adapted, or bought, I wasn't really sure about that, but it's a lovely little thing, erm and then the little box of tiny bells, which is really nice in the plastic lid. Erm, so I did that and then the next thing I did was I read, not all, but some of the texts which I'm assuming are kind of song lyrics, erm or poetry perhaps - looked through those, and I've just, the thing I didn't do, cos I've only just noticed the box now, is take the box - the middle box, out. So I don't even know what's underneath that, er, nothing okay. Okay, so it's just a little, kind of box which has a little bit of text on the side I think, ooh there's more on the side, ah I didn't realise this, sorry I'm just discovering this now, oh, okay, there's a few bits of writing there which I hadn't spotted until just this moment. Erm, so I did that and then the last thing I did obviously was, then listened to the recording - Spacefaring Sailor, erm which was lovely, really enjoyed that because I think there's a sense of anticipation that was created by all this obviously, erm of to what extent it was real, but also then seemingly it was, or either that you'd spent an enormous amount of time fabricating a biography of somebody and writing a lot of comments, erm, and texts, in order to sort of create this identity. Or it was real. Erm, so I listened to the music thinking, right okay, that doesn't sound like Aaron, I don't, I think it must be real at this point, then yeah, the music was great, I really loved it, erm I listened to that song, erm I think three times actually it was really good, erm and then, y'know against my better judgement, at what was nearly midnight at that point, I sat down and started googling him - which is the inevitable thing. Erm and I found quite a lot of material, lots of recordings obviously, and I thought, right okay, you've, this must be real because I don't think you probably recorded this many tracks, just in order to set this up. So y'know, I think by that point I was pretty clear anyway, and yeah, just enjoyed listening to I think another four or five songs, erm, and then, erm, closed the box and went to sleep.

Appendix 13

'PB' Evaluation of (Potential) Impacts

The (Potential) Impacts of my work with PB

Production of PB text-score

Publication in Tempo
- Potential safeguarding issues
  - School implicated
- Receiving criticism from editor and readership
- Editor and readership respond positively
- Makes me more well-known

Contributing to completion of PhD
- Providing a model for psychosocial and post-sonic composition
  - Has a positive influence on composers
  - Opportunity to teach this approach
- No one reads it anyway

Inclusion in doctoral thesis
- Contributing to failure to complete PhD
  - Waste of time and money
- Potential ethical issues
  - School implicated

Might be performed by The Assembled
- Associated with my supervisors
- Furthers my own career
- May encourage performers to consider psycho-social impacts of this performance
  - May lead to the creation of other psychosocially engaged works
  - May strengthen ensemble relationships
  - Work may be deployed in other contexts
    - Work may be used to help
- May encourage performers to consider psychosocial applications of touch
- May encourage performers to apply similar thinking to other performances, and to view performances as disparate and situated

Might be performed by others
- Bad performance
- May impact an audience, and alter their perceptions of music or encourage them to compose in a similair manner

Strengthening my relationship with PB

PB more likely to be settled in class
- PB less likely to behave in an unsettled manner

Teaching made easier
- Strengthening PB's relationships with other students
  - PB feels closer to other students
- Other students think PB is not as 'funny'
- Weakening PB's relationships with other students
  - PB feels more isolated
- Strengthening staff relationships with PB
  - PB feels closer to staff

Teaching staff impressed
- Altering perception of music therapy
  - More likely to generate employment
- More likely to retain my employment

Forming/modelling positive attachment

PB happier at school
- PB happier at home
- Family approve of PB's school experience

Something that makes me pleased