MONASH University

School and community ensembles: Implications for collaborative musical performances.

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Abstract

Musical performances which involve a collaborative process between a school music ensemble and musical organisations outside of the school community are beneficial for students, teachers, and the school. Despite these benefits, there is little literature on this topic. The motivation for music teachers in busy secondary school Music Departments to engage in large-scale, collaborative projects can be better provided if informed understanding of the benefits can be better understood. Furthermore, students who spend many years developing performance skills in school ensembles often discontinue being active participants beyond their schooling years. Despite having considerable musical experience and ability, further musical engagement is often limited to that of a passive musical consumer. This study aims to investigate the implications of collaborative performance projects between school music ensembles and music ensembles from outside of the school community. Among these implications are several factors for specific exploration, including: personal and group social identity, life-long learning, developmental factors for school Music programmes, and intergenerational understanding.

Accordingly, this study asks the following questions: Does engagement in a school / community performance collaboration constitute a 'critical incident' with the potential to encourage life-long active musical participation? Are there other benefits for secondary music students when collaborating with community ensembles such as; emancipatory learning processes, preserving cultural continuity within communities, and having a heightened sense of engagement during the collaborative process? This study will undertake a constructivist approach to several social identity theories in exploring several qualitative case studies in determining the extent to which students benefit from musical collaborations that take them beyond the school context.

This study will employ a qualitative approach and a variety of methodologies including: autoethnography, interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and the use of a descriptive survey. The participants that comprise the sample will include: myself, former students of mine, secondary music teachers, university music ensemble directors and community music ensemble directors.

It is hoped that the benefits for students, directors and adult musicians participating in collaborative music events will be made clear and that the importance of musical collaboration will enable stakeholders to consider it as a central activity rather than an opportune activity when circumstances seem favourable.

Thesis including published works General Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

This thesis includes three original papers published in peer reviewed journals, one article accepted for publication, and four unpublished articles. The core theme of the thesis is collaborative performances involving secondary music ensembles. The ideas, development and writing up of all the papers in the thesis were the principal responsibility of myself, the candidate, working within the Faculty of Education under the supervision of Associate Professor Jane Southcott.

In the case of eight publication chapters, my contribution to the work involved the following:

Table 1. Publication status of articles comprising the thesis.

Thesis Chapter	Publication Title	Publication status	Extent (%) of student's contribution
2	From isolation to collaboration: An autoethnographic account.	Published	100%
3	Sharing the stage: Trends in composition for children's choir and symphony orchestra.	Submitted	100%
4	'3:36, that's when all the fun starts': Forming musical identity through secondary school music.	Published	100%
5	'I think everyone's been thrilled': Music teachers' perspectives on school music performance collaborations.	Published	100%
6	School and university music collaboration: A case study of a performance of Britten's *War Requiem.*	Published	100%
7	Together but disconnected: Involving parents and children in an intergenerational choral collaboration	Published	100%
8	'I tried hard to control my temper': Perceptions of older musicians in intergenerational collaboration.	Submitted	100%
9	'It was more about his ego than about the choir': Jonathan Willcocks reflects on a career as a guest conductor.	Submitted	100%

I have added additional page numbers to the sections of this thesis containing published work in order to generate a consistent presentation within the thesis.

The undersigned hereby certify that the above declaration correctly reflects the nature and extent of the student and co-authors' contributions to this work.

Student signature:

Main Supervisor signature:

Date: 11 March 2017

Date: 13 March 2017

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank all of the participants involved in this research. Your contribution to this project is something for which I will always be grateful. Secondly, I would like to thank my tireless supervisor, Associate Professor Jane Southcott. For your calm and patient manner and unwavering support of my research journey, thank you. The occasions we shared in six different cities around the world discussing this project and the problems of the world generally were most enjoyable as were the liquid refreshments that helped provide those solutions.

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List of Abbreviations

ABODA   Australian Band and Orchestra Directors Association

APS   Association of Private Schools

GC   Guest Conductor

GCSE   Graduate Certificate of Secondary Education

ICT   Intergroup Contact Theory

IPA   Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

KS2   Key Stage 2

KS3   Key Stage 3

RC   Regular Conductor

SIM   School of Instrumental Music

UK   United Kingdom

UWA   University of Western Australia

WACE   Western Australian Certificate of Education

WAAPA   Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

Prefatory comment

This thesis consists of published, submitted and unpublished manuscripts. While the author has made every effort to avoid any unnecessary repetition, there are instances where this was unavoidable such as providing definitions of self-regulation, the provision of details about the methodology of the study. There are some stylistic variations in the thesis presentation, such as spelling and referencing styles used in manuscripts that were submitted to journals requiring US spelling or particular referencing annotations, where the rest of the document is written using UK spelling and the APA referencing format. The references for each manuscript (published and pre-publication) directly follow each paper, with the thesis references placed at the end of the thesis document. For manuscripts under review or in press, tables and figures are placed in the text of the manuscript in accordance with the requirements articulated by the relevant journals.

Chapter 1: Exegesis

Introduction

Students who spend many years developing performance skills in school ensembles often discontinue being active participants beyond their schooling years. Despite often having considerable musical experience and ability, further musical engagement is often limited to that of a passive musical consumer (Boswell, 1992; Smith & Haack, 2000; Myers, 2008). Large-scale collaborative performances can provide memorable experiences that can impact students' decisions to continue being active participants in music (Oddy, 2001; Adderley, Kennedy & Berz, 2003). The overarching aim of this study is to investigate the implications of collaborative performance projects between school music ensembles and music ensembles from outside of the school community. Among these implications are several factors for specific exploration, including: personal and group social identity, life-long learning, developmental factors for school music programmes, and intergenerational understanding.

For schools operating small or developing Music programmes, the opportunity to stimulate and encourage students with the excitement of music-making in the real world by developing partnerships with community arts organisations is a common practice worth consideration (de Vries, 2011; Varvarigou et al., 2011). Although there are benefits of school and community collaboration due to the positive outcomes found with inter-generational music making, the literature has yet to address why music education still appears to be reluctant to fully embrace community engagement (Beynon, Heydon, O'Neill, Zhang & Crocker, 2013). Factors such as ecology, particularly leadership and personality traits, interorganisational communication, and logistical challenges should be fully explored as they contribute to the level of success of collaborative projects.

Students who engage in musical activities outside of the classroom develop many important skills and understandings not addressed in the curriculum (Cohen, Bailey & Nilsson, 2002; Skingley, Clift, Coulton & Rodriguez, 2011; Creech, Hallam & Varvarigou, 2014). Benefits are not only cognitive but also include social, creative self-knowledge and self-discipline dimensions. These dimensions can be overlooked in shaping the adolescent in

performance activities but are nonetheless important factors which will be explored in this research which is presented as a thesis with publications.

Nature and scope of study

Collaboration in the context of this research refers to performance projects between school music ensembles and music ensembles outside of the school community. The nature of the ensemble is not limited to a particular style of music or type of ensemble; however, the researcher is interested in ensembles that are staff-directed and form an important part of a school's co-curricular activities. Each of the case studies involves at least one school music ensemble. The school ensemble involved in the performance may collaborate with a community ensemble, a university ensemble; an intergenerational ensemble or an ensemble from another school. Collaborations may be unique, once-off performance projects or established partnerships. The participants involved in the study have participated in one or more collaboration performance projects.

Throughout this study, I explore the collaborations from the perspectives of the participants. As such, it is the participants' experiences that will form the data for analysis. Although the phenomenon is explored from multiple perspectives, the question of how collaboration can impact the educational experience of secondary school students is of primary concern.

Significance and timeliness

The notion of 'collaboration' has been explored extensively in research in music education. The emphasis of the literature however seems to be concerned with applications with the curriculum, particularly composition and the use of technology (Sawyer, 2007; Cane, 2009; Makelberge, 2012). In the particular area of musical performance collaboration between institutions, there is a noticeable gap in the literature and in much of what is written the concept of 'collaboration' has a variety of meanings. More specifically, the impact of collaborative performance projects on enhancing life-long learning in music is a characteristic of this research.

In establishing the basis for my investment in this topic, Chapter Two, *From isolation to collaboration: An autoethnographic account*, explores my personal background and understanding of the phenomenon. Chapter Three, *Sharing the Stage: Trends in Composition for Children's Choir and Symphony Orchestra,* then investigates the development of repertoire that utilises ensemble collaboration involving school-aged musicians in its orchestration. The following phenomenological case studies then explore the lived experience of participants from diverse perspectives. Students, former students, school music teachers, community ensemble conductors, older community musicians, and finally, an international guest conductor are interviewed so that the phenomenon can be understood from each stage of life.

Research questions

The purpose of this research is to explore collaborative performance projects from a variety of perspectives and discuss the ways in which they can impact music students, music teachers and the wider community. The research aim is to investigate whether or not collaborative performance projects have any more implications for participants than in-house school concerts. Particularly, this study is focussed on the notion of life-long learning and the possibility that collaboration performance projects can form a 'critical incident' that guides students towards continued active engagement in music. In exploring the notion of life-long learning, three case-studies (Chapters Six, Seven and Eight) address intergenerational collaboration from three different perspectives; ensemble directors, adult musicians, and student musicians.

The principal research question for this study is; 'What are the implications for participants in collaborative performance projects?' Secondary research questions to be explored in the discussion and conclusion of the thesis are; 'Do collaborative performance projects have an impact on music teachers?' 'Are collaborative performance projects helpful in developing a growing Music programme?' 'Are the difficulties and issues associated with collaborative performance projects outweighed by the benefits?'

Table 2 lists the specific research question for each of eight articles.

Table 2. Research questions for articles.

Article no.	Research question
Article 1	What events in my life have led me to the conviction that collaborative performance projects are beneficial?
Article 2	Why did composers start creating collaborative works for symphony orchestras and children's choirs?
Article 3	What events in school music led to pursuit of active music participation beyond secondary school?
Article 4	How can a sustainable collaborative performance process have an impact on the development of a school music programme?
Article 5	What factors allow for successful performance collaborations with choirs of different generations?
Article 6	Does student collaboration with adult choristers, enhance a culture of singing within a community?
Article 7	What perceptions do older people have of younger people in intergenerational music making activities?
Article 8	What factors determine the successful interaction with a guest conductor?

Limitations

This research employs a qualitative approach and seeks to explore in-depth a small number of participants and as such will seek to thoroughly understand how the phenomenon affects those involved. In order to determine whether students are affected by collaborations in terms of 'life-long' learning, participants were chosen from different points of their lives. This allows perspectives that will generate an understanding of the effects of collaboration on life-long learning and continued active participation in music-making. The phenomenological approach favours depth of understanding rather than breadth involving many participants. As such, the themes to emerge from each article may not always be generalizable, rather they represent the temporal, lived experience of 21 individuals engaged in collaboration.

Structure of thesis

This is a thesis with published works. It reflects a sustained and cohesive theme between articles sent for publication in peer-reviewed, academic journals, and is framed by an exegesis and a discussion to introduce and link the chapters. Each article must be submitted, accepted for publication or published at the completion of the thesis. There may be some repetition of meaning regarding literature and methodology in the exegesis and the articles which is unavoidable. Table 3 shows the structure of the thesis and the respective journal that each article has been sent to for peer-review.

Table 3. Table indicating the chapters that comprise the thesis and respective journals.

Chapter No.	Chapter content	Journal for submission
Chapter 1	Introduction	N/A
Chapter 2	From isolation to collaboration: An autoethnographic account.	*The Qualitative Report*
Chapter 3	Sharing the stage: Trends in composition for children's choir and symphony orchestra	*Musicology Australia*
Chapter 4	'3:36, that's when all the fun starts': Forming musical identity through secondary school music.	*Australian Journal of Music Education*
Chapter 5	'I think everyone's been thrilled': Music teachers' perspectives on school music performance collaborations.	*International Journal of Music Education*
Chapter 6	School and university music collaboration: A case study of a performance of Britten's *War Requiem.*	*Music Performance Research*
Chapter 7	Together but disconnected: Involving parents and children in an intergenerational choral collaboration.	*Visions of Research in Music Education*
Chapter 8	'I tried hard to control my temper': Perceptions of older musicians in intergenerational collaboration.	*International Journal of Community Music*
Chapter 9	'It was more about his ego than about the choir': Jonathan Willcocks reflects on a career as a guest conductor.	*Psychology of Music*
Chapter 10	Discussion and conclusion	N/A

Unfolding the thesis

The structure of the thesis will begin with an analysis of my own experiences with musical collaboration and gradually work towards case studies of collaboration that are further removed from my own experiences and familiarities.

Figure 1. Structural framework for thesis construction

In Figure 1, the stacked Venn diagram illustrates the concept of collaboration radiating outwards from the central circle labelled 'Me'. For me to understand the concept of musical collaboration and how it can affect life-long learning, I must understand why it has become an important feature of my music education career so far. The second circle labelled 'collaborative repertoire' is a musicology study. The purpose of this article is to explore repertoire that demands a collaborative process between children and adult ensembles. The next circle, labelled 'Case study involving me and others known to me', involves case studies in which I was personally involved and with participants known to me. This allows for appropriate application

of the principles of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. It is the closest circle to the inner circle as my role as researcher is directly influenced by my understanding of the research setting. The fourth circle includes case studies in which the participants are known to me but I do not have any direct involvement with the collaboration process being explored. These case studies concern projects in Australia and the United Kingdom and examine the phenomenon through the lens of ensemble directors, adult musicians, and children. The final circle, situated furthest from the inner circle, is labelled 'Expert case study' and it is hoped that by exploring numerous collaborations involving the expert participant that the phenomenon may be analysed from a unique perspective.

The conceptual framework requires a thorough search of the literature covering each stage of the research. The following section will discuss some of the content used in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Structural framework with interconnecting subject content.

The circular arrangement of boxes in Figure 2 represents the structure of the eight journal articles. The articles operate independently while being situated within the context of the overarching topic of collaborative musical performances. There is an interconnection of subject content which has occurred as the articles were written. They were a result of the unpacking of the research topics and not predetermined. The column on the left of the circle shows six examples of interconnecting subject content and the colours link each example to the various articles in which they appear. Article Three explores repertoire that is written so that collaboration with school-aged singers is necessary. It is unsurprising therefore that two of the works discussed in the article, Britten's *War Requiem,* and Orff's *Carmina Burana,* arose as the experiences of participants in the various case studies were explored. Jonathan Willcocks is the focus of the final article which explores the topic through the lens of an international practitioner. I met Jonathan in Germany at a choral festival which involved international choral collaboration and this experience is discussed in Article One and also emerged as an important vignette in Article Three. I consequently invited Jonathan to visit Australia in another collaborative venture which resulted in him being discussed in Article Four. Jonathan's father, Sir David Willcocks also conducted the premier of Vaughan Williams' *Hodie* which is a work chosen for discussion in Article Three. The partnership of the Choral Society discussed in Articles Six and Seven were originally conceived as a single article as they had co-performed Verdi's *Requiem*. The data were so rich and the findings so different for the two groups of participants that two articles were necessary. James MacMillan is a patron of one of the choirs at the school operating the Choral Society and his work, *Quickening* is discussed in Article Two.

Literature Review

This section includes a discussion of the literature that underpins the overarching themes to emerge from my eight journal articles. The first overarching theme to be discussed is music ensemble performance collaboration which is the principal theme for the thesis. In addition, the following themes will be discussed; developing musical identity, developing a music department, musical communities and intergenerational music making. Finally, Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory is discussed. Each theme is addressed in turn. Several themes that were not considered until the phenomenological process was complete are addressed in Chapter Ten as unexpected findings.

Music ensemble performance collaboration

This study is concerned with the implications of school students collaborating in a performance setting with organisations outside of the school community. Using various case studies, the research employs a constructivist approach to developing ideas found in the literature (Beckman & Graves, 1997; McCoy, 2000; Temmerman, 2005; Bartleet, 2012; Roennfeldt, 2013; Beynon, Heydon, O'Neill, Zhang & Crocker, 2013). Musical collaboration combines resources (human and otherwise) in order to achieve what cannot be done in isolation. Bartleet (2012) explains; 'These exchanges can result in a pooling of resources, an enriching musical experience for the participants, and a significant community building exercise for all involved' (p. 58). Human resources as well as financial capital, access to an appropriate venue, and instruments enable more elaborate projects to be undertaken. More elaborate projects are not just enjoyable but often significant for being memorable.

A musical experience being memorable is not a means to an end but rather a bi-product of an individual's rich experience. The richness of the experience is not only in the epic musical moments of the large-scale events but in the process of social change that young musicians can experience when being part of something much bigger than themselves. The process of collaboration in performing music involves participants understanding of compositional intent and mutual respect concurrently. The latter is more important and more challenging (Beckman & Graves, 1997). The nature of large-scale musical events demands a high level of musical respect

as a large-scale, collaborative project necessitates the assets and abilities of the members of all groups involved.

Performance collaborations can have positive effects for music teachers, students and the school community generally. Making connections between school, home and community to enhance positive attitudes toward music making is a central issue in music education (Temmerman, 2005). These connections also have a logical, pragmatic purpose in bringing together expertise and resources to benefit music activity (Darrow & Belgrave, 2013; Jackson, 2016).

Large-scale performances can also be difficult to organise, expensive to run and provide logistical issues. Ultimately, if a performance event involving multiple contributors is to be sustainable, the issues need to be outweighed by the benefits. Sustainability of collaborative processes requires consideration of a variety of issues such as; venue, scheduling, repertoire choice, program structure, and organisational support (Roennfeldt, 2013). Inevitably, combining one group of musicians with another is time consuming, difficult and frustrating. However, they provide a degree of richness for participants that is unachievable in isolation (McVoy, 2000).

The implications for student learning in the collaborative process are important. Although individual learning and collaborative learning may be diametrically opposed, in authentic, musical settings, musicians learn individually from the direct instruction provided by the instructor and also from the new musical peers they are making music with (Jung, 2014). Educational theories involve a central opposition between approaches that emphasize individual learning and approaches that emphasize collaborative teams (Sawyer, 2008). A level of group knowledge disappears once a group disbands at the conclusion of a collaborative project (Forkby & Turner, 2016). Although this may be true, what is left behind is likely to be the development experienced by the individual. It is this development which may be the important factor in the collaboration process. This combination of the traditional, 'master and apprentice' model and Vygotskian peer learning can occur naturally in the collaborative setting (Daniels, 2016).

Musical collaboration can not only impact learning processes, but contributes to the development of musical identity for participants. How student musicians consider their place in the musical community can be radically altered through participation in a large-scale musical collaboration involving different institutions, which is discussed in the following section.

Developing musical identity

When students participate in group activities, they are developing two separate but closely related identities concurrently; their personal identity and their collective/social identity. Both of these identities are shifting as new interactions and social situations impact their relationships with others. Adolescents increasingly utilise social media platforms to display an idealised version of their social identities (Zhao, Grasmuck & Martin, 2008). Social interactions not only include school peers, but family and influential adults influence the development of both identities (Steinberg & Morris, 2001). Music teachers can therefore expect to play a role in how young musicians see themselves and how the social collectivity of their ensembles view themselves.

This study adopts the model proposed by Hargreaves and Marshall (2003), whereby three components of identity are considered; musical-artistic, personal, and social-cultural. They suggest that these spheres can overlap and interact, but as they converge they ultimately impact self-identity. Hargreaves and Marshall posit that music provides a cultural awareness that helps students better understand themselves and each other. A student's self-identity can according to Hargreaves and Marshall, determine their motivation and contribute to life-long learning. Formal and informal activities involving adolescent students can be viewed through the lens of this model of dual identities so that young musicians form positive views of themselves as musicians, their place in the ensemble, and their role in the wider music community.

Hesmondhalgh (2015) discusses the way in which music provides a platform for the private and public realms of social and personal identity to converge. He highlights the emotional significance of Music as an art form which sets it apart from other identity mediums such as art, film and product consumerism. He goes further, stating that, 'Music, like other cultural forms, provides opportunities for people to make connections with each other, to enrich their inner lives, and even in some cases, to enhance a sense of community' (p. 341).

Making music with others provides participants with a positive engagement with others that can contribute to wellbeing (Croom, 2015). Belonging to a group while participating in positive and creative activity can provide a sense of group identity through friendship and social networking (Jetten, et. al., 2015). Lifelong music-making can contribute to improved social,

psychological and physical outcomes (Pearce, et. al., 2016). Performing music with others can allow individuals to experience a sense of accomplishment, pride and fulfilment. Although initial motivation for joining a music ensemble is often musical, participants often reflect that social and personal development factors are important outcomes (Bassett, 2013).

When two organisations combine for a shared, artistic purpose; whole group identity becomes more dominant than individual identity, and positive engagement is increased due to the increased size and power of the group (Haslam, 2004). With positive engagement comes a richness of experience which in turn provides for a memorable or pivotal moment for the student (Burnard, 2012). The idea of large-scale events being more memorable is a strong theme throughout the articles. It is possible that the richness of the experience comes from having several models of learning operating at once. These models are likely to be operating at a heightened state with the new aspects of the learning environment. As well as the 'master-apprentice' model that exists between conductor and musician, students will find themselves making music with new and unfamiliar people next to them or nearby. For this process, the Vygotskian model is important in helping understand the benefits of peer learning.

Vygotsky's theory of child development known as the 'zone of proximal development' provides a useful starting point for understanding the foundation of learning through collaboration. Further to the notion of children interacting and learning from their more competent peers, the collaborative process should be considered in terms of several factors. Tudge and Hogan (1997) explain, 'It requires an interweaving of different aspects of development, involving the individual and the cultural-historical as well as the interpersonal, and focusing on the processes of development themselves' (p. 3). These aspects of development will be discussed in turn.

Human interactions are affected by the personal attributes of the respective individuals, including; gender, sexuality, development status, physical and mental attributes, temperament, and age (Hogan, & Tudge, 2014). The cultural-historical aspect recognises that the nature and form of historical developments have an impact on cultural development. Cultural behaviour is a process developed through habit which guides cultural methods of reasoning. The development of the interpersonal aspect begins with interaction with others at birth. Social interactions shape the child's psychological development and it is this aspect which is most closely aligned to

Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' theory. According to Vygotsky, children internalise and externalise processes of interaction with more competent peers (Lin, et. al., 2016). The internalisation process allows for a combination of the child's own knowledge and experience with the input provided by the interaction thereby resulting in a further process of reorganisation of mental structures (Zhang, et. al., 2016).

For the process of collaboration to allow the Vygotskian theories to occur, both partners must play an active role in the interaction. Accurate analysis of collaboration using a Vygotskian framework should include all three variables of childhood development. As Tudge and Hogan (1997) point out, 'Vygotsky's theory is systemic and treats these levels of analysis as interdependent and co-constituitive' (p. 9).

Developing a Music Department

An exploration of the implications of collaboration for developing a music department has been explored in my fourth article; *'I think everyone's been thrilled': Music teachers' perspectives on school music performance collaborations.* Developing a music department provides an improved environment for young musicians to develop their skills with like-minded peers (Hallam, 2010). Music teachers therefore need to consider enhancing a broad range of opportunities so that as many students as possible can benefit. One of the most effective ways to deliver high-quality, practical music experience for a broad range of students is through ensembles (Graulty, 2010).

Developing ensemble music-making in schools can in turn increase student participation in music and foster peer-learning (McPherson, Davidson & Faulkner, 2012). Vygotskian peer-learning can manifest in a variety of musical experiences as young musicians often aspire to the skill level of their more experienced colleagues (Lehmann, Sloboda & Woody, 2007). Introducing the collaborative process with ensembles from other institutions further emphasises this process as students can connect with others who are working on the same set of skills but are influenced by a slightly different set of musical experiences.

One of the principle factors for improving the opportunities of a school music department is motivation. If students are inspired to perform music in situations that are motivational,

learning will have greater impact (Gibson & Anderson, 2008). Motivational musical performance opportunities need to offer something to capture the imagination of young musicians and; collaborating with other ensembles, performing in venues outside of the school, touring, encountering inspirational repertoire, and working with guest conductors are several ways this can be achieved (Pitts, 2007; Creech et al., 2008; O'Neill, 2012). A positive momentum of inspirational ensemble music-making can overcome a myriad of obstacles that disadvantaged schools face and create meaningful experiences for large numbers of students.

Musical communities

Research into the social, mental and physical health benefits of community music organisations for involving older people has been significant (Joseph & Southcott, 2014; Smith & Sataloff, 2013; Johnson et al., 2015). Arts centres in the community have the ability to reach out to schools to establish relationships. Cases where cultural centres have become cultural brokers are models that co-ordinate and instigate arts-based projects within local communities (Bowell, 2014). These cultural agents are contributing to arts partnerships which are fostering community engagement which in turn contributes to improved health and well-being. Importantly, partnerships should be sustainable to enable the full benefits of collaboration to be enjoyed in the community. The key to sustainable partnerships is the dynamic relationships between participant stakeholders (Schippers & Letts, 2013). Without strong leadership within arts organisations, the outcomes of collaboration may not be fully realised. Leadership within the arts community is however, still lacking. Organisational structures or mechanisms to assemble the abundance of expertise, skills and good music practice that exists in arts sectors, individual artists, arts organisations and schools are rare (Temmerman, 2005).

Intergenerational music-making

The opportunity to improve intergenerational understanding through music ensemble collaboration can help build respect and break down negative stereotypes (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009). Allowing different generations to share in purposeful and creative activities creates an environment in which understanding can take place (Lawton & La Porte,

2013). Directors of collaborative projects must ensure that interaction between generations is positive by establishing an understanding of what each group brings to the activity (Stokols, Misra, Moser, Hall & Taylor, 2008). Without this prior understanding, negative stereotypes can continue with some participants and intergenerational prejudice will be more difficult to erode (Dickson & Duffy, 2016).

Musical experiences that are inspirational, can create memorable, pivotal moments for musicians (Sixsmith and Gibson, 2007). Creating important memories that are linked with intergenerational understanding forges lasting attitudinal change (Soether, 2016). Ensemble collaboration provides unique musical situations that have multi-faceted variables to the usual performance experience such as; interaction with unfamiliar musicians, alternative rehearsal or performance venue, altered acoustical environment, more challenging or larger-scale repertoire and the opportunity to work with a different conductor (James, 1997). Bowers (1998) warns that memorable musical experiences must involve high-quality performance standards to be beneficial. Simply combining ensembles from different generations will not necessarily produce successful outcomes.

Changing attitudes between generations is equally relevant for both groups (Bowers, 1998). Older musicians can view younger people negatively (Amos & Mensah, 2015), however this issue has attracted less research attention than the converse perspective. Countering the negative effects of ageism is not only socially beneficial, but also has musical benefits (Green, 2002). The enthusiasm of young musicians and the experience of older musicians if combined successfully can deliver musical dividends. Despite this, intergenerational partnerships between musical institutions are still atypical in communities (Laughey, 2006). Communities benefit from cohesion and shared understanding and collaboration of music ensembles in performance projects provides a platform for this to occur (de Vries, 2011).

Intergroup contact theory

Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport, 1954) included four features of group interactions which, in optimal conditions, could reduce prejudice between groups. His original hypothesis sought to improve race relations in 1950's America, however as this research explores the combination of two or more musical ensembles, Allport's theoretical platform for

developing tolerance and understanding between groups is useful. The original Intergroup Contact Theory (ICT) comprised four components; equal status among group members, common goals, intergroup cooperation with consistent and meaningful contact, and support by authorities. Subsequently several authors have discussed the need to add further requirements. Some authors state that equal status should be established before groups embark on a shared activity (Brewer & Kramer, 1985), while research demonstrates that prejudice reduction can occur even when status initially differs (Patchen, 1982; Schofield & Eurich-Fulcer, 2001). According to Dixon, Durrheim, and Tredoux (2005) the notion of 'good' contact has required further prescriptions recommended in the contact literature such as:

- Contact should be regular and frequent;
- Contact should involve a balanced ratio of in-group to out-group members;
- Contact should have genuine 'acquaintance potential';
- Contact should occur across a variety of social settings and situations;
- Contact should be free from competition;
- Contact should be evaluated as 'important' to the participants involved;
- Contact should occur between individuals who share equality of status;
- Contact should involve interaction with a counter-stereotypic member of another group;
- Contact should be organized around cooperation toward the achievement of a superordinate goal;
- Contact should be normatively and institutionally sanctioned;
- Contact should be free from anxiety or other negative emotions;
- Contact should be personalized and involve genuine friendship formation, and;
- Contact should be with a person who is deemed a typical or representative member of another group (p. 699).

For the purposes of this research, Allport's original four components will be utilised. The benefits of building understanding between musical ensembles collaborating to rehearse and perform is multi-faceted. Unprejudiced understanding encourages musicians to be accepting of the limitations or conversely, the advanced abilities of their new colleagues. If participants acknowledge the need for each member in achieving the shared objective of the project, efforts can be focussed on musical achievement rather than intergroup rivalry.

The fourth component of Allport's theory states that support from authorities is crucial. In military (Landis, Hope & Day, 1984), business (Morrison & Herlihy, 1992), and religious settings (Parker, 1968), 'authority sanction establishes norms of acceptance and guidelines for how members of different groups should interact with each other' (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005, p. 265). In the context of musical performance, support from authorities is required less in terms of prescribing codes of behaviour but equally as important in publicly and institutionally supporting the endeavours of the musical leaders and their participants. For schools, this can manifest in; financial support, allowing ensembles time to rehearse and prepare, enabling music teachers time to meet effectively with partnering ensembles, and by being present at the event.

Methodologies

Introduction

This section will discuss qualitative research and the three methodologies used in the research thus far; Autoethnography, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and Case Studies. Autoethnography was chosen for the first article as it was considered most appropriate to address the interest that I have in the topic before exploring others' experience of it. IPA has been used for the subsequent articles as a way of exploring deeply the experiences of the individual participants and to provide a rich description of their accounts as the following section will discuss. Before addressing IPA, a broader discussion of Phenomenology is important.

Qualitative research

Qualitative research is a general term that separates an approach to inquiry from its quantitative counterpart. There are several types of qualitative approaches which use the same characteristics; they make non-interventionalist observations in naturalistic settings, they emphasise the interpretations of emic, or participant issues as well as etic, or researcher issues, they use rich, descriptive language to establish setting and context, and they use triangulation to validate information (Bresler & Stake, 1992). The qualitative researcher favours an inductive rather than a hypothetical-deductive approach (Patton, 2001). The inquiry is therefore allowed to develop as the data is collected in a naturalistic setting with the experiences of the participant being central to the process. The researcher is also able to have a closeness to the phenomenon being explored as the understanding of the context assists with the accuracy of interpretation. In qualitative research, participants are often chosen using purposeful sampling (Rossman & Rallis, 2003) and may even have a connection with the researcher. Their understanding of the phenomenon is explored in depth rather than the breadth of participants which quantitative methods require.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a qualitative methodology that developed in the social sciences as a way of observing the world according to their manner of appearance (Silverman, 1980). Although phenomenologists have different emphases and interests, the commonality lies in thinking about what the experience of being human is like, especially in phenomena important to us (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). As teaching is a practice that requires constant reflection, and that the experience of music is a personal one, deserving of in-depth description, Phenomenology was an appealing approach for this research. To understand the development of Phenomenology, the ideas of four important philosophers will be addressed in turn; Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre.

Husserl first argued that the basis for a programmatic system in philosophy is that 'experience should be examined in the way that it occurs, and in its own terms' (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p. 12). Rather than fitting concepts into a pre-existing categorization system, Husserl argued that they should be examined in their own right. According to Husserl, the natural function of reflecting on seeing, thinking, remembering and wishing is the basis for phenomenology (Stewart, 1933). To develop a phenomenological process, Husserl developed 'bracketing'. Bracketing, which has its roots in mathematical function, allows the researcher to 'put to one side, the taken-for-granted world in order to concentrate on our perception of that world' (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p. 13). The method of bracketing is a reductive process, allowing perceptions of reality to be considered without the distraction of researcher assumptions and preconceptions. Although subjectivity frames our overall understanding, bracketing allows for focus on a specific component of the subject's world in a way that disregards bias.

Heidegger, a student of Husserl took a slightly divergent view to his teacher. Heidegger developed the hermeneutic and existential concepts of phenomenology. He coined the term *dasein* (being-there), positioning the subject in a particular time and place. Heidegger addresses the ontological question of human existence, acknowledging the practicality of human activities and relationships through which we gain meaning of how the world appears. Temporality is an important concept in this existential idea and time is therefore considered as a horizon or context (Wilson, 2014). Our perspectives of being in the world are temporal, and also in relation to something which must be acknowledged in the phenomenological process.

The work of Merleau-Ponty by contrast is concerned with the place of the body as a central element. He argues that individuals see themselves as different from everything else in the world owing to our holistic sense of self. The mechanisms of perception and judgement are critical and the lived experience of a being can never be entirely captured or absorbed. According to Merleau-Ponty, understanding of this limitation is critical. He therefore considered using phenomenological philosophy to reconsider empirical evidence as logical (Gallagher, 2010). Merleau-Ponty did not however, disregard empirical research rather, he used a process of 'bracketing'. Abstract and logical affordances are bracketed separately to physical and perceptual ones and it is the latter that he gave greater significance.

Sartre, like Heidegger was more concerned with existential phenomenology. His ideas were a combination of existential philosophy, phenomenology and a critique of Sigmund Freud's ideas concerning psychoanalysis (Jones, 2001). He considered the ongoing process of the development of the individual and suggested that, 'we are always becoming ourselves, and that the self is not a pre-existing unity to be discovered, but rather an ongoing project to be unfurled' (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p. 19). For Sartre, human nature is more about becoming than being. The relationship between researcher and participant is dependent on the occurrence of the phenomenon in a particular time and place and acknowledgement of this is critical. Action and responsibility is central to meaningful human existence, therefore, '*Being,* according to Sartre, is a totality and so ontological and therefore concerned with how we live in the world' (Jones, 2001, p. 369). Events should be seen 'in-itself' and 'for it-self' without being confused by other uniformity given to other connections or associations.

Autoethnographic study

Autoethnography is used at the beginning of this research process in order to better understand my own predilection for the phenomenon of music ensemble collaboration. As the articles that follow use a phenomenological framework, it is important that I position myself in the context of the research so that my personal understanding of the topic is elucidated. Autoethnography merges elements of autobiography and ethnography and illuminates layers of consciousness while making connections from the personal to the cultural (Raab, 2013). Ethnographers study the interaction amongst members of a group or culture while exploring

behaviour, language, relationships, customs and culture. Sometimes, this process can have a cathartic effect for the researcher through self-reflection. Autoethnography is therefore ethnographical in its methodological orientation, cultural in its interpretation, and autobiographical in its creation of content.

The researcher begins by creating a series of vignettes; memories of personal experiences related to a particular topic. These stories can be powerful tools for the researcher and practitioner who can use the rich language provided in the vignettes to better understand the human condition and its relationship to the environment. Butler (2009) explains that 'many autoethnographical studies are similar to memoirs in that the researcher might gravitate to a past negative or challenging experience' (p. 4). My autoethnography posed no tension or emotionally disturbing process of reflection, however it enlightened my understanding of my repeated pursuit of ensemble collaboration throughout my career as a music educator.

This idiographic methodology requires the researcher to reference pivotal moments as an insider and then analyse the meaning of the data as an outsider. The writing is therefore in the first-person and enhanced by rich, descriptive language. Two approaches to analysis include 'members' practically oriented, first-order constructs or interpretations and the more abstract, transcontextual, second-order constructs of social science analysis (Anderson, 2006, p. 381). As autoethnographers are both members and researchers, they are able to engage with both. Chang (2008, p. 9) explains that, 'Autoethnographic data analysis and interpretation involves moving back and forth between self and others, zooming in and out of the personal and social realm, and submerging in and emerging out of data'. By better understanding our own lived experiences in relation to the research focus, we are also better able to understand how others experience the phenomenon. Autoethnography is also a reflective process that is ideal to thoughtful teaching practices.

Case study

Case studies are characterised by their intense focus on a single phenomenon in a real-life context. The many variables that exist in case studies are not considered as important in the case study methodology. The definition of case studies is considered more by their design rather than their data collection method (Yin, 1999). The three authors on case-study methodology to be

discussed in turn are: Yin, Stake, and Merriam. Yin adopts a positivist philosophical stance to case study methodology in which design quality is informed by: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability (Yazan, 2015). Stake takes a more constructivist approach to case study methodology in which it is holistic in considering the interrelationship between the phenomenon and its surroundings. Merriam also posits that a case study should be: empirical in that the study is based on observations in the field; interpretative, allowing for researcher-subject interaction; and emphatic, reflecting the vicarious experiences of the participants from an emic perspective (Yazan, 2015). Merriam also adopts a constructivist viewpoint in which a case study focuses on a particular phenomenon using thick, descriptive language and is heuristic in the way that it informs the readers understanding of the phenomenon. Merriam argues that, 'qualitative research assumes that there are multiple realities – that the world is not an objective thing out there but a function of personal interaction and perception' (Merriam, 1988, p.16). The case studies I have undertaken employ a constructivist approach.

The second case study; *School and university music collaboration: A case study of a performance of Britten's War Requiem,* utilised a longitudinal approach consisting of two interviews that took place pre-performance and post-performance. It enabled exploration of how the perceptions of the phenomenon changed over time. This helped me to understand how the event changed participants' thoughts and feelings about collaboration. Yin (2009) explains, 'The theory of interest would likely specify how certain conditions change over time, and the desired time intervals would presumably reflect the anticipated stages at which the changes should reveal themselves' (p. 49). This case study was faithful to Merriam's ideas but acknowledged Stake's views about an emic perspective as the participants were known to me and I was present at the performance.

Interpretative phenomenological analysis

Jonathan A. Smith developed IPA incorporating the ideas of Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre. Smith also develops the interpretative component of the latter three phenomenologists through an understanding of hermeneutics. Smith discusses the early work of Schleiermacher who wrote systematically about hermeneutics as a generic form. Schleiermacher suggests that interpretation could be grammatical and psychological. Grammatical interpretation

requires exact and objective meaning to text whereas psychological interpretation acknowledges the individuality of the participant (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). In IPA, a double hermeneutic is required whereby the participant is making sense of their own life and then the researcher makes sense of the participant's understanding. The double hermeneutic is both empathetic and questioning, thereby the researcher understands the participant's world from their viewpoint. IPA requires the researcher to have an element of contextual understanding. Being close to the subject allows for a more focused approach to data collection and subsequent analysis. Smith (2010) explains, 'It requires a process of engagement and interpretation on the part of the researcher and this ties IPA to a hermeneutic perspective' (p. 10). Having the researcher closely positioned to the phenomenon being examined provides a more appropriate engagement. IPA is best served when, it can be expressed in its own terms, rather than within an inflexible, predefined category system (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin 2009).

The participants in each article formed a small and homogenous sample. Each of these samples was involved in activities with which I was in some way involved. A methodology which allowed an emic view into the participant's world was therefore necessary. Examining the series of concerts in the third study; *'3:36pm, that's when all the fun starts': Forming musical identity through secondary school music,* necessitated an understanding of how the participants' divergent viewpoints converged to form an understanding of the reality of the phenomenon. Lincoln and Guba (1986) point out, 'The axiom concerned with the nature of reality asserts that there is no single reality on which inquiry may converge, but rather there are multiple realities that are socially constructed' (p. 75). This aim of this case study was to explore the experiences of a small, homogenous group rather than collecting a wide sample of data which can be reliably transferable to other settings. I acknowledge that these data sets may not be generalisable to a wider population.

IPA was employed as it 'emphasizes that research is a dynamic process in which the researcher takes an active role as they try to approach the participant's personal world' (Southcott, 2009, p. 145). IPA allows for the researcher to be closely involved with the participant's world in order to understand it. IPA also acknowledges that there is no direct route to experience but closely experiencing the phenomenon is preferable to experiencing it from a distance (Smith, 2011). A researcher's understanding of the phenomenon is required to make sense of the participant's world through a process of interpretative activity (Smith & Osborn,

2008). IPA is idiographic, inductive and interrogative (Taylor, 2015). IPA is idiographic in that analysis is made of the data of each participant in turn to understand similarities and patterns. It is inductive as it allows themes to arise unexpectedly during analysis rather than from a predisposed position of the researcher. It is interrogative by questioning and informing existing research.

In the five articles in which IPA was employed, I sought to understand the participants' lived experience without influencing their narratives. The first phenomenological research was conducted by interviewing five participants who were identified as being suitable for this study by fulfilling two criteria; the first being that they were former pupils of mine and the second; that they are still actively engaged in music-making beyond graduating secondary school. The five participants are all well known to me. As their music teacher in secondary school, I followed their progress and created opportunities for them to become engaged in musical activities and to develop a sense of their own musical identity. The notion that the researcher and participants are well known to each other is an important part of Heidegger's characterisation of human relationships, *dasein*. Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006) explain this idea of 'person-in-context' by saying, 'our very nature is to be *there* – always somewhere, always located and always amidst and involved with some kind of meaningful context' (p. 106).

Bresler (1995) asserts that, 'Because the researcher is the main instrument, her qualifications, background, and expertise, are important factors in the shaping of the study and need to be stated explicitly' (p. 6). In acknowledgement of my position in this narrative, I allow the study to be informed from a position of knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon. Knowledge of the history of the events being examined allows for better informed understanding of the contexts of the interview responses and an ability to frame interview questions that best provide the participant to discuss the issues. Taylor (2014) concurs by stating, 'Researching with IPA…calls for a very high degree of personal commitment, even obsession' (p. 15). Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006) discuss the two aims of an IPA researcher; 'The first aim is to try to understand their participant's world, and to describe 'what it is like.' They go on to state, 'The second aim of the IPA perspective is to develop a more overtly *interpretative* analysis, which positions the initial 'description' in relation to a wider, social, cultural, and perhaps even theoretical, context' (p. 104). In discussing the role validity of Arts research, Eisner (2005) argues, 'Validity in the arts is the product of the persuasiveness of a personal vision; its utility is

determined by the extent to which it informs' (p. 70). His position allows subjectivity to have meaning and value and should not be considered less valid that a more quantitative, science-based method of inquiry.

As I am familiar with the process of collaboration, explored in my autoethnography, I am able to posit myself closely with the experiences of the participants. Furthermore, many of the participants are known to me and this understanding when positioned candidly in the research allows for a richer and more accurate understanding of the participant's lived experience.

Data collection

The semi-structured interviews are recorded and then transcribed verbatim by the researcher to preserve the participants' voice. The transcripts are read repeatedly and emergent themes identified and annotated in a right-hand margin. Each reading has the potential to reveal new insights into the meaning given by the interviewee. Themes are identified according to the richness of the meanings and also the frequency with which they are discussed. The strongest emergent themes in this research were then presented in the findings of each respective article using the words of the participants without interpretation. Smith (2015) notes that during the first stage of analysis, the IPA researcher is 'likely to comment on similarities and differences, echoes, amplifications and contradictions in what a person is saying' (p. 40). During the second phase of analysis, the initial notes are transformed into concise phrases which capture the essence of the participant's meaning. The skill of the researcher is then to find high-level expressions that connect with and have meaning in existing theoretical frameworks. The final analysis respects the convergence of overarching themes articulated in the final phase with the individual idiosyncrasy of the participant's voice.

The participants in Chapter Four include five former students of mine who continued studying music after graduating from secondary school. The participants in Chapter Five include four Heads of Music who collaborated with me in a series of concerts involving our respective music department ensembles, all of which belonged to the same association of schools. The participants in Chapter Six included two university ensemble directors, a community ensemble director and a school music teacher who collaborated on a performance project with their respective ensembles. The participants in Chapter Seven include three students of mine involved

in a student/community ensemble partnership and Chapter Eight involved three adult members from the same partnership. The participant in Chapter Nine is an international conductor of collaborative music projects with whom I had worked in Germany and Australia.

Reliability, validity and trustworthiness in qualitative research

The criteria for developing trustworthiness in naturalistic inquiry were developed from the positivist view point. The proposition of naturalistic inquiry prompted a demand for rigor that met the same standards demanded in the long-established scientific methods of enquiry. Credibility was introduced to parallel internal validity, transferability corresponded with external validity, dependability complemented reliability and confirmability is congruent with objectivity. Lincoln and Guba (1986) list the following techniques for establishing credibility: prolonged engagement; persistent observation; triangulation; peer debriefing; negative case analysis; and member checks. For transferability, thick descriptive data is required and for dependability and confirmability, the researcher should establish an external audit component. The unique criterion for authenticity is fairness which is recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1986) to occur in two steps. They posit, 'The first step in the provision of fairness or justice is the ascertaining and presentation of different value and belief systems represented by conflict over issues' (p. 79). By establishing any kind of agenda which is then presented in the analysis, the researcher not only establishes authenticity but grounds the method in truth. They continue, 'The second step in achieving the fairness criterion is the negotiation of recommendations and subsequent action, carried out with stakeholding groups or their representatives at the conclusion of the data-gathering, analysis, and interpretation stage of evaluation effort' (p. 79). This negotiation should operate in a continuous way throughout the research process so that participants and researcher alike are not influenced by pressures to produce predetermined or desired outcomes.

Chapter 2: The researcher as subject

The first article titled 'From isolation to collaboration: An autoethnographic account', was published in *The Qualitative Report 20*(10), 2015. This autoethnographic study explores my musical background and personal experiences that have contributed to the formation of my current self as musician, teacher and researcher.

Autoethnography allows the researcher to describe and systematically analyse personal experiences to understand cultural experience (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011). This humanistic inquiry requires the researcher to reflect on own life experiences and then interpret them. This interpretation contributes to a discourse on an associated topic in a personal and meaningful way. Interpretation of personal, biographical accounts requires a systematic understanding of the many layers of meaning that accumulates with experience and over time (Denzin, 2013). Meaning derived from the lived-experience is therefore temporal and also an embodiment of who we are and how we research (Wakeman, 2014). This process has allowed me to better understand my repeated engagement in the process of ensemble collaboration. Understanding my social and cultural context, enabled me to explore the need for personal engagement with large-scale music-making and connection with other musicians.

This autoethnography situates me as the subject of a reflective inquiry into music ensemble collaboration. The vignettes in this article provide evidence of my engagement in collaboration through a process of hermeneutic, phenomenological reflection which resulted in an autographic narrative. As ensemble music-making is an inherently social phenomenon, applying a methodology which supports a multiplicity of meanings based on social context allows a deeper and richer understanding than traditional, reductive methods (Kara, 2015).

The autoethnography foregrounds my lived experience which is important for the following phenomenological articles. Phenomenology requires the researcher to position themselves in the narrative so that understanding of the phenomenon and closeness to the participants in the research is clearly established (Moran, 2001; Tuohy, Cooney, Dowling, Murphy, & Sixsmith, 2013).

From isolation to collaboration: An autoethnographic account

Abstract

In this paper I explore my personal experiences with collaborative music performance projects. Collaborations between different groups of musicians can be a transformative moment in the lives of students and music educators. The process of collaboration provides opportunities that cannot always be achieved when an ensemble performs alone. Many of these projects were undertaken in my role as a music educator responsible for school music ensembles but in one case, as a conductor of a community band. This idiographic auto-ethnographical study is based on my own reflective journal, which was analysed using Autoethnography and Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. The themes identified include: Isolation versus Collaboration, Social Interaction, and Music on a Grand Scale. The findings support the idea that there are considerable advantages for engaging in collaborative performance projects which can not only be musically enriching but provide unexpected social and cognitive benefits.

Keywords: Autoethnography, collaboration, music performance, community.

Introduction

One of the defining characteristics of my career as a secondary Music teacher has been my persistence with collaboration; gathering groups of musicians together to create special musical events. I have always enjoyed these projects and have believed they have been positive for my students but hadn't considered scrutiny of the reasons why I am obsessed with pursuing them until now. The more I thought about it, the more I realised that this desire for collaboration came from the social setting of childhood. The literature on collaboration in music tends to focus on formal partnerships and composition using technology. There is very little research available on collaborative performance projects in the way that I have encountered them. The purpose of this study is to examine what has driven me to continue pursuing collaborative performance projects. By understanding my own position, it is hoped that I can then explore how these performance projects impact students, teachers and school communities. Therefore, this paper attempts to answer the question; what events in my life have led me to the conviction that collaborative performance projects are beneficial? Music teachers could consider collaborative performance projects for their students so that they may experience the same benefits that I enjoyed. Music teachers who experience a sense of isolation in their musical lives may look to the events that I have experienced as a potential way of overcoming such feelings. In addition,

this study may benefit music educators and ensemble directors through understanding aspects of collaborative performance projects not covered in the literature.

The Researcher

I am a doctoral candidate in Music Education and lecturer in Music and Music Education at a university in Western Australia. I completed my undergraduate degree in Music Education, choosing not to take the performance stream and spent several years teaching in the classroom and conducting school music ensembles. After four years of teaching Music in the classroom I spent a year as a professional singer. I realised during this year of performing how much I missed teaching and that my original career path was as much vocational as it was practical.

This study explores the pivotal moments in my life that has led to my interest in collaborative performance projects. It is important to understand the reason I am drawn to this process of collaboration in order to examine the impact that it has on those who are drawn into them.

Why Auto-ethnography?

In considering methodology, the choice of auto-ethnography was made so that I could examine my own cultural context. Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) explain that, 'Autoethnography combines characteristics of *auto*biography and *ethno*graphy' (p. 2). The autobiography allows the writer to reference pivotal moments or critical incidents in their own lives that are selected in hindsight. These incidents are usually chosen for being transformative in some way. Ethnography focuses on the study of social and relational practices within a group of people so that emic and etic (insider and outsider) understanding of that culture can be enhanced. Therefore, this idiographic methodology requires the researcher to reference pivotal personal moments as an insider and then analyse the meaning of the narrative as an outsider. This approach requires the ability to recall events in a personal way and write about them using the first-person narrative. Ellis and Bochner (2002) discuss that, 'Autoethnography represents a significant expansion in both ethnographic form and relationship potential. In using oneself as an ethnographic exemplar, the researcher is freed from the traditional conventions of writing' (p. 15).

By utilizing the autoethnography process, I hope to understand my own preferences about using the collaborative process. For so long, it has provided me with moments of inspiration and I have been using it as a model with which to inspire others. This may not mean that my reasons for collaboration will be generalisable or transferable to any context. Lincoln and Guba (1986) in their seminal and ground breaking work explain, 'The axiom concerned with the nature of "truth" statements demand that inquirers abandon the assumption that enduring, context-free truth statements – generalizations – can and should be sought' (p. 75). Despite this, as a firm believer in bringing musical communities together, I hope that by better understanding my own journey, this process of understanding will be useful for those considering collaboration as a tool to motivate and inspire others. Bochner and Ellis (2002) explain; 'Autoethnographies can encourage acts of witnessing, empathy, and connection that extend beyond the self of the author and thereby contribute to sociological understanding in ways that, among others, are self-knowing, self-respectful, self-sacrificing, and self-luminous' (p. 222).

Musical Collaboration

The notion of 'collaboration' has been explored extensively in the research into Music education. However, the emphasis of the literature seems to be concerned with applications with the curriculum, particularly composition and the use of technology. In the particular area of musical performance collaboration, there is a noticeable gap and in much of what is written, the concept of 'collaboration' has a variety of meanings. This autoethnography explores musical collaboration in terms of a group of musicians from one organisation performing with a group of musicians from another organisation. Beckman and Graves (1997) state that 'Collaborative music-making can…be an enriching experience, as the exchange of musical ideas with a partner may both broaden as well as deepen one's musical skills' (p. 20).

Collaboration can make possible what was in isolation, impossible. The combined pool of resources, both human and otherwise can enable sophisticated or large-scale events to take place. The benefits of creating such events in turn provide increased opportunity for inspiration. Bartleet (2012) explains that such 'exchanges can result in a pooling of resources, an enriching musical experience for the participants, and a significant community building exercise for all involved' (p. 58).

Such meaningful, musical experiences don't simply happen by mistake. They are often achieved by multiple moments of negotiation and compromise that are not always easy or pleasant. John-Steiner (2000) observed, 'Collaboration thrives on diversity of perspectives and on constructive dialogues between individuals negotiating their differences while creating their shared voice and vision' (p. 6). Despite the difficulties that may arise, the benefits are often worth the effort.

Research Approach and Methodology

This article employs an autoethnographical methodology. Autoethnography is an idiographic, qualitative research method, which gives the subject a unique voice to their personal, lived experiences. Its use is growing in popularity and has been successfully used in the sphere of Music Education by many researchers (Nethsinghe, 2012; Fung, 2014; Harrison, 2012; Dhokai, 2012). The use of autoethnography allows the researcher to create an understanding of his or her own position in order to understand any further research that may follow. An understanding of the self is critical in understanding the position taken when analysing others. In this way, the reasons for decisions made throughout the research process are made clear and any notion of bias is understood and placed up front. Bochner and Ellis (2002) explain that, 'the autobiographical project disputes the normally held divisions of self/other, inner/outer, public/private, individual/society, and immediacy/memory' (p. 216). By understanding the inner (the self), a clearer understanding can be gained when trying to stand the outer (others).

The use of auto-ethnography is particularly suitable for studies involving cultural contexts. The use of an ethnographic wide-angle lens on the broader scope of cultural practice is combined with a constant reflection and inward look at the vulnerable self. Hamilton, Smith and Worthington (2008) state that, 'In auto-ethnography, it is the cultural I shaped by cultural contexts and complexities that takes the foreground' (p. 25). This practice of self-reflection is also not unfamiliar to the world of the teacher.

The vignettes were written from my own recollections. When considering which collaborative experiences to include, the choices were influenced by two factors. The first factor was memories that stood out as being pivotal, usually that involved experiences that were overwhelmingly inspirational but not always. The second factor was a desire for a cross section of musical settings. I wanted to avoid all of the stories being about the same type of ensemble. Once the vignettes were written, a process of reading and re-reading them took place. Repeated

words and phrases were identified and noted in a column at the right-hand side of the page. These words and phrases were then examined to identify common threads so that strong themes emerged. Eatough and Smith (2006) note that, 'With each reading, the researcher should expect to feel more 'wrapped up' in the data, becoming more responsive to what is being said' (p. 487). This process attempts to achieve a high degree of dependability by ensuring that if the vignettes were analysed again, similar results would be achieved. Shenton (2003) posits, 'Such in-depth coverage also allows the reader to assess the extent to which proper research practices have been followed' (p. 71).

After completing the autobiographical narrative, and coding the text for important, recurrent themes, three themes emerged as being significant: isolation versus collaboration, social interaction, and music on a grand scale. At times, these themes overlap and become difficult to distinguish within a particular vignette.

Writing about myself

Writing about myself has been a challenging process. I constantly struggled with the idea of including aspects of my life, which seemed mundane and uninteresting into a format that was somehow both rigorous and worthy of reading. I constantly found myself resisting including any detail about how I felt about situations, wanting to provide a dry, detached narrative that simply informed the reader of what happened. It required repetitive reference to the essence of auto-ethnography and qualitative research generally to give in to the need to tell my story in a personal way. Bochner, Smyth and Tenni (2003) discuss that, 'It is with the physical and emotional in particular, that we often get the first clue that something is happening and may be worthy of exploration' (p. 1).

The events discussed in this paper did not illicit negative or uncomfortable feelings, but rather moments of exhilaration. The projects represent a cross section of collaborative musical performances through the course of my career. They are not exhaustive; there were many more, but they do represent several different combinations of groups. The chosen collaborations include school-aged students with school-aged students, school-aged students with university students, school-aged students with adults and adults with adults. The collaborations also include various combinations of students, amateur enthusiasts and professionals. Significantly, these

performances were chosen as they represent pivotal moments in my journey, shaping my understanding of the characteristics of collaborative performances.

My Background

I began my music education when attending boarding school at the age of 11. Musical opportunities available in a small town in the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia with a population of around 50 were virtually non-existent and so this waited until I moved to the city. Prior to school, my musical life consisted of sitting at an out-of-tune, upright piano, attempting to recreate familiar melodies 'by ear' and desperately looking forward to 6:00 p.m. each Sunday for the popular music show, *Countdown,* to appear on the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) which was the only television channel available at the time. It was a 15-minute drive to the nearest neighbour and so social and musical isolation was a significant feature of my childhood. There was no church choir, nor did the Primary School have the ability to offer Music as part of the curriculum. The only person in the community who could play an instrument was my father who enjoyed playing Country and Western tunes on his guitar but was far too busy on the farm to show me. Therefore, until I left for boarding school, I thought that this rather simple style that I could not connect with at all was all that music had to offer.

Once in the city, I encountered a school with an enthusiastic community of student musicians. I soon joined every school music ensemble I could with only the most rudimentary piano skills and found myself singing in the choir and playing percussion in the various bands. My enthusiasm for Music was undoubtedly at times bordering on embarrassing. At various points throughout my school music experience, the choir or band would join forces with a choir or band from outside of the school. For me, there was a huge thrill in being part of a collective that could produce a sound that felt and sounded epic. It didn't really matter whether it was a combined choir or a combined concert band or a mix of ensembles such as a concert band / brass band combination. The notion of the collective and the anticipation of the power of the music was what excited me. The audience's thoughts about the music was really secondary, it was all about how electrified I felt about being part of something epic.

I clearly remember going to my first performance given by a Symphony Orchestra and being enraptured by the sheer number of musicians that were gradually gathering together on the

stage, warming up, and building the variety of sounds up until it was thrilling. When they actually started playing the music together, I could barely contain my excitement. I don't remember what music they played or who I was with when I went. I remember being in the large concert hall with its red seats and large pipe organ above the stage, surrounded by other audience members and simply being transfixed as the number and variety of instruments were gradually brought on to the stage.

Following school, I began my undergraduate Music degree as a tenor. The first two performances I was involved in took place within the first few weeks of first semester. A friend told me to knock on the door of the choral director the week before classes began and to introduce myself as a tenor. I later realised that my voice type was a commodity that was highly desirable due to its short supply. I was quickly recruited and given music to learn for the first rehearsal that evening. The first experience involved a performance with a Symphony Orchestra and Chorus with the university choir of Francis Poulenc's *Gloria.* Suddenly the joy of witnessing the awesome power of such an ensemble was no longer something I just witnessed but was engaging with.

The second performance at university was coincidently another collaboration with our orchestra combining with a local youth orchestra and the university choir. We performed Borodin's *Polovitsian Dances* followed by Gorecki's *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs* in one of the main cellblocks at the decommissioned Fremantle Prison. The prison is a stark, dehumanising building first built in the mid-19th century and remained in operation until it was closed in 1991. The orchestra was seated on the ground floor and the chorus was situated above on two galleries with the audience fanning out on three levels in a kind-of 'L' shape. The building had only been closed for three years and the prison cell I was standing in front of could not be entered because the murder that had taken place inside was still being investigated. Some of the text of the Gorecki work, which had been written on a Gestapo cell wall by a Jewish mother to her child, had a profound impact on me in this incredibly evocative setting. These two concerts left me wanting more. It would be several years before I had the chance to create my own collaborations in an attempt to recreate the feelings I had enjoyed so much and to share those experiences with others.

The First Collaboration

After graduating, my first appointment as a secondary school teacher was at a Government Senior High School, which closed at the end of my first year of teaching due to economic rationalism. I arrived at the school to discover that there had never been a choir and as someone who had a background in singing in and conducting choirs, I saw it as my mission to establish one. Apart from the physical, musical and educational benefits of singing, it is an inexpensive way to engage a large number of students in music quickly across all year groups and I knew that I could make the activity fun. I also knew how important choral music had been in my school experience and I wanted to make sure that my students had the same opportunities. I set about teaching them Antonio Vivaldi's *Gloria* RV 589, which was a piece I had previous experience performing; as a student at school singing treble in the school choir and as a conductor of a small church choir during my university years. As the choir was fairly inexperienced and given that they had never performed anywhere yet and were still learning how to sing in four different parts at the same time, I thought it would be wise to join forces with another school choir that was similar in terms of size and having mixed girls and broken boy's voices. I contacted a friend of mine who conducted the choir at a Catholic college several suburbs away and we agreed to teach our choirs the piece during our regular, scheduled rehearsals. I wasn't concerned about the two schools being from different systems (e.g. Government and Catholic), I was really just concerned with having enough singers to make the piece work. My friend felt that her choir would also benefit in the same way because it was a similar size to mine and suffered from a small number of tenors and basses and in retrospect, this shared sense of purpose may have been a factor in the success of the collaboration.

I booked a 300-seat venue at a nearby school because our school had no such facilities, asked some friends of mine to play the orchestral parts and created a simple poster to advertise the event at the two schools. We held a dress rehearsal in the venue a couple of days before the concert, which took place on a Sunday afternoon in July, 2008. The audience consisted of around 150 parents, staff and friends from both schools who seemed to view the concert as an 'event'; certainly nothing choral or collaborative had previously taken place at the school at which I was teaching. On the day, I was strangely delighted at how nervous my students were about the performance because it indicated that they cared – this was important to them. The two choirs stood on the stage in a very integrated formation and although some of them sang their hearts

out, it was pretty clear that some of them were rather unsure of exactly what they were doing. I didn't care. I was more interested in how they felt about being a part of it than creating the best possible performance of this frequently performed piece of music.

The response from the students following the performance was unexpected. Some of them told me about being nervous (e.g. there were so many people in the audience), some of them remarked that the concert was 'a big deal' (e.g. several adult musicians had given up their time to play), and some of them discussed the quality of what we managed to achieve musically after around four months of rehearsal. The unexpected outcome for me was the number of friendships, which developed very quickly between students from the two schools. I hadn't thought to provide the students with an opportunity to socialise but had seen the collaboration more as a musical 'safety net' in terms of having enough singers to make the piece 'work'. Watching the social interaction of the students reminded me of the sense of community I had experienced in my early days as a music student, bonding with like-minded people with a shared interest and common purpose. For me, I was very happy with the musical result given the lack of singing experience that my students had but mostly I was encouraged with the spirit with which the students approached the event. It was clear by the looks on their faces that the performance mattered to them and it was clear that the response from the audience was more than a perfunctory applause.

Brass Bands

The following year, my second school appointment was in a small city in the South West region of Western Australia. After living in the community for a few months, I was approached by a member of a local community brass band from a neighbouring city that was looking for a new conductor. I had experience as a teenager playing percussion in a community brass band and took the position, which I found musically and socially rewarding. Concurrently, I was a playing member of my local community brass band (e.g. first cornet and later, tenor horn) that was conducted by my teaching colleague at the school I was working at. Being involved in both bands was not an issue because they rehearsed on different nights. However, a problem arose with the competition known as the 'Queen's Cup' which was established by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II in 1954 for Brass Bands in the South-West region of Western Australia. It was deemed by various people that I would have a 'conflict of interest' when both bands competed

for the coveted prize. I personally didn't feel a conflict of interest and found myself surprised at the idea. I was only thinking about both ensembles playing as well as they could and saw my role in the community as being involved in helping in whatever way I could. This situation highlighted for me the paradigm that existed between these two ensembles that essentially viewed the other as a competitor, even though they were really part of the same community of musicians.

An opportunity arose with a relatively well-known, international cornet player who was coming to perform with the brass band I was conducting. The committee flagged an idea for a suitable concert and I suggested that we invite the other community brass band to participate in a combined performance. The committee enthusiastically embraced this suggestion and I was pleased when I learned that the other band had accepted the invitation. Each band would provide the music for one half of the concert which would include several pieces that featured our guest musician and the performance would conclude with both bands playing two pieces of music together (around 60 musicians). One of these pieces was a transcription of Wagner's '*Procession into the Minster*' from Act II of *Lohengrin*, chosen for the venue of the concert, which was the Anglican Cathedral in one of the cities.

The combined bands created a full and rich sound for this music, which is known for needing players to sustain long phrases in a single breath. The 'safety in numbers' aspect of the combined forces and the generous acoustics of the building provided a satisfying musical experience for the musicians. What transpired from this collaboration was richer still. As a result of this process, further collaborative processes took place and the two bands travelled to a mining town in the Goldfields of Western Australia, which also has a long-established community brass band and performed a programme involving all three ensembles. Suddenly, the memory of rehearsing the band when there was only one trombone player seemed a distant memory when there were around 10 in the section. I don't think I had ever seen three flugalhorns in one place and seeing three soprano cornets discuss who was going to sit where made me giddy with excitement for the sound we were going to make. The concert took place in an abandoned gold mine. This venue sounded romantic initially but in reality, ended up being a large, tin shed; however that didn't alter the excitement of the event. After this combined success, several members decided to play in both bands and these musicians started socialising (i.e. drinks after rehearsals formed an integral part of the community ensemble experience) and to see themselves

as colleagues and friends of people with similar interests rather than a member of a competing rival opponents.

Two School Choirs

In 2009, I was in my third year of teaching at a school in Perth, Western Australia and I took the secondary school choir on a tour of Germany and Austria. The trip itself generated considerable enthusiasm amongst the students and the number of students in the choir grew from around 25 to 40 members. The major focus for the tour was a Choral Festival that took place in Leipzig. The Festival was not a competition, but provided performance opportunities at the famous *Thomaskirche* and the similarly renowned *Gewandhaus* at the beginning and end of the event respectively. At the *Gewandhaus*, we performed on our own and also sang excerpts from Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with all of the participating choirs (appropriately chosen as it was composed within walking distance of the stage). A guest conductor from the United Kingdom conducted these collaboratively performed pieces.

What took place in between these performances was a series of 'Friendship Concerts' where the festival organizers paired two choirs together and arranged for them to present a programme in which each choir performed half. My school choir was paired with a choir from a comprehensive school in Liverpool, England. I had a chance to talk with the conductor of this choir because we were all staying at the same hotel, and we arranged to perform the *Sanctus* from Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem,* which we discovered was mutually well-known piece of both groups. The students had already begun socialising with one another over breakfast and it was clear that both mixed-sex choirs were looking forward to spending as much time together as possible.

The performance was enjoyable and very low pressure for all involved and the students intermingled very happily. Because by now, collaborative projects with students was something I had arranged with some frequency, it came as little surprise that they were quickly exchanging email addresses and Facebook invitations. This collaboration was especially sweet given the serendipitous nature of it. When we arrived in Germany, we had no idea that this exchange would happen and the chance that both choirs knew and were ready to perform the same piece of music together made it surprising and special.

The following year, our school's Chapel Choir toured to the United Kingdom. This provided an opportunity for us to include in our schedule a visit to Liverpool and our new friends at the school. There was a flurry of excited greetings and hugs from those who had been in Germany when the two choirs reunited and once again performed together. By now, I was becoming fully aware of the extent to which musicians enjoy meeting like-minded people and the way this shared identity helps reduce the sense of alienation that musicians in larger communities can experience. As a Music teacher, I was watching my students deriving real pleasure from being involved in music making with other people. I hoped that more than any other outcome; this sense of pleasure would sustain and keep them wanting to remain involved in performing beyond school.

German Partnership

The same year as the initial collaboration with the school from Liverpool in Leipzig, my secondary choir travelled to a city in the Baden-Württemberg region of Germany. Our school had an existing partnership with the university in this town whereby education students would spend a term gaining experience being in a school in an English-speaking country. As there were friendships between our institutions, a suggestion had been made that a concert could be arranged with our choir and their university big band (e.g. a 25-piece Jazz Band).

The concert took place in a nearby church. This seemed to be an odd venue choice for Jazz, especially with the resonant acoustic which made it very loud, but it was free and the German colleagues arranged everything and so we just needed to turn up and perform. The church was however, full to capacity and our choir was able to perform our full programme to an appreciative audience. The concert also gave me an opportunity to practise my conversational German on an audience that uniformly stepped in to help me with words I was clearly stumbling over. I had learned German at high school and this was the first time I had tried to use it in a formal context and I was terrified. The choir was standing on stage listening to my linguistic attempts and had no idea that I was going to be doing this. They were shocked and following the performance, peppered me with questions and relished the opportunity to learn as many words as they could for themselves. I found this moment of enthusiastic enquiry delightful and it was certainly unexpected.

At the conclusion of our tour of the United Kingdom the following year, four boys who had formed a barbershop quartet and several staff returned to the university and performed once again in the nearby church to an equally large audience who seemed fascinated by these Australian teenage boys who clearly loved singing. Once again, I practised my German on the audience and stated enthusiastically and publicly that it was their turn to visit us.

Upon returning to Perth, the vice-chancellor of the German university and the big band director emailed me to express how much the concert meant to them and the community. They also let me know that plans were under way for arranging for the big band to visit us in Perth. The following year, around 30 Jazz and Contemporary musicians spent around 10 days performing at our school and with our own school Jazz Band at the inaugural Perth International Jazz Festival (the timing was a complete coincidence). Although there were surprising organisational issues that existed with the visiting university students who had no idea how they were going to get around the city and who had made no arrangements for any other performances or activities during their stay, our Music Department were able to put things in place and the tour was ultimately successful from all accounts. All of this felt particularly stressful as events were in many ways out of our control. It was unsettling to rely on someone from so far away who I knew almost nothing about.

The unexpected outcomes from this collaboration included several of my students attempting to learn German and being generally fascinated in languages and friendships between staff and students from both countries resulting in visits and further exchanges. As a Music teacher, I experienced the way music provides such tangible links to other rewarding disciplines and now I was seeing my students understand that link. The impact for the German university big band was considerable and merits further research.

A Child of Our Time

The head of Classical Music at one of the local universities approached me to collaborate on a performance of Michael Tippett's *A Child of Our Time.* This is an English oratorio composed around the time of the outbreak of World War II. It is just over an hour in length and is scored for four soloists, mixed choir, and orchestra. The performance would take place in a nearby cathedral with the university orchestra and combined choirs from the university and my school. This was a challenging work which, I approached with some trepidation but realised that

because of: their continued presence in rehearsals, their interesting questions and their focus when attempting musical detail, that the students were relishing the opportunity to learn such a difficult piece. I tried to disguise my constant terror that I had finally chosen a project that was too difficult and which I feared would fail miserably.

The performance was very successful and achieved critical acclaim in the West Australian newspaper later that week. The project differed in two distinct ways from previous collaborations. The first was that the conductor had an awkward nature when it came to working with teenage musicians, which was complicated by an unclear conducting style. Although the performance went well despite this, the rehearsal process was difficult and at times not enjoyable. Rehearsals felt long and frustrating with choristers sometimes unsure of what the conductor's instructions meant in practical terms. The music would sometimes grind to a halt in rehearsal as the choir and orchestra couldn't follow the beat and gestures given by the conductor.

The second way in which this collaboration differed was in terms of organisation and administration. The details about where the choir would be situated in the building were not thought through. A discussion took place at the university prior to the dress rehearsal in which a decision to have the choir standing throughout the performance with no levels to provide staggered height which is important for sight lines between singers and conductor to keep the music together. Once I discovered this, I arranged for choir risers to be brought in from the school, which solved the problem but created another one. The Cathedral was unhappy about these being placed on the polished marble floor without some sort of protection and this needed to be resolved. Ultimately, the issues were attended to but not until just prior to the performance which meant that those involved in the project were distressed and distracted immediately before the music began.

This collaboration allowed me to see how important formal communication was throughout the planning process of a collaborative project. Spending time discussing aspects that might seem trivial not only help for a better finished product but allow for a smoother process which allows for the benefits of collaboration to be best realised. I had mixed emotions about this project. Mainly, I was thrilled with the opportunity that my students had just had but there was a considerable degree of frustration that has stayed with me when reflecting on this project.

On reflection, the success of the performance reinforced my belief that students will always rise to the occasion. I was incredibly proud of them.

Beckman and Graves (1997) discuss the role that frustration plays in the collaborative process, noting 'Opposing musical interpretations are not uncommon, and diverse backgrounds with respect to training, expectations and routines may negatively affect student performance' (p. 20). Managing expectations and considering perspectives are discussed as important factors in dealing with such frustrations.

Carmina Burana

When a highly-respected orchestra was planning a performance of the popular work, *Carmina Burana* by Carl Orff, I took the opportunity to offer my choral forces to sing the necessary children's chorus parts (known as the *regazzi).* This would be an opportunity to sing in the premiere venue in Perth with an international conductor and would be a memorable musical experience for my students. They would join forces with the existing chorus, which sang regularly with the orchestra. I hoped that by having such an exhilarating musical experience, students might be encouraged to join such a choir after leaving their school choir at the end of Year 12. I wanted them to enjoy the same transformative experiences I had when I was their age. This in turn would be a welcomed development for the adult chorus which would benefit from having a younger demographic among the ranks. One of the most desirable outcomes of a school music programme, in my opinion is to produce graduating students who pursue a lifelong engagement in music. I hoped that by being involved in this project, my students would see a natural path from school choir to being in an adult chorus.

Although this collaboration is by far the highest profile of all of the projects I have instigated, it fell short of delivering any of the benefits I was hoping to achieve. The international conductor was wonderful and worked extremely well with the students and adult musicians, the performance was oversubscribed and an additional third performance was arranged which everyone was happy to do, the concert received critical acclaim in the newspaper once again which was gratifying for my school community, and the parents of the students were able to see their children making music at the highest level.

The difficulty with the process of this project was with the conductor of the chorus. This person trained the chorus and then the international conductor took over once the chorus and orchestra were ready to rehearse together just prior to the first performance. There were several meetings involving the chorus conductor and myself including a visit to the school to hear the choir perform. I explained that in addition to the *regazzi*, we could also provide secondary students (i.e. including mixed male and female voices) as well as staff (i.e. including some professional singers). These additional singers would help provide a bolstered choral presence in a work that requires a large and vocally heroic chorus. Despite the lists of names with their vocal parts being discussed in the meetings, when the students and I turned up for the first combined choir rehearsal, the conductor looked shocked to see us and seemed very confused about why we were there given that the *regazzi* were not yet required. The singers from my choir which included the School Principal, were asked to sit up the back, out of the way and whenever a semi-chorus was required for certain sections, it would consist of everyone who wasn't from my choir. The process of division and alienation between the groups of singers was alarming. This was exacerbated by the choice of words and tone of voice used in rehearsals to belittle the singers from my choir. There were even moments when it was clear that the conductor thought that by sitting near my singers, the other singers might be at a disadvantage. For the staff involved in my choir, this was shocking and outrageous. Several of my choristers became a little disenchanted with the process and I had difficulty in persuading them not to drop out. Fortunately, the enjoyment and success of the performances including the enthusiasm and personality of the international conductor allowed the project to leave a positive memory for the singers but the process left me feeling helpless which had never happened before in a collaborative performance project. I was ultimately crestfallen and frankly angry, knowing that the students would be highly unlikely to want to sing in this adult chorus after leaving Year 12. My faith in the collaborative process had been shaken a little.

Results

Three themes emerged as being significant: isolation versus collaboration, social interaction, and music on a grand scale. I will address these themes in turn, based on the sequence in which they occurred in the narrative.

Isolation versus Collaboration

Growing up in such an isolated community meant that social interaction was limited to attendance at school and whatever gatherings the adults chose to create which may or may not have involved children my age. Admittedly, there was Music offered in primary school, but this was limited to singing songs out of the ABC songbook once the teacher had pressed 'play' on the tape recorder. What I didn't know at the time was how being exposed to a community of musicians would allow me to express myself. The stark contrast between the life of a small boy, isolated and without music and a teenaged boy surrounded by like-minded people with a common purpose provided an insight into my development that I had not considered until now.

Being an Australian, growing up in a town situated at great distance from where any meaningful musical connections could be made is part of the tyranny of distance that lies at the heart of the Australian experience. Mine was not the only such experience. Other musicians[1] went on to having fulfilling musical careers after a childhood characterised by similar experiences of isolation.

Social Interaction

The social element of musical collaborations was a strong theme. However, not all of the projects in the narrative discussed this. The collaborations where social interaction was strongest was unsurprisingly when the ensembles mixed like for like (in terms of age). This is not to suggest that when adults and teenagers collaborated that there were not moments of social interaction, or that different demographics didn't produce other meaningful outcomes. The mix of geographical backgrounds certainly didn't hinder agreeable social intercourse, and in the case of the brass band vignette, an old relationship based on rivalry and competition was to some extent, transformed into a more cohesive community.

In the vignette about the first collaboration, the word 'friend' appears three times. Each time, the context of the word 'friend' changes. Initially, the collaboration took place between

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[1] Peter Allen, songwriter and singer – Tenterfield, NSW; James Morrison – Boorowa, a rural farming community in NSW; Don Walker, songwriter for rock band, Cold Chisel – Ayr, North Queensland; Lee Kernaghan, Country & Western songwriter – Corryong, Victoria; Florence Broadhurst, classical singer – Mount Perry, Queensland; John Williamson – Kerang, Victoria; and Ella Hooper from rock band, Killing Heidi – Violet Town, Victoria.

myself and one of my friends. The performance project took shape with the addition of more friends to play in the orchestra. Finally, the concert produced friendships between students from both schools. Friendships and social interaction is identified as pivotal to the first collaboration. That people seek friendships or depend on them for help is not unique to the world of music-making but the significance of its recurrence in recounting this first collaboration juxtaposes my socially isolated childhood with a way of working in my adult life.

That social interaction was a strong theme to emerge from my observations of my students and adult band members creates an interesting link to my lack of social interaction as a child. That I not only observed the socialising but also recall it in my narrative highlights the resonance it has for me. It also makes clear the notion of bias that is an inevitable feature of the auto-ethnographical methodology. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) point out that, 'Autoethnography is one of the approaches that acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they don't exist' (p. 2).

Music on a Grand Scale

The third emergent theme explored the notion of ensemble size and the capacity of an enlarged ensemble to create big and exciting sounds. This is a musical experience that is capable of ecstatic moments for audience and performers due to the huge force of sound. Although it is much easier to produce loud sounds via electronically amplified means, the language makes clear connections between the number of individuals involved and the powerful music that is created.

The comparison of the quiet, sonic isolation of my youth and the urge to create big sounds in my professional life is clear. The Wheatbelt with its sparse population, quiet countryside, lack of noise pollution, and musical isolation provided little in the way of sound stimulation. A yearning to fill my adult world with grand-scale sounds can almost be seen as trying to make up for lost time.

The intimidating sparseness of the West Australian landscape has inspired many artists, poets and composers such as; Tim Winton (*Dirt Music*, 2002), Iain Grandage (*Wheatbelt*, 2007), and Dominik Karski (*Streams of Consciousness*, 2000). In a discussion of Australian-inspired art, Richards (2007) notes that 'David Tacey has written of the oppositional attitudes towards the landscape as being either demonic or paradisal.' (p. 8). Tacey's thoughts on the desolation of the

Australian outback resonate with me. While the relative peace and quiet seems captivating, this was an environment unsuited to a young person wanting to explore the world of music and I seem to have focused on activities that counter my childhood experiences.

Conclusion

The narrative of these vignettes provides a positive recollection of a variety of collaborative performance projects. I am the common thread in these moments and this subjectivity is likely to have contributed to the positive tone. The auto-ethnographic process allows this sense of bias to form a critical part of the research process. Despite the overwhelmingly positive tone of the vignettes, the tension noted in the *Carmina Burana* narrative indicates that things do not always go according to plan. There is an increase in risk when collaborating, especially when venturing into working relationships with people and having to produce something so suddenly with so many people involved. If it goes wrong, it can go spectacularly wrong.

Despite the anxiety of relinquishing control to relatively unknown people, the fear of overly ambitious projects, the difficulties of logistics and administration of collaborative projects, the opportunity for creating pivotal moments in time is evidenced by my recollections. Farrell (2001) posits that, 'the figure of the lone genius is not always accurate. Instead, he recognizes that extraordinary creativity if often the result of successful collaboration among peers who develop an intense friendship and work together on similar projects for an extended period of time' (p. 1). Although difficulties may arise, collaboration allows the meeting of creative minds, which has its own motivational effect. That the large ensemble creates considerable power for a performance is to be expected. It is the anticipation of this power however, the moments before it is realised that creates excitement and adrenaline. The risks taken in creating an ensemble that is untested is outweighed by the feelings of heightened emotion before the event takes place. These feelings are always preferable to the possibility of a performance being so safe and lacking in risk that the execution of it becomes perfunctory.

In a case study of three Australian school and community partnerships, Bartleet (2012) notes that, 'such joint ventures provide deeply enriching musical, social, cultural and pedagogical experiences for their participants, and oftentimes present practical solutions to the resourcing and infrastructure challenges facing many school and community music programmes'

(p. 49). This indeed supports my thoughts about the many collaborations I have instigated over the years. It was interesting to note that Bartleet also observed 'that many Australian schools and community music activities exist in relative isolation from one another' (p. 49). I hope that in my sphere of influence the potential for vibrant school-community music collaborations is being realised.

Epilogue

Understanding what influenced my journey through these collaborations allows a deeper understanding of how I understand other people's perceptions of them. It seems so important that if I am to involve so many people in my quest to collaborate, that I have a deep understanding of why I am driven to do it and why others should participate. The journey of socially isolated child, deprived of meaningful musical experiences, to enthusiastic student desperate to be a part of a purposeful community of like-minded people, to teacher with an insatiable need for his students to experience the joy of massed music making on a grand scale now seems obvious. My childhood isolation created a desire for an opposing experience both in terms of a thirst for cultural saturation and for large-scale human interaction. It took the auto-ethnographical process for me to construct the narrative, which in turn allowed me to understand the connection. For those music teachers who did not experience such an isolated childhood, perhaps the need for collaboration is not pursued as fervently. For these teachers, the understanding of the importance of collaborative experiences needs to be considered more consciously.

I set out to understand my constant pursuit of collaborative performance situations so that other music teachers may benefit from the insight I have gained. If large-scale musical collaborations could inspire me and my students to pursue active participation in Music, I hope that other musical leaders may share this positive experience with those in their sphere of influence.

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Coda

The process of writing this autoethnography revealed aspects of my development as a musician and educator that I had not previously considered. Writing an autoethnography can be a difficult or painful process of reflection. For me, it revealed a deeper meaning of the transformative effect that large-scale, collaborative music performances provide me. This deeper understanding in turn assisted my facilitation of a double hermeneutic process of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis used in subsequent articles.

The notion of collaboration in music performance is broad and can involve the relationship between composer and solo performer and intimate chamber music situations. This research is focussed on the collaboration of a school music ensemble such as a choir, orchestra or band with an ensemble from another organisation. The theme that emerged from the autoethnography which explores the reaction against musical isolation is therefore central to this research. The following article provides a link between some of the repertoire encountered in the autoethnography and a musicological analysis of pieces specifically encountered when two music ensembles collaborate.

Chapter 3: Musicology

The following article is currently under review with *Current Musicology* and is entitled 'Sharing the Stage: Trends in Composition for Children's Choir and Symphony Orchestra'. It follows on from the autoethnography by providing a foundation of understanding for the subsequent chapters. In this case, the musical material, its development, and the impact it had on the musicians involved in the ensemble collaborations is explored. The purpose of this chapter is to identify musical works specifically written for a collaboration of ensembles involving children and musicians outside of the school community. As subsequent chapters explore the performance of some of these works, it is important to understand the musical material being referred to.

The decision of which works to explore was made on the basis that some ensemble works required two ensembles which necessitate the musical collaboration of two institutions. It is possible to successfully perform repertoire with an amalgamated ensemble that does not fit this criterion, however understanding of this unique sub-genre of composition had attracted little research and was important to the thesis. Decisions about suitable repertoire for combined musical forces must be made by ensemble directors based on all factors known to them (Young, 1998). Music performed in some of the collaborations involving brass bands and concert bands discussed in the previous chapter were not conceived of by the composer for collaborative ensembles, but for our purposes, at that time, they worked successfully.

Composers writing for high school ensembles are invariably aware of the differing capacities of school music programmes to perform works that demand advanced instrumentation or prohibitive technical requirements (Colgrass, 2004). Such works exist for more developed and elite programmes and are often commissions, however market forces determine that composers cater for the limitations of the majority of school music resources (Apfelstadt, 2000). In this article, not all compositions were composed with a specific school ensemble in mind, however they have all become important performance works that allow school music ensembles, notably children's choirs, to experience musical collaboration with professional, adult orchestras.

Sharing the stage: Trends in composition for children's choir and symphony orchestra

Abstract

In the 19th century, a small number of composers included parts for children's chorus in their symphonic and choral works. As the 20th century progressed, more composers were scoring for children's choirs to perform alongside their adult counterparts. Post-War Europe was enjoying a change in mood, creating art works that embodied hope, renewal and in many instances, turned to children to reflect this zeitgeist. Composers were also exploring the possibilities of children's choirs to add to the developing timbral palette available to them. As the repertoire for children's choirs and adult orchestras increased, so too did the sophistication of the musical demands upon them. Children's choirs in the 21st century now need to be highly skilled and well-trained in order to effectively perform some of the modern compositions. In a response to these trends, symphony orchestras around the world are choosing to have their own 'in-house' children's chorus to perform the growing list of works that require them. In this article, six works for children's chorus and adult music ensembles are explored and compositional and historical trends are discussed. The contrast in musical demands from the earlier works are compared with more recent pieces and the rise of the modern, symphonic children's chorus is explored.

Key Words

Children's chorus, choral music, collaboration, twentieth century music

Introduction

Composers have been incorporating child choristers in their works for hundreds of years. J. S. Bach made use of the boys at the *Thomaskirche* in Leipzig as did Antonio Vivaldi with the orphans at the *Ospedale della Pietà* in Italy. The idea of composing works in which collaborations between adult musicians and children's choirs were necessary did not emerge until the late 19th century. Mendelssohn's famous 1828 revival of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* dispensed with a children's chorus as it was not absolutely necessary for the score to make sense in performance. Other works of the Renaissance, Baroque and Classical periods can be performed by professional, adult singers and with their professional, adult, orchestral counterparts without significantly compromising the meaning of the work. Even the clarity and

purity needed for the *cantus firmus* required for Monteverdi's *Sonata Sopra* from his *Vespro della Beata Vergine* (1610) which would have undoubtedly be performed by young boys could effectively be sung by adult choristers. With the well-known exceptions of Berlioz and Mahler, it was the composers of the 20th century who created popular works which necessitated a children's chorus in significant numbers. This development led to the phenomenon of choirs of children regularly sharing a musical platform with the world's great orchestras, soloists and conductors.

The programmes and publications for the earlier works involving children's choirs include little mention of the children involved in the premiere or the musical directors who prepared them. Over time, the involvement of the children's choirs increased in perceived importance and were included on publication material. These works now occupy an important space in the repertoire of professional musical organisations. In recent years, professional Symphony Orchestras have looked to expand their scope to include a children's chorus under their own umbrella to perform the growing oeuvre. Examples include; the Cleveland Orchestra Children's Chorus (formed 1967); the Royal Scottish National Orchestra Junior Chorus (formed 1978); the China Children's Choir of the China National Symphony Orchestra (formed 1983); the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra Children's Chorus (formed 1994); the Paducah Symphony Youth and Children's Choruses (formed 1997); the Singapore Symphony Children's Choir (formed 2007); and the Fairbanks Symphony Children's Chorus (formed 2015). Having direct control over the activities of a children's chorus can alleviate the need to collaborate with organisations such as schools and churches in the community to perform such music. Enlarging the Orchestra's performing community to include children is also a form of internal promotion of the activities of the orchestra. Tagg notes that repertoire can be a pivotal reason for the formation of such a children's choir:

> Not every choir begins with the goal of founding a new organization. Sometimes a choir grows organically from a special project. A children's choir may be formed to participate with an adult chorus for the performance of a major orchestral work such as Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mahler's Symphony No. 3 or Symphony No. 8, or Britten's *War Requiem*, each of which requires a boys' or children's choir. Many

children's choirs have been formed for such a purpose and become a permanent ensemble following the event. (Tagg, 2013, p. 8)

When composers write works for ensembles of children and adult musicians, they are unwittingly necessitating a process of collaboration. Although there are a growing number of symphony orchestras which have created their own children's chorus, many of the works that are now staples of the repertoire, originally called for school or church choirs to perform at the premier. The incorporation of works requiring children's voices and adult musicians may result from several reasons;

1.   The theme of the piece requires children as part of the narrative;
2.   A desire for the unique timbre of children's voices;
3.   Creating a work for enhanced community engagement and intergenerational understanding;
4.   A specific commission from an organisation involving children.

Much of the literature tends to avoid discussion of the collaborative process that takes place when major, adult works require children to perform components of the music. Instead, it suggests they were simply a requirement of the music. Little discussion can be found about the works providing young musicians still in their Primary years of schooling with opportunities to be part of a process involving highly professional musical situations. These opportunities may create moments of enjoyment for the audience, but they can have lasting effects for the children who participate.

In an article written in 1944 that discusses the role of group singing in school, Dickinson states that,

the best in school life is of value in itself. It may make its own selections from full or adult experience, but it must satisfy the present need of an individual or group for experience commensurate with realised or latent powers. (Dickinson, 1944, p. 12)

Dickinson discusses the benefits of advanced musical ideas in contemporary unison songs for class-singing in 1944. However, he does not touch on the grander compositions requiring children to perform with symphony orchestras. These were yet to occur in considerable volume.

The research question is, why did composers start creating collaborative works for symphony orchestras and children's choirs? In attempting to answer this question a selection of works from a variety of composers over a large time-frame have been chosen for discussion. The criteria for the selection of works included;

1.   The piece must be scored for children and adult musicians;

2.   The piece must require an ensemble of children rather than solo voices;

3.   The piece should not be able to easily replace children with adult choristers.

The works selected for this article are discussed in chronological order.

Symphony No. 3, Gustav Mahler (1896)

In the fifth movement of Mahler's Symphony No. 3 (1896) an offstage boys' chorus is used to imitate chiming bells. They sing '*bimm, bamm*' repeatedly. Mahler's marking for the final phoneme is '*lustig im Tempo und keck im Ausdruck*' – cheerful in tempo and bold in expression. For the premiere, the orchestra comprised musicians from both the Krefelder Städtische Kapelle and the Gürzenich Orchestra. The choirs comprised the ladies of the Oratorien-Verein and the children of the St Anna-Knabenchor. Monelle (1996) explains,

> The work is not production or utterance but manifestation; just as the "subjective" utterances of the fourth and sixth movements are the manifestation of an impassioned speaker, so now another part of the speaking universe is manifested, the singing of children and the chiming of Christmas bells (p. 254).

Figure 1. Section from the beginning of the fifth movement of Mahler's third Symphony.

Figure 1 shows that the writing for the children is uncomplicated and although in two parts, provides little musical challenge for young singers. Following this extract, the children's part is in unison for the remainder of the movement which lasts for only 120 bars. The range is between a B^b4 and an F5. The text consists predominantly of the onomatopoeic 'bimm bamms' seen in Figure 1 but they are given several short lines of text from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (Youth's Magic Horn) towards the end of the movement. The tessitura used in this extract encourages use of 'chest voice' for the boys rather than the more angelic sounding 'head voice'. In Willem Mengelberg's[2] score, above frauenchor, the 'Hohenstimme' the term Grob (coarse or crude) was *not* struck out by the correcting copyist.

Other melodic material used in the fifth movement quotes Mahler's previously composed material from the child's song *Das himmlische Leben.* The children's chorus anticipate the adult chorus, which sing text from another poem from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. Franklin explains that this material, 'is introduced by the "morning-bell" ostinato of children's voices, whose 'Bimm, bamm, bimm, bamm' rings out in F major after the last sepulchral A of the Nietzsche setting has died away' (Franklin, 1991, pp. 68-9). The introduction of children in the final movement of the symphony was a new concept for the late-romantic composer as Franklin goes on to explain,

> No one but Mahler would have dared to try a movement like this – drawing a full women's chorus and a company of rowdy children into his symphony for a movement that he himself reckoned to last only four minutes…The sheer cheek of the childlike angels may have more to do with the Germanic Christmas-carols than Mediterranean dances…The elaborate artifice of the previous movement's song of the individuated inwardness is now replaced by a public celebration – a musical party to which everyone has been invited, from the local church choir to the village band. (Franklin, 1991, p. 70)

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[2] Mengelberg was principal conductor of the Concertgebouw Orchestra between 1895 and 1945. He invited Mahler to conduct his third Symphony in Amsterdam in 1903. Mengelberg's score is valuable as it includes many annotations made during rehearsals both in his and Mahler's hand.

Franklin goes on to discuss the effusive reaction to Mahler's third Symphony in *The Musical Times* in London. The 1902 article stated, 'Much interest was created by the performance under the composer's direction of the Vienna Opera, the final movement of which introducing a choir of boy's voices, with contralto solo, produced a most marked impression' ("Annual Festival", 1902, p. 481).

The unexpected inclusion of a boys' choir is clearly significant enough to be mentioned and the effect was noted. Mahler's use of children in his third symphony can be in part accredited to the clarity of the children's bell-like timbre but also to help represent the theme of universality that the composer was intent on expressing. The connection with children's' voices and angels is an obvious one as the text relates how St. Peter repents his sins, finding forgiveness and heavenly bliss.

Carmina Burana, Carl Orff (1935-6)

Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* (1935-6) is based on a collection of Latin and German Goliard poems found in the monastery of Benediktbeuren. The work favours easily discernible rhythmic patterns rather than traditional melodic development. His pervasive use of simple rhythmic ostinati and inclusion of a children's chorus at pivotal moments reflects his passion for music education. His *Musik für Kinder* which was later developed into a more extensive series known as *Orff Schulwerk* made Orff one of the pre-eminent international experts on children's music education (Southcott & Cosaitis, 2012).

Carmina Burana was originally conceived as a staged performance although over time, it has become more popular to present it as a concert work. Orff enjoyed the process of working with a variety of artists to allow his compositions to develop organically. Thomas explains that Orff

> found the right friends, collaborators and interpreters for the realization of his works…Artists and producers were encouraged to develop solutions in their own way. Orff sometimes worked with singers and actors over a period of weeks. He was amenable to changes which evolved from practical experience. He discoursed with conductors, producers and stage designers; many of them became his friends…' (Thomas, 1985, p. 17).

The need for Orff to score for children's chorus can be seen to come from his work with music education but equally the text can be seen as responsible. The *ragazzi* (boys), are used in the third section; *Cour d'amours* (The Court of Love) [3] and assist with the metaphor of spring and the earthly delights that follow. The children represent newness, youth, and cheeky humour, central themes in the Goliard poetry.

Figure 2. Extract from third part of *Carmina Burana* for the *ragazzi*.

Figure 2 shows the relatively simple unison melody for the *ragazzi*. The melody is set quite low in the voice for young boys requiring a 'chest voice' technique emphasised by accents, to enable reasonable projection. The melody is a repeat of the same figure sung by the soprano and baritone soloists. The conjunct melody is supported by the accompanying orchestra in a diatonic structure. It provides little in the way of musical challenge apart from the text which moves syllabically and depending on the conductor's choice of tempo, fairly quickly towards the end of the extract. This extract is typical of the music provided for the children in that they do not have lengthy extracts to rehearse, rather Orff gives them short, simple sections of music that could easily be memorised without too much rehearsal if required. This is not the case for the adult chorus who have significantly more music, some of which is vocally and musically demanding.

There were no less than seven choirs involved in the first performance however documentation of the first performance of *Carmina Burana* makes no mention of the group of children who first performed the *ragazzi* sections. The Cäcilien-Chor, Frankfurt, famous for its performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* along with the; *Chor des Opernhauses, gemischter Chor des Reichssenders Frankfurt, Ruehlscher Gesangverein, Lehrerchor, Singakademie*, and the *Extra-Chor der Oper* were all involved, but there is no reference to a children's choir or *ragazzi* (Uraufführungen an den Städlichen Bühnen, n.d.). The original poster only mentions

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[3] Orff's Autograph facsimile score has, '*Pars tertia: Amor volat undique'.* (Schaefer & Thomas, 1997, p. XXIX)

three people involved in the production aside from the composer; '*Musikal Leitung: Bertil Wetzelsberger, Regie: Dr. O. Walferlin, Buhnenbild: Ludwig Sievert*' (Schneider, 1979, p. 65).

The Autograph facsimile of the score reveals that the sections sung by the *ragazzi* are written for '*kleiner chor sopr.*' (small choir of sopranos). The verse usually involving the *ragazzi* in movement 22, *Tempus est iocundum* is indicated only to be sung by Soprano Solo alternating with Baritone Solo which is consistent with the list of singers required in the inside page under *Singstimmen* (singing voices) in which there is no mention of children's voices. Schaefer (1997) notes that Orff tried several times with much frustration to amend the score, particularly in the lead-up to the Dresden performance in October, 1940 conducted by Karl Böhm. There were three issues of the score; the photocopy of the autograph, the blueprint of the copyist's manuscript, and the printed version. Orff wrote to Willy Strecker, his publisher at Schott Music on October 28th, 1950, remarking

> It's gratifying that Carmina Burana is to be performed in London. Who is doing it? In which hall? In view of the local production, it fills me with concern that I have to make the observation, that corrections of 12 years standing, in fact absolutely essential ones, have still not been carried out today…when I think that performances abroad take place with uncorrected materials, then I find that distressing. It is urgently necessary to bring out at least a revised study score of the publishing house. But this must happen before the foreign performances have taken place. (Schaefer & Thomas, 1997, p. XXVII)

In the autograph score of 1936 and in the first issue of the score, a photocopy of the autograph in 1937, Orff wrote '*kleiner Chor Sopr.*' and at the beginning of the text for movement 15, *Amor volat undique* (p. 113), he wrote '(*nur sehr helle Stimmen* – only very bright voices)'. In the second issue of the score, a blueprint of a copyist's manuscript published in 1939, similar markings are indicated; '*Kl. Ch.*' and '*Sopran (nur sehr helle Stimmen)*'. However, in movement 17, (p 117), Orff makes a correction, crossing out '*Sopran*' and writing with pencil '*Knabenchor*' (boys' choir). It is only since the corrected and revised third edition of the score was printed in 1952, that the Italian word "Ragazzi" is used (Schaefer & Thomas, 1997). This is in keeping with the uniform use of Italian performance directions that Orff was intending. From

the concert programs, we know that the first time a *Knabenchor* was used in performance was in Vienna, at the Wiener Staatsoper, on 5th February, 1942 with the Wiener Sängerknaben. Direction: Oscar Fritz Schuh, Stage Design: Josef Fenneker, Musical Direction: Leopold Ludwig.

Although Orff was frustrated with the process of arriving at a score with which he was happy, it is clear from his own handwriting that he did not originally intend for *Carmina Burana* to involve children's chorus. The decision to use children alongside adult musicians was made after the work was premiered and after the first edition.

St. Nicolas Op. 42, Benjamin Britten (1948)

Approximately a third of Benjamin Britten's music incorporated children's voices. His cantata, *St. Nicolas* (1948) was written for a mixed chorus and orchestra but with an additional two-part children's chorus. The work was written for the centenary celebrations of Lancing College, Sussex. Britten wrote the piece for boys from three schools and girls from another. It was premiered at the Aldeburgh church as part of the 1948 Aldeburgh Festival. Britten wished to create a piece that could be performed by amateurs, with the exception of the tenor soloist and pianists.

The precise reason for Britten's interest in composing for children's voices is disputed and theorised (Matthias 1993; Sinclair 1997). His repeated reference to 'lost innocence' is a favourite *leit motif* throughout his works. Some biographers discuss his fondness for the easy rhythms of school daily life, three years of which Britten missed. Britten himself did not complete secondary school. Following five years at South Lodge Preparatory School, he moved to Gresham's School in Holt, Norfolk. However, he left at the age of sixteen to attend The Royal College of Music, an experience of frustration for him. Bridcutt (2006) observed, 'Although Britten wrote extensively for children, and about children, this aspect of his work has received surprisingly little attention, perhaps out of concern that, if too many stones were dislodged, something nasty might crawl out' (p. ii).

Britten and Pears often stayed with Esther Neville-Smith, the wife of a member of staff at Lancing College, Sussex. She offered Britten a commission of £100 for a new work, celebrating

the centenary of the college. Pears had been a pupil of the college in the 1920's. In a letter to Jean Redcliffe-Maud dated July 10th 1947, Britten wrote, 'I am so busy with the opera excepting for September, when I <u>must</u> do my Lancing commission…' (Mitchell, Reed, & Cooke, 2004, p. 299). The commission required Britten to include children's voices as Handford explains,

> 'We explained [to Britten] that it would be performed by the joint choirs of Lancing, Hurst, Ardingly and St Michael's with perhaps contingents from other schools. This is why there is a special part for female voices, to be sung from the western gallery, lamenting the murder of the three boys in the legend [No. VII 'Nicolas and the Pickled Boys'] the Choir is divided into several sections so that each school could have its own short section to sing.' (Handford, 1986, p. 255)

In a letter to Peter Pears from Benjamin Britten dated December 18th, 1947, it is clear that the forces involved in the first performance dictated the need for the children's choir to be separated from the main chorus. What is not clear is whether Britten's view on girls in church was his or whether he was sarcastically expressing a distasteful opinion of the churches history of involving females in worship activity. He writes,

> I am beginning St Nicolas, & enjoying it hugely. It'll be difficult to write, because that mixture of subtlety & simplicity is most extending, but very interesting. I have just got the details of the choirs from Jasper, & it looks quite hopeful. I think St Michael's will have to be relegated to the galleries (where anyhow all girls should be in Church), because they are obviously the most efficient, & their breathy voices are obviously more suited to the wind noises & so forth. (Mitchell, Reed, & Cooke, 2004, p. 344).

Figure 3. Extract from Britten's *St Nicolas. Op 42.*

Figure 3 is taken from the seventh movement of *St. Nicolas.* The children sing in two parts, in bitonality with the antiphonal orchestra. They can find their starting note from the highest note in the tonal cluster played by the tremolo strings. Rhythmically, their part bares no relation to the ostinato provided by the timpani. The music is fairly conjunct and syllabic making the learning of the notes relatively achievable but certainly not without a reasonable challenge for the young singers.

Britten's need for the children's chorus in *St. Nicolas* arises from the text. Saint Nicolas is the patron saint of children, among other things. This is due in part to his anonymous acts of charity and kindness to children while carrying out his duties as Bishop of Myra. More curiously, the story of the three pickled boys heard in the seventh movement, gives voice to one of his miracles whereby the dismembered boys were amazingly brought back to life.

Hodie, Ralph Vaughan Williams (1953-4)

His last major choral and orchestral composition, Vaughan Williams' *Hodie* (This Day) (1953-4) was premiered under the composer's baton at Worcester Cathedral for the Three Choirs Festival. This annual festival involves the choirs from the three Cathedrals of Hereford, Gloucester and Worcester in the United Kingdom and has been occurring for over 300 years (Young, 2000). It is therefore one of the world's oldest choral music festivals. The 16-movement cantata is scored for orchestra, chorus, boys' choir, organ and three soloists.

In 1954 Vaughan Williams indicated a desire to include a simpler version for school orchestras, as the original was quite complex. He asked Roy Douglas[4] to consider another scoring. About the request, Douglas recalls, 'the scoring of This Day seemed to me unsuitably complex for school orchestras, and I wrote back on 6 February, gently discouraging - as I hoped - this project, but the subject cropped up again in June' (Douglas, 1972, p. 67).

Vaughan Williams indicates the importance he placed on school music participation. The possibility of community participation was more important to him that the work as a piece of art. In a letter to Douglas, he writes:

Now the score is nearly finished a new problem presents itself - I have an idea that this work is likely to become popular with school choral societies - but, as usual, I have made the orchestration (probably unnecessarily) elaborate and difficult - would you consider re-scoring it to bring [it] with in the means of the average school orchestra - preserving as much of the original orchestration as possible? (Douglas, 1972, pp. 68-9)

Dickinson observes the work's usefulness for school children and community music organisations despite his faint praise for the piece as a whole. He states,

The ending of *Hodie* is piquantly varied and descriptive – the composer begged for advice on school potentialities – and school choirs seem to 'like' this work. Listeners, and in time performers, may still doubt what sort of integer it adds up to. It is scarcely an aesthetic whole. It will stand or fall, in the class-room, and in the concert hall, by the appeal of the vivid movements, round which other events move in converging circles. Still, it is important for school teachers and county directors to have this piece of intelligible and singable modern music in store for a suitable year, at a reasonable cost per head and with not necessarily more than a string group accompaniment. (Dickinson, 1963, p. 464)

Figure 4. Extract from second movement of Vaughan Williams' *Hodie.*

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[4] Roy Douglas was Vaughan Williams' musical assistant from 1947 until the composer's death in 1958. He produced legible versions of the composer's works and made many accepted revisions.

Moderato con moto (♩ = 88)

(in a narrative style)   A few trebles (preferably boys)

Now the birth of Je-sus Christ was on this wise: when-as his moth-er

Ma___ ry was es poused to___ Jo- seph, be fore they came to___

geth- er, she was found with child___ of the Ho - ly Ghost___

Figure 4 shows the first entrance of the boys' voices. The writing is in unison and is rhythmically and melodically simple. It operates within a range of an octave between the tonics of F Major and is mainly conjunct. The role of the boys' voices is to link the work by narrating the Gospel scripture throughout. Always accompanied by organ only and with a uniform style in each movement, the boys' choir tells the story of the coming of the magi. Etter elaborates, 'The challenge was to achieve some sort of unity, a process he attempted through the narratives sung by boys' voices, and through the expressiveness of his music. Whether or not he achieved that unity is still debated' (Etter, 2002, p. 49). Vaughan Williams provides a work in which the boys are central thematically and musically. However, the level of difficulty is not beyond the abilities of most children's choirs. The boys' part is isolated from the large forces of the adult choir and orchestra, accompanied by organ in the same way as an evangelist in a Bach oratorio. The possibility of singing concurrently with the combined orchestral and choral forces does not exist for the boys in this piece.

Mass, Leonard Bernstein (1971)

Bernstein's *Mass* (1971) is a theatre piece that utilises several groups of singers. A children's choir (SSAA) processes on and off stage at various times, performing alone, in antiphon, or in concert with the Formal Choir and the Street Singers. The boys' choir which needed to include at least 20 singers also doubled on kazoo. The premiere included the Berkshire Boys' Choir alongside the Norman Scribner Choir. Apart from the sections of the Roman Catholic Tridentine Mass, the additional text was prepared by Bernstein, Stephen Schwartz and Paul Simon. It was commissioned by Jacqueline Kennedy and the premiere was part of the

opening of the John F. Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts in Washington D.C. Secrest explains the general theme of the work,

> The work has as its slight plot the story of a very contemporary young man carrying the compulsory guitar who begins as a celebrant but, as the Mass progresses, becomes increasingly embittered and disillusioned and erupts in a rage, desecrating the sacraments and tearing off his vestments. The work ends with an affirmation of faith, or a demonstration of the need for faith, by the congregation. (Secrest, 1995, p. 327)

Figure 5. Section from *In nomine Patris* from Bernstein's *Mass*.

Figure 5 shows an extract from the end of the first section involving boys' chorus in Bernstein's work. The second line of the score is for the 8th part of the adult chorus from the previous movement. The musical line for the boys' voices is the bottom stave. The range is a 10th within four bars and the adjunct nature of the melody requires some skill in the pitching of notes. Later, the boys sing complex, two-part polyphonically textured music against multiple adult chorus lines in Latin. Although the lines involve sequential patterns, these are not straight-forward or predictable and involve several irregular metres. The boys were also required to play kazoos in the second movement. In the *Sanctus* movement, the boys divide into two groups, each singing in two parts but are only together for several bars which require four-part singing. The work concludes with the boys' choir 'descending the steps on either side and into the house'. The score notes that 'In the original production the Boys said "Pass it on" with each touch' (Bernstein, 1971, p. 266).

One of the choristers involved in the first performance of Bernstein's work wrote to the composer shortly afterwards explaining the impact the experience had on him. He writes,

David Charles Abell to Leonard Bernstein

466 Poplar Street, Winnetka, IL

21 November 1971

Dear Mr Bernstein,

I would like to thank you very much for the fantastic time I had in Washington D.C. in September. It was thrilling to be in as big and important a production as your *MASS*. I think it is a great piece of music, and my favorite parts are the Epistle, and from the "Ágnus Dei" to the end. I was an alternate in the Berkshire Boy Choir and I was in over half the performances and all of the recording (the two easiest sessions I have ever seen or been in).

Recently, I head the piece on radio and was so excited about it that I didn't do my homework so I could listen to it! I can't wait until I can get the record, but the stores around here are slow at getting it in. Wasn't the recording changed a little from the performances?[5] (Ron Young singing the first "I don't know").

Is *MASS* going on Broadway or to Los Angeles or any place like that? I'm sure if you took it around to different cities, the crowds would be miles long.

I wish I could re-live the fantastic experience I had in Washington, but anyway it will benefit me in many ways all my life.

Sincerely,

Your friend and admirer,

David Abell

Berkshire Choirboy

(Simeone, 2013, p. 513)

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[5] Ron Young was replaced for the recording because his agent was holding out for more money. Ed Dixon replaced him. (Dixon, 2012)

This letter provides an insight into the life-changing experience that such an opportunity can have for a young person. Although Bernstein's inclusion of a boy chorus was likely one of necessity given the narrative, the unexpected benefit of providing a transformative experience would not have been lost on the maestro. Although the inside page of the score and the billing in the concert programme includes the Berkshire Boys' Choir, there is no indication of who prepared them for the performance.

Quickening, James MacMillan (1998)

James MacMillan's *Quickening* (1998) was a commission from the BBC Proms and the Philadelphia Orchestra. It premiered in 1999 with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Hilliard Ensemble, and Westminster Cathedral Boys' Choir 'Quickening' refers to the stage of pregnancy in which the foetus can first be felt to move. The children's choir are representative of the unborn child. The words are by British poet, Michael Symmons Roberts (b. 1963). Structurally, there are similarities to be drawn with Britten's *War Requiem Op. 66* (1962). The forces require a small ensemble of soloists, a symphonic chorus on stage and a separate boys' choir accompanied by chamber choir ideally spatially removed from the other forces. The work is complex and musically demanding, and the parts for boys' choir involve some high tessitura singing, although MacMillan states,

> I have specifically written this piece so that it will continue to be performed by amateur choirs. I suppose, in that sense, it should not be technically demanding, although there are things asked of the singers that are quite unusual like the Glossalalia, like the very free, rhythmical approach to singing like that with a strange text, a kind of nonsense text, though it is based on a kind of adaptation of old Aramaic (Spicer, 2012, p. 23).

There are four movements; *Incarnadine, Midwife, Poppies,* and *Living Water.* The children's chorus is used in each of the four movements. MacMillan's performance notes in the front of the score state,

> The children's chorus and chamber organ should, if possible, be positioned away
> from the other performers (for example in a gallery or at the back of the auditorium),

but not so as to sound distant. In the absence of a suitable children's chorus a chorus of pure-sounding women's voices may be used. (Macmillan, 1999, p. i)

The adult chorus sing all but the words of the Unborn in the first three movements which are given to the adult, male quartet in turn and the children's choir. However, in the last movement the procedure is reversed. Weitzman wrote in his review of the premiere performance,

It became evident that MacMillan would be skilfully fusing dynamically new instrumental colours with three layers of vocal writing: namely, full-bodied homophonic choral music, intertwined with the compact and tender other-worldly sounds of the adult vocal quartet which in turn are dovetailed with luminously radiant boys' voices. (Weitzman, 2000, pp. 29-30)

It is unsurprising that a work which deals with childbirth should include children. What is important is that the musical demands of the children are no less than their adult counterparts as seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Final chord for Children's chorus, last movement of MacMillan's *Quickening*.

Instructions to children's chorus in the score:

Divided into 5, the trebles begin on one of the given pitches *and* with one of the phrases marked 1 to 5 chant through the given text, repeating the whole over and over again. Each individual voice takes a separate path through the words, chanting at different speeds, creating a cumulative but disparate effect. Each bracketed phrase[6] can be dwelt upon and repeated any number of times before proceeding.

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[6] In the score, brackets are provided in between each phrase of text. Here, the sections are separated by semicolon.

All voices should now start weaving their way through the 5 pitches, improvising one's own individual chant. Portamento between the semitones is also sometimes desired.)

Text: *Abona in de shoo; der catta shesh mach; dee failey mülkach; cheeth gang erotchah; gech beschmüh;sheeb hallah há; ab paich lech na oholian ná; oruferlaich theoltá; echmel rufferlee; deemach in maináh; oloof urst tach lemna tevere duth; bes majena ibshén.*

In Figure 6, the chord provided for the children's voices is tonally ambiguous. Pitching this tonal cluster is not something that could be quickly taught to an inexperienced group of children singers. The children are asked to sing in five parts which is challenging enough in a tonally straight-forward chord. In addition to this, an element of improvisation is required as well as singing in a made-up language. Following a triumphant, chorale-like conclusion in the last movement, the piece ends with a fade out with distant boys' voices as seen in Figure 6. 'The music of the Unborn, represented now by the full chorus, kicks and dances exultingly. The Babel-babble (joined by the children's choir, silent in this movement until now) recurs, rising to a shriek' (Macmillan, 1999, p. ii). The use of text adds further to the complexity of this music for young singers. A children's chorus considering approaching this work would require significant skill and training and the contrast between what is expected in these parts and those by Mahler is extreme.

MacMillan feels that his experience with children's choirs has enabled him to value their level of skill. He explains that 'there are fine traditions here of maintaining high standards for children's choirs.' The complexity of his writing for children has developed. He states, 'I have been lucky to write for some of the best children's choirs in the UK, and when the music travels there are wonderful choirs too in the US, Holland etc.' When working with the choir at Westminster Cathedral his understanding of the chorister's skills impacted his work on *Quickening.* He recalls, 'The choir at WC had already sung some of my music so I knew the boys' sound that was available to me.' He continues, 'I have had a close relationship with the musicians at Westminster Cathedral and they were my first choice when Quickening was commissioned for the BBC Proms in London in 1999.' MacMillan is aware of the difficulty of the parts he writes for children, noting, 'When Quickening was performed in Scotland the youngsters of the RSNO Junior Chorus were involved. My eldest daughter sang with them then and she reported back favourably! To begin with they probably found the music challenging and

complicated but they have directors who are committed to new music, so they all persevere.'
(James MacMillan, email message to author, June 3, 2016)

On the Transmigration of Souls, Adams (2002)

Almost 10 years to the day, after the terrible events of September 11th, 2001 in New York, the world premiere of John Adams' work took place at the Avery Fisher Hall in the same city. The New York Philharmonic, which commissioned the piece was joined by the Brooklyn Youth Chorus and New York Choral Artists and conducted by Lorin Maazel. The programme also included Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (1824) and Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* (1930) and the management of the orchestra felt that due to the proximity of the date, a piece reflecting the likely emotional state of the audience would be appropriate. According to Adams, the term 'transmigration' in the title refers to 'the transition from one state of being to another' (New York Philharmonic, 2002). The single movement work lasting around 25 minutes begins with a pre-recorded 'city-scape', a collage of three separately recorded tracks. Pre-recorded voices then enter, beginning with a boy repeating the word 'missing'. The instrumental forces enter gradually, 'but the work grows to employ the full orchestra, including at times a second ensemble within the orchestra playing a quarter-tone higher than the others, and the full chorus and children's chorus who sing other texts that Adams selected (Blim, 2013, p. 385). As the recorded music must be mixed live and played stereophonically with the live performance, the venue and the location of the listener based on proximity to the speaker and volume will be critical for the individual experience. The work is characterised by Adams' typical use of minimalism. Blim explains, '…the static harmonies, the repetition of names and the word "missing," and the repeated melodic cells that characterize much of the choral writing all suggest a minimalist style as a sort of background into which other musical and textual ideas are placed' (Blim, 2013, p. 393). Adams wanted to

> create a 'memory space' where 'you can go and be alone with your thoughts and emotions.' He wanted to make the concert hall something akin to a great cathedral, where you feel in the presence of generations of souls even as you are surrounded by other people: whispered voices, children whimpering, shoes scuffling on the stone floor. (New York Philharmonic, 2002)

The performance was critically well received. The role of the children's chorus was evidently important enough to be mentioned in reviews. According to one reviewer, 'With just two rehearsals he pulled off a raptly beautiful account of a complex score, with the Philharmonic joined by the New York Choral Artists (Joseph Flummerfelt, director) and the Brooklyn Youth Chorus (Dianne Berkun, director)' (Tommasini, 2002). Similarly, another reviewer wrote, 'The children's chorus, so often used as disembodied angels' voices, is here woven directly into the texture of the larger choir, and is perhaps Adams' single most effective writing here. The Brooklyn Youth Chorus was terrific in shaping this halo of sound…' (Conrad, 2002). The concert programme for the premiere of Adams' work not only includes billing for the Brooklyn Children's Chorus, it names each of the choristers. It also credits Dianne Berkun for preparing the children including a biography and head shot of her.

Adams was attempting to write for children's voices in a way that differed from Mahler's Eighth Symphony and Britten's *War Requiem* (1961-2). He felt that the ethereal and angelic qualities of their vocal timbre for which they are commonly associated instantly links them to the idea of innocence which he wanted to avoid. He explains,

I wanted the children's choir not just for these qualities but also because theirs is acoustically and timbrally a very very different sound from the mature voices of an adult chorus. So I used them a lot and I didn't isolate them or give them the usual "innocent" role. In fact they are right there in the thick of things, singing along with the adults and the orchestra'. (New York Philharmonic, 2002)
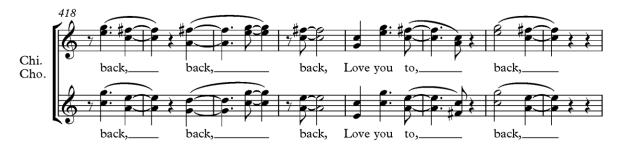
Figure 7. Extract from John Adams' *On the Transmigration of Souls*.

Figure 7 shows the final eight bars of music for the children's chorus. Adams' signature minimalist use of repetition and gradual change is evident in this section. The pattern of chords builds on the preceding material that occurs simultaneously with the adult chorus in eight parts

and the orchestra. Harmonically, the children's chorus is operating within a G Major framework although the tonic is rarely uttered. The adult chorus is singing in oppositional rhythmic points, pre-empting the children and in tonal clusters that often include all notes of the G Major scale. The orchestra provides little harmonic support for the children's chorus with additional tonal clusters occurring at different parts of the bar. The difficulty for the children is not so much the four-part singing but performing accurately along with the adult musicians and choristers.

Adams also scored for children's chorus in the final movement of his Nativity oratorio, *El Niño* (2000) but was keen to have them play a much greater role in *Transmigration* as the contrasting sounds of children's and adult voices was an effect he enjoyed as noted by Quinn, 'it is the stark contrast between the children's chorus and adult chorus that gives the work much of its specific flavour' (Quinn, 2005, p. 76). The scoring in *El Niño* is in three parts; Soprano I, Soprano II and Alto. It involves polymetric rhythms and complex harmonic juxtapositions, however the score notes that it is only preferable to be sung by a children's choir. (Adams, El Niño [vocal score], 2000, p. 261). Adams employed a greater role for children in *Transmigration* following the success of *El Niño*. His faith in the ability of a children's choir to add something important to his composition is evident and his use of children in the world of adult classical music further adds to the rapidly developing repertoire for such a collaboration.

Discussion

There are two important discussion points to emerge from the research; historical trends, and benefits of the inclusion of children. These will be discussed in turn.

Historical trends

Composers were scoring for children in compositions involving adults in significant volume around the mid-20th century. This was a time when Europe was recovering from the devastation of two world wars and the arts were increasingly recognising the effect these events had on children. Alban Berg's use of children's chorus in his war-themed opera, *Wozzeck* composed between 1914 and 1922 is distressing and poignant. In 1923, Zoltan Kodaly's *Psalmus Hungaricus* Op. 13 included children's chorus to represent innocence in the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the unification of Buda and Pest in Hungary. Benjamin Britten's obsession with 'lost innocence' in his post-war collaborations with W. H. Auden are well documented (Kildea, 2013) and many collaborative works involving children emerged. The use of children's

chorus in symphonic repertoire has become increasingly prevalent and the theme of loss of innocence has continued to be used such as Jonathan Dove's commission, *There was a Child* (2009) to celebrate the life of Rosemary Pickering's son Robert following his death. The representation of children for the theme of loss was also central in Adams' *On the Transmigration of Souls.* Although the need for children's chorus is varied, the theme of loss of innocence has developed and transformed in a way that is not apparent in Hector Berlioz' *Te Deum* Op. 22 (1849) and Gustav Mahler's late 19th Century offerings.

Following the Second World War, there was a zeitgeist in art and literature of rebuilding and renewal, of looking forward to a peaceful and better future. Central to this theme was children, both as a metaphor and also literally in the production of art works which involved children. The flavour had changed from the examples of nineteenth century examples in which children's choirs were used as part of a timbral pallet, they were now useful in expressing the new European psyche of hope in the future. This period of rebuilding saw Orff's earlier work with Dorothee Günther rediscovered after allied bombing of the Güntherschule on the 7 January 1945 destroyed their archive, library, instruments, instruction materials and costumes (Pruett, 2003). In 1951, the Festival of Britain aimed to lift post-war Britain out of a period of war and into a time of rejuvenated national pride. One hundred years after the famous exhibition designed by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, this exhibition promoted British cultural and scientific developments. Spender discusses the concept in context of the times, saying, 'It taught that the solution of our cultural problems in the age of austerity is to produce the greatest variety of effects within the narrowest limits of means' (Spender, 2012). Community celebrations in this new Elizabethan era were turning to children as a symbol of hope and renewal.

The works explored in this research clearly show a development in the material being composed for the various children's choirs. The children had increasingly greater roles to play in the musical narrative of the pieces. In the earlier examples, they tended to be used sparingly and in later compositions were used more centrally and throughout the work. The sophistication of their music developed significantly over time also. The technical demands of the voices, including; the tessitura, the harmonic context, and rhythmic features suggest an increasing respect for the abilities of the children's chorus. The musical demands on the children's chorus have been elevated to be comparable to the musical demands of their adult counterparts in the chorus and orchestra. This development in compositional sophistication seems to mirror the

growing trend of children's choirs being attached to the symphony orchestra organisation. It also mirrors the recent trend of public acknowledgement of the musical director responsible for the training of the children's chorus for performances and recordings.

Benefits of the inclusion of children

The timbral pallet of composers is always in a state of expansion. Although children's voices were in no way a new tonal colour, for the 19th century orchestral repertoire it had been an untapped resource for many years. Commonly known for the ethereal, pure qualities of their head voices utilised for centuries by the Renaissance polyphonists, Mahler and Orff were keen to make use of the more 'guttural' qualities of their chest voices. Once the flood gates of 1950's had been opened, the slow trickle of works to incorporate children's choirs gradually developed into a stream of compositions employing the different timbral qualities of children's voices.

The literature has shown that the experiences for the children involved can be life-changing. One of the choristers involved in the premiere of Britten's *War Requiem* (1961-2) reflected on the experience, saying, 'This was one of the most thrilling and memorable musical experiences of my life' (Harris, 1965, p. 10). She went on, 'As I left the Hall, I felt very privileged to have had so many opportunities of singing in what must surely be one of the great masterpieces of our time' (Harris, 1965, p. 11). Children can learn from early interactions with adult music ensembles, living composers and experienced orchestral conductors which strengthens their musical development. These life-changing experiences go beyond music education and provide experiences which shape attitudes towards music and community engagement throughout life.

Performances that include large ensembles of children can be a draw for audiences. Parents are often keen to support children in their endeavours and in an effort to boost ticket sales, including works with children's choirs can have a practical, positive benefit to arts organisations. This is evidenced by the growth in numbers of children's choirs attached to symphony orchestra organisations (Armstrong & Paulin, 1989; Tagg, 2013).

Conclusions

One of the unexpected findings from this research was that Orff's *Carmina Burana*, commonly performed by adult orchestras and choirs, and children's choirs throughout the world

was originally not intended to include a children's choir. Although children's choirs have been formed specifically for the performance of this work in which the *ragazzi* part is indispensable, the choral music world seems to have accepted that this is how it must have always been. The researcher found no literature regarding *Carmina Burana* that discusses this point.

The works chosen for analysis in this article provide only a small sample of the works written for children and adults. The limitations of this study are such that a huge body of works particularly in the last 15 years have not been discussed. That there is so much music written in recent years further suggests that musical collaborations of adults and children is a continuing trend for composers.

The research question asked: Why did composers start creating collaborative works for symphony orchestras and children's choirs? There are various factors for the generation of these works such as; commission requirements, tonal and timbral possibilities, narrative development which are all relatively utilitarian. There is also a desire for music composition to reflect the changing psyche of society. Works explored in this research show composers interacting with children's voices for different reasons and in increasingly more musically demanding ways. The musical demands seem to reflect a growing admiration for the abilities of the children's choirs encountered in the premiere of these and other works. A further discussion point may be the role of the children's choir director in the phenomenon of increasing compositional sophistication for children's choir parts in these works. The collaborative process of composer and children's choir director in developing the sophistication of these pieces is worthy of discussion. As children's choirs are being introduced into film scores such as; *The Lord of the Rings – Fellowship of the Ring* and *The Two Towers,* and some of the *Harry Potter* films, the importance of the children's chorus director in the collaborative process is likely to become increasingly pivotal.

The incorporation of children into the adult music world embodies a sense of community dealing with themes such as lost innocence, grief and renewal which is pivotal in a world constantly dealing with isolation, loss and suffering. The expanding literature for children's voices and adult orchestras reflects not only the way in which the children's choir is seen as a highly capable ensemble, but the way in which the modern view of the child has changed since the late 19th century. The simplicity of child-like melodic structures representing the naïve and

innocent child, is being replaced by the sophisticated and complex musical demands that reflect a modern child with increasing understanding of the adult world.

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Coda

Understanding the development of this unique component of the choral/orchestral repertoire allows musicians to see the impact of intergenerational collaboration through the accounts of some of the original performers. These personal accounts compliment the phenomenological enquiry that follows in subsequent chapters by providing a rich, personal text from which we can understand the subject.

Sir David Willcocks worked with Vaughan Williams on the premier of some of his intergenerational, collaborative works such as *Hodie* (1954). His son, Jonathan forms a part of three of the following articles in this thesis. Through his work in guest conducting a multi-school performance collaboration I facilitated in Perth, Western Australia, he is mentioned by former pupils and colleagues of mine who were also involved in the event.

Chapter 4: Former students

This chapter explores the music performance experiences during high school of five former students of mine. The article is entitled '3:36pm, that's when all the fun starts': Forming musical identity through secondary school music', and was published in the *Australian Journal of Music Education (2),* 2015.

In this, the first of six articles to employ Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the participants were encouraged to use rich, descriptive language to articulate their lived experiences of secondary school music. In order to explore in depth, how music ensemble collaboration impacted their journey of sustained active music engagement, I analysed the emergent themes for each participant through a double hermeneutic. The themes were allowed to emerge organically from the data rather than being predetermined areas of interest to the researcher (Taylor, 2015). Consequently, some of the themes were unexpected.

The most unexpected finding from this article was the importance of friendship and social engagement in maintaining student interest in ongoing musical participation. The importance that adolescents place on social connection is often significant and the role that ensemble music-making plays in enhancing these connections is important (Selfhout, Branje, ter Bogt, & Meeus, 2009; Miranda, 2013). Ensemble collaboration experiences were referred to frequently by participants in this article and this process seemed to exacerbate the feelings of friendship both within and between ensembles. Music ensemble collaboration can therefore be considered as a positive force for the promotion of adolescent connectivity.

The formation of musical identity was also an unexpected finding in this article. The participants shared personal accounts of how reticent they were to acknowledge their status as a musician due to feelings of insecurity and inadequacy. The pivotal moments that enabled them to realise their important role as a contributing member of an ensemble often took place in large-scale, collaborative musical events. These events allow the individual to clearly see themselves as belonging to something greater than the sum of the parts, and to understand how they are valued by fellow musicians whom they were meeting for the first time (Blaine & Fels, 2003).

'3:36pm, that's when all the fun starts': Forming musical identity through secondary school music

Abstract

Many secondary music students graduate from school and stop being actively involved in making music in the community. This is frustrating for music educators who have watched their journey of musical development and then discover it came to a sudden end once they leave the school. One of the goals of a music teacher is to develop a love of music that will enable lifelong learning. Five students who have been taught by the researcher discuss issues and events that have led to their passion for music making lasting beyond the secondary school experience. Their musical experiences provided such a positive impact on them that not only did they pursue musical activities beyond school, but also discussed that they would not consider ceasing musical engagement until the end of their lives. Their relationship with music and their friends who share a similar passion has provided them all with a sense of musical identity. They are musicians and they hope they always will be. The formation of personal, musical identity and social musical identity is critical in the process of students seeing themselves as lifelong, active participants in music. Identity and the impact that this had on their decision to remain actively engaged with music will be explored. Implications for the research will include providing secondary music students with a variety of musical activities that includes collaboration with outside ensembles to support the development of personal and social, musical identity.

Key words: Life-long learning, identity, collaboration, musical engagement, interpretative phenomenological analysis.

Introduction

Music educators who spend many years developing students' skills and love of music often encounter a feeling of disappointment when they discover that following the final music examination, engagement in music-making stops. Whether former students study Music at a tertiary level or join a community based ensemble, it is gratifying to think that making music is something that they wish to experience throughout their lives. Extensive research has explored

the goals of lifelong learning, (Boswell, 1992; Myers, 2007; Smith and Haack, 2000). Shared music making is deemed to be 'one of the few activities that offers lifelong enjoyment and that the continuation of this pleasurable activity throughout life may add to general wellbeing' (Cohen, Bailey and Nilsson, 2002, p. 99). Such music engagement has 'been found to support group identity, collaborative learning, friendship, [and] social support' (Creech, Hallam and Varvarigou, 2014, p. 17). The benefits associated with music making across the lifespan include well-being, and positive social, psychological and physical outcomes (Skingley, Clift, Coulton and Rodriguez, 2011). Music participation can be a source of enhanced social cohesion, enjoyment, personal development, and empowerment (Sixsmith and Gibson, 2007). Music making can enhance a sense of well-being and offer an 'anchorage to life' (Borglin, Edberg and Hallberg, 2005, p. 205). Performing with and to others can offer participants a sense of fulfilment, pride and accomplishment (Jacob, Guptill and Sumsion, 2009).

In this study, five participants discuss their experiences of a secondary school Music programme at a private school in Perth, Western Australia. The researcher was the Head of Music at the school, and organised many of the activities the participants discuss and knows the participants well. These students are selected as they are examples of where the secondary school music experience has had the positive impact required to achieve the goal of a desire to pursue lifelong learning. The notion of personal, musical identity and collective social identity relating to being involved in an ensemble and the impact that this had on their decision to remain actively engaged with music will be explored.

People have multiple identities which are constantly shifting and evolving depending on new interactions and social situations (Hargreaves, Miell and MacDonald 2002). Eccles (2009) argues that there is a distinction between two types of closely related identities; personal identities versus collective/social identities. He states that, 'I believe that social roles influence behaviour through quite similar mechanisms as personal identity but I also do not believe that all aspects of personal identities are grounded in social roles' (p. 78). Adolescents form an identity of themselves as an individual that can be different to their identity formed as part of a collective through social interactions. The importance of social interactions are not limited to students with their peers. Supportive teachers have a role in providing encouragement that can shape identity. Pitts (2009) argues that for the adolescent, influential adults have the ability to affirm or reject the emerging musician identity.

Hargreaves and Marshall (2003) suggest that music provides a cultural awareness which helps students understand themselves and each other and that a student's self-identity can determine their motivation for lifelong learning. Their model proposes three main outcomes of musical engagement that are; musical/artistic, personal, and social/cultural, and describes some potential overlaps and interactions between these three broad types. The opportunities indicated in this model are available across a broad spectrum of formal and informal activities. These three different outcomes converge in the centre of the model towards self-identity. The research question is, 'What events in school music led to pursuit of active music participation beyond secondary school?'

Methodology

Phenomenological research is a qualitative method of inquiry founded on the principle that experience should be examined in the way that it occurs, and on its own terms. This approach draws on the emphasis of phenomenology on experience and interpretation (Merriam, 1998, p. 15). Phenomenology is 'concerned with the ways in which human beings gain knowledge of the world around them' (Willig, 2001, p. 50). Phenomenology involves an examination of everyday experiences and allows reflection on these experiences in a natural way. In this study an understanding of the participants' lived experience is sought without influencing their personal narratives. Following ethical approval, this phenomenological research was conducted by interviewing the five participants. They were identified as being suitable for this study by fulfilling two criteria; first, that they were former pupils of mine and second, that they are still actively engaged in music making after graduating secondary school. The notion that the researcher and participants are well known to each other is an important part of Heidegger's characterisation of human relationships which he referred to as *Dasein* (or 'being there'). Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006) explain this idea of 'person-in-context' by saying, 'our very nature is to be *there* – always somewhere, always located and always amidst and involved with some kind of meaningful context' (p. 106). In phenomenological research, a homogenous sample is sought so that the phenomenon being explored is common, allowing for deep understanding of a small group of peoples' lived experiences (Willig, 2001).

Once collected, data must be analysed. The most appropriate method for this study is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The process of IPA requires the researcher to

make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them; a double hermeneutic. According to Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009), 'The researcher is making sense of the participant, who is making sense of *x*. And this usefully illustrates the dual role of the researcher as both like and unlike the participant' (p. 35). In this case, the participant is making sense of their school music experiences which led them to choose to continue active involvement in music and the researcher is making sense of their data to understand the important reasons behind their decision. Smith, Flowers and Larkin also explain that, 'When people are engaged with 'an experience' of something major in their lives, they begin to reflect on the significance of what is happening and IPA research aims to engage with these reflections' (p. 3). Reid, Flowers and Larkin (2005) explain that the participant's lived experience is 'coupled with a subjective and reflective process of interpretation, in which the analyst explicitly enters into the research process' (p. 20). Interviewing appropriate participants is made possible due to the researchers interest in the phenomenon being explored. According to Wagstaff, Jeong, Nolan, Wilson, Tweedlie, Phillpis, Senu and Holland (2014), an 'IPA researcher employs an empathic but critical hermeneutic process to produce an interrogative account based on experience' (p. 2). The experience of the phenomenon is often shared in some way between researcher and participants.

After responding to an invitation on Facebook, the participants were interviewed. The semi-structured questions allowed them to discuss their secondary music experience and the impact on their decision to continue with music making. The interviews which lasted roughly an hour were audio recorded and transcribed. They were then read repeatedly by the researcher until important themes emerged. The right-hand margin of the transcript was then used to make notes of anything that appeared to be significant. Eatough and Smith (2006) note that, 'With each reading, the researcher should expect to feel more 'wrapped up' in the data, becoming more responsive to what is being said' (p. 487). Further re-reading of the text allowed the significant headings in the transcript to be more clearly identified. In each case, three important themes were identified. The interview questions avoid leading the participant to any possible intended outcomes. Some of the questions asked during the interviews included; what did you enjoy most about being a musician at school? What music events do you remember most from your time in school? What do you think made that event so memorable? Why do you think that event had such a big impact for you? What was the performance that first made you feel most like a capable musician?

The participants

The five participants have all continued their music studies at university. There are two pathways for pursuing musical studies at a tertiary level in Perth and each participant currently attends either the School of Music at The University of Western Australia, (UWA) or the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) which is a part of Edith Cowan University (ECU). The interview questions were not distributed prior to the interviews. Each participant is introduced in turn.

Jasper

Jasper has been a drummer for seven years and is currently studying his third year of a Jazz performance degree at University. During his time at school, he was involved in several ensembles which allowed him to play in Jazz Bands, Concert Bands, Contemporary Music Bands and Orchestras.

Luke

Luke was an extremely active musician during secondary school. He is currently studying Contemporary Music on Bass Guitar at University, although at school he spent many years playing saxophone, guitar, and singing in several choirs. He was also a cast member of several school musicals.

Josh

Although Josh was actively involved in many musical activities from Year Seven through to Year Twelve, it was not until comparatively late that he decided to study Music at a tertiary level. He began discovering his passion for Music with singing and this is what he does today, being selected into the Music Theatre course at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). He was also persuaded to try playing the double bass and subsequently bass guitar which provided another set of experiences.

Simon

Simon began learning the oboe in Year Seven. He was the very first oboe player in the school and knowing this was an important part of how he saw himself. He played in the school

orchestra and concert band and was asked to play in the pit orchestra for the school musical when he was in Year 12; an ensemble mainly comprised of professionals.

Freya

Freya began learning the violin from the age of three. Her two brothers both played violin and they each began learning from their mother who also taught violin at the school they attended. Freya's musical aptitude was clear from an early age. She learned the flute, the piano and the vibraphone and started singing professionally while still at school following a vast amount of singing experience. She is now studying violin at the University of Western Australia and sings for several semi-professional ensembles in Perth.

Findings

The participants each identify themselves as musicians. Some of them saw themselves as musicians from very early on in their musical journey and others only afforded themselves such a label once a certain level of ability had been reached. There was a shared feeling among the participants that the musicians at their school were 'different' from the rest of the school population and that there was something special about the community to which they all felt they belonged. They felt part of a small community within the school that provided them with a sense of their social or collective identity. The themes that emerged from their interviews explore the differences between this identity and the more unique and individual self-identity that developed in tandem throughout their secondary school experience and beyond. The findings are then reported under three broad themes: Musical/artistic, Personal, and Social/cultural. Each of the themes will be discussed in turn.

Musical / artistic

Musical / artistic factors are discussed as they provided the platform for personal and social musical identity to develop. The participants discussed the opportunities they had at school to discover their musical abilities and to develop them further. These opportunities were varied and discovering music through a variety of situations was important for each of them.

Jasper's musical identity was formed by learning about and making music in an unstructured way. He recalled the process of developing his music skills with phrases such as;

'play along to songs', 'trying to figure out', and 'just making it up on the spot'. Conversely, when discussing some of the methods used by his early drum teachers, he explained, 'he had his lesson plans very structured and we never went out of that' which did not compare as favourably to other teachers who would teach differently, he described, 'it wasn't as structured, but it was a lot more influential.' Jasper made a discernible link with listening, improvising, and creativity and unstructured learning. For him, playing the drums progressed when he moved from reading music to 'being able to play it straight off to actually thinking about how the drums work in the context of the song.' He moved from reading drum parts to 'trying to see if I can make it up and see if it works.' For Jasper improvising is a more challenging and style-appropriate skill than learning to read music.

Luke is very aware of the musical opportunities that were extended to him and allowed him to be who he is today. He started playing music when young but it was not until he moved to the school that he 'picked the music back up again.' He continued, 'When I was ten, I didn't really know how to read so getting to know all those things when you're that young is rewarding for the skills that you need for the future.' As his skills developed, the opportunities to be involved in activities began. Luke recalled, 'The big one was the opportunity to go on all these trips to represent the school.' He recalled tours overseas with various ensembles and noted that four international trips was something he was very fortunate to experience. He explained, 'Not many people get that opportunity and I'm very grateful for that.' Luke acknowledged that the opportunities were responsible for him wanting to continue with music after graduating from school. He noted, 'I think it was just being part of all the ensembles, being around, listening to as much as I can, and…I think it's because of all the opportunities I've had.' Luke's final performance as a secondary school student was one that he was able to organise and plan with his colleagues. It was emotionally significant for him as it marked the end of an important chapter in his musical journey.

Jasper values the act of music making above any specific genre or style of music. It does not really matter what the music is, as long as he's making it. He immersed himself in a wide range of musical activities during secondary school and this desire to make music in many different ways still appeals. He noted, 'I kind of thought I might enjoy some other things and so I tried everything else, I tried playing a bit of Funk, Hip-Hop, Classical percussion and loved all of

it.' There is no distinction between an 'ultimate' art form and an informal musical experience. He went on,

> I found that I liked playing every style so I might as well play every style…two weeks ago I was on the beach in a costume playing in a Brass Band, playing on buckets with pots and pans…that was as fun as playing in a Big Band as is playing in a Rock Band or in a Pit Orchestra.

Jasper saw mastery of different styles as central to being a competent and well- rounded musician. He explained, 'Contemporary music I could kind of pick up a lot on my own, Jazz I really struggled with that so thought, "I want to learn a lot more about this."' The important thing was to keep an open mind. He stated,

> When I first started drums I thought, "Oh, drums are better than anything else", then I first listened to Rock and, "Oh, this is better than anything else", then I listened to Jazz and, "Oh, this is better than anything else", now…everything is good, everything is also bad at the same time", but it's definitely keeping an open mind.

Personal

Personal musical identity formed at different stages for each participant. The notion of seeing themselves as 'musician' developed concurrently with their musical skills and understanding. For some of the participants, personal musical identity could not be formed until insecurities were overcome. Once insecurities were abandoned and replaced by a sense of strong, musical identity; they were able to see themselves as lifelong learners of music.

Freya's life seems to have been consumed by music. She feels that her secondary school experience in particular provided her with full immersion in music making. She stated, 'Music became my life pretty much when I came to [the school] because there was so much to do.' Freya did not see herself as a violinist, but a musician. This sense of personal identity along with her considerable abilities enabled her to participate in every kind of ensemble and activity available. She noted, 'So yeah, it really took over my life but I'm glad it did.' Now that she is studying Music at university and her sense of identity changed with new social interactions and

situations, the idea that music is all-consuming has become even more prevalent. She discussed, 'Nothing's changed, music is even more a part of my life now.' When describing the list of musical activities she now participates in outside of her timetable classes, she explained, 'it doesn't really end.'

Although there was a brief time when Freya considered rebelling from the assumptions made of her and was choosing not to pursue music following secondary school, she soon realised that this was impossible. Music was her entire life not because of others' expectations but because she loved it so much. She recalled,

> I remember specifically when I was in Year Eight and I was still learning violin from my Mum and I'd had a few other teachers but at this point it was just with Mum and I remember a distinct point where I was like, "That's it, I am not going to do Music." I told all of my friends and they remember me telling them and I said, "No, I've had enough, I am putting this away as soon as I leave school. I'm going to make my own decision. I am not going to do Music anymore." Look at me now, Music is all I do now which is pretty funny.

Freya came to the realisation that being actively engaged in music for the rest of her life was not really an option; she considered it her *raison d'etre*. She stated,

> Who knows how old I'm going to get but it's definitely what I'm going to be doing for my university degree, definitely what I'm going to do for my post-grad. degree, definitely what I want to do for my career, and something that I would pass on to my children if I have them. When I retire, what else would I do? Yes, there's kind of no question about it. It's always going to be part of my life.

Freya also mentioned the role that her various violin teachers played in developing her sense of identity. She recalled one particular teacher, 'I thought he was cool, he was young, he was different to any teacher I'd had before and I really appreciated him and respected him and had fun in lessons.' Freya also noted the difference between encountering ensemble music that was challenging and original versions of compositions as opposed to arrangements made for

secondary school students. There was a clear sense of respect for this kind of music despite the challenge being a lot for some students to cope with. She reflected, 'I really appreciated that we did works that were way too hard for us because we played real music by real composers which were not arrangements, which wasn't necessarily easy for everyone but it was definitely worthwhile.' Finally, Freya discusses the feeling that is experienced when there is a lack of respect, in this case by the general school community when ensembles would perform at whole-school gatherings such as assemblies or special occasions. She thought that at school assemblies 'you know that you don't have an appreciative audience and it's hard to perform in those circumstances.' Those in the audience may never have learnt an instrument or not learnt for long and 'they just won't comprehend because it looks easy enough, but it isn't and I still find that annoying that lack of respect that people have.'

As Josh struggled with the difficulties of progressing through adolescence, there was a need for him to engage with activities that provided positive effects. One of these activities was running but the principal activity was music. Josh explained, 'Singing is uplifting and invigorating, you know it's been scientifically proven to create endorphins. Singing, swimming with dolphins and eating chocolate are the three best things to do when you're depressed or sad.' Feeling depressed and sad was unfortunately something Josh experienced throughout secondary school and music became a salvation for him. He continued, 'it's something that you can still find joy and happiness in and I was just giddy yesterday, it had reignited…my passion for music if anything. It's phenomenal.' When Josh needed to feel comforted and supported in difficult times, he turned to music to accept him and provide positive feelings. He noted, 'Music is fluid, music is not judgmental, music will love you and accept you in all your assets and will allow you to be with her, it, him, whatever you want to classify it as, in whatever you want to be.' Music became more than just a refuge for Josh, it provided a counter experience to moments of depression. He stated, 'Music realistically has touched everyone's lives in one way or another.' He also feels that these feelings should be shared with each other so that the positive effects may be passed on. He concluded, 'They're just there and they're full of energy and happiness and they're enjoying themselves…I'll still be able to share that joy.'

Simon relished being the only oboist in the school when he first began having lessons. Although others began learning some time later, he found himself to be the only oboist in the ensembles when he was in Year 11 and 12. He recalled, 'I loved being the only one, first oboe. I

thought that was quite nifty…[and] enjoyable. I loved the uniqueness of it.' For Simon, it was not only the idea of being unique but also having his own part to play in an ensemble. He explained, 'I loved having that freedom because it was just me mostly, just the one oboist…so when I had a solo I could be carried.' The very idea of the oboe appealed to Simon, he was the perfect candidate for such an instrument as he clearly wanted to play something different from everyone else. He reflected, 'I think at the time it was the world's hardest instrument, a Guinness World Record thing.' He recalled the moment I approached him to have lessons, stating, 'Well I remember you actually calling up my parents and saying that we have no oboists, no oboes, no oboe teachers, but if I'm willing to learn, they'll get someone in. I remember that. That's quite a memorable moment for me actually.' Simon enjoyed the idea of being singled out to do something no-one else was doing. Simon cherishes the opportunity to play as a soloist. When discussing a large-scale performance of Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* with a symphony orchestra and combined chorus of two choirs, he shared his thoughts, stating 'I just wanted to get everyone off stage and then play something…I could just imagine myself standing there with the hall filled with people and just playing something beautiful. That's kind of the dream.' Simon wanted to be heard by himself. When discussing his future dreams, it is playing solo oboe that he envisages rather than being a rank and file orchestra member. He noted, 'I'd like to be a competition oboist for the beginning of my career.'

Simon's passion for music is such that he sees his career as far more than a practical way of making money to make ends meet. Like many artists, he saw his music making as a vocation. Simon finds the idea of not doing music difficult to entertain. He discussed, 'if I wasn't to be a musician, I don't think I would have anything to strive for right now. I think I would have just been one of those people who do a university course just because I finished school, not because I want to achieve anything and money's not really a factor for me…I'd rather be doing something I love and earning minimal, than doing something that I really hate, earning a lot.' Simon often discussed his musical future in terms of dreams. He recounted, 'I remember one night, a long time ago, I couldn't fall asleep and I was just like, this is what I want to do. I kept thinking about it. I just want to do music. I don't care if anyone tries to stop me. This is what I want to do, this is what I'm going to pursue. I'm not going to give up something that I love.' While touring Eastern Europe with the school orchestra, Simon continued visualising his future, explaining 'I could imagine myself living here, playing music, busking, just performing live. It would be fantastic.'

That tour clearly had an impact on Simon. He thought it 'would be nice if I could get to perform in Prague, like just playing *Don Giovanni* on first oboe. That would be a nice feeling. That trip was really inspirational.' That Simon sees music as a vocation becomes particularly obvious when he discussed his desire to share his passion for music with others. He stated, 'I wanted them to experience how I felt music in that moment, to show them how much I really love it, make them feel and understand music.' His determination to make music central in his life in the future as much as it is in the present is paramount. He added, 'I've got to keep doing this. I can't stop now; it's too good to be true.'

Luke found music to be a refuge. Music enabled him to discover his self-identity and to challenge himself to overcome his personal insecurities. When discussing his experiences, he recalled considerable concern about musical accuracy. He recalled, 'I was always worried about trying to get the part right.' For him, getting the notes right mattered a great deal as he thought a lot about people's perception of his abilities. He continued, 'not that it stuffed up the whole service or something but I thought in my head, "Oh no, that's not right", but I try not to worry about that too much because if it gets in my head...I might completely stuff it up and that might be noticeable to everyone.' When discussing his musical activities at school, Luke often assessed his own abilities. He reflected, 'I couldn't read bass clef and I don't think I was getting anything right that day.' He was often nervous when performing. His concerns about whether he was 'good enough' extended to his thoughts about what would happen after high school. He noted, 'I think it was if Music didn't work, I would be back to the drawing board of, "Oh no what do I do?"' Luke's insecurities provided a considerable hurdle for him to overcome. As his proficiency grew, his insecurities diminished and Luke developed not only self-confidence but a clear sense of self-worth and musical identity. He stated, 'You can get nervous and it is something you need to overcome if you do want to be a musician.' Luke cannot imagine himself doing anything other than music. He sees himself being actively involved in music 'until I drop dead.' Overcoming his insecurities has meant that he feels confident to be a musician for his entire life. Finding the confidence that other young musicians take for granted gave Luke a strong sense of self–belief and identity as a capable musician.

Throughout school, Josh struggled with self-doubt. This was partly because he started his musical training later than many of his peers and equally due to his lack of confidence in his abilities. He discussed his musical journey and frequently described his abilities as being inferior

despite having an enormous amount of musical experience on several instruments. He recalled his feelings about being accepted into WAAPA, stating,

> I'd gotten into the Certificate, still doubted myself, I had no idea what the hell I was doing there, still had no belief in my abilities, because I was raw and untrained, and then when I got into the Bachelor I was like, "What the hell am I doing here? They've made a mistake again." Why? There are so many more talented people in my class that have been doing this for years and years beyond what I've been doing and they're incredible.

Josh explained that he 'always had an incredible self-doubt of my lack of talents or my skills.' During his time in secondary school, with help from some of his teachers there were moments where he began to overcome his self-doubt. Josh gained much from the reassurance. He recalled being told by a particular teacher, 'What are you doing with your life child? Stop. This is the wrong decision. You don't even owe it to yourself. You owe it to us to explore that, for me. Don't audition for yourself, audition for me.' The encouragement and support from his teachers had such an impact that Josh decided to totally change career paths and pursue musical studies at a tertiary level. According to Josh, another teacher also encouraged him. He said, 'She almost practically signed me up for an audition at WAAPA herself…it was definitely the support and the push that came from them that led me to pursue it.' Josh's self-belief and confidence was growing due to this support which was coupled with his developing skills. He discussed his change in attitude towards auditions over time. He noted, 'Auditions don't shit me anymore. This year they don't, end of last year they don't but they used to shit me all the time. Auditions are terrifying.'

Social / cultural

Social / cultural factors contributed to the participants' positive experiences of musical experience in secondary school. Three social / cultural factors were identified in the transcripts. The importance of friendship and community was indicated as being critical in the formation of a collective identity. Important also was the notion of collaboration with ensembles outside of the school Music Department. These collaborations reinforced the idea of the collective identity. The

notion of support was also a strong theme and this came from fellow colleagues as well as teachers and other adult figures. Often these themes overlapped.

Key to Jasper's enjoyment of music making is experiencing it with his friends. His level of enjoyment from music making pervades his interview. The word 'fun' is mentioned 35 times and often closely linked to the words 'friends' and 'community'. Upon joining an ensemble, Jasper explained that, 'It went from being time for band practice to, "Oh cool, time to meet up with friends."' He described the Jazz Band at school as being, 'like a little community'. Jasper discussed the community that he found himself in at University. He said, 'We've got like 30 in our course and everyone knows everyone else…that's important for the music community.' He placed importance on maintaining connections made outside his immediate group such as the wider community of musicians in Perth. He enjoys being part of this community and recalled an occasion when he attended a concert and met 'lots of people that were there that are now kind of part of the Jazz community.'

The importance of friends is clear in Freya's responses. Not only do her friends provide a sense of enjoyment that enhances her music making experience, they help provide her with a sense of social identity. The Music Department at Freya's school created a community within a community where the members were like-minded and often shared a common purpose. She discussed,

> Probably just getting to make music with my friends is the most exciting thing. I guess being a music student, you're not like everyone else in the year group but within your own little circle…we had our own inside jokes and things that only a musician would understand and just spending time in a community environment and doing ensembles was so much fun and going overseas with your friends and getting to play music with them, it was amazing.

The idea of community becomes apparent when Freya discussed her friends. She reflected, 'I think we're like our own community in the school and it's a really fun community to be in and the friendships that you make are so much stronger than just sitting next to someone in Science like everyone else basically.' Freya's musical community had its own time of the day to meet. She explained, 'All the other kids who decide, "I'm not going to do any co-curricular

activities. I'm leaving school at 3:35pm. Who even cares? Why would I want to stay any longer?" That's when all the fun happens; 3:36pm, that's when all the fun starts and that's when you make all the memories.' Whether Freya was reflecting on concerts, rehearsals or tours, the concept of friendships was a recurring and significant theme. She noted, 'It was so much fun…just being with my friends and making music together, that's essentially it and I did really enjoy all of the music we played in Orchestra.'

Freya perceived a respect for music making from students from other school ensembles. Each year, the school music ensembles would participate in the various festivals run by the Australian Band and Orchestral Directors Association (ABODA). The ensembles were not competing against each other to win, but performed to attain a level that indicated their skill and musicality. This activity allowed students to monitor how their school ensemble sounded compared to other schools. Freya described, 'going and listening to some of the other kids play…that weren't at my school and going, "Oh my God, they're so talented", and the whole orchestra is so far advanced compared to ours. It makes you reflect on your own position.'

Luke's performance opportunities were varied and often included collaborative performances with other schools. Collaboration allowed him not only to work with other musicians to perform music unachievable by the school ensembles he was a part of, but also it enabled him to reference his musical identity by seeing himself as part of a much bigger picture. He described playing the double bass in a collaborative event, 'The Town Hall show was the combined show with [another school]. "A Haydn Double Bill". I didn't really study double bass, actually I never studied double bass, it was just something to see if…I can make it work.' Performances that involved situations that moved Luke out of his comfort zone in terms of working with new conductors, playing in unfamiliar venues and performing alongside unknown musicians was a positive experience. Luke enjoyed

> working with other musicians and with the other schools…we don't always get to do that, you always work with what you have here. There were some great musicians from that [other] school so to be able to combine, it was a successful show. I'm sure there were a lot of comments made afterwards about how good it was and that this kind of thing should happen again.

Luke revelled in the large-scale performance experience. He recalled one in particular fondly; the Anglican Schools Commission Combined Schools Concert held at the Perth Concert Hall. He said, 'it is up there I think with one of the best things I've done performance-wise.' Luke felt that large-scale performances provided a sense of doing something out of the ordinary. He continued, 'I felt good about it. I don't think any other schools do this sort of thing and I remember comments made by these other schools, these other Heads of Music were saying this is something they had never heard of being done before or thought of.'

Josh joined the school community much later than most of his peers and fitting in and being included was important. He discusses the moment his involvement in music began with his friend approaching him; '"Oh you should come join Choir with me and do all these co-curricular things" and I kind of got absorbed into the Music Department very quickly.' He was extremely enthusiastic and explained the significance, 'For me it was singing with people.' He loved the way that singing with others provided a sense of being part of a team. He continued, 'Singing in an ensemble, just hearing all of your voices come together…is an experience that I feel everyone should have.' He enjoyed the way people of different ages worked together with a common purpose. He observed, 'they were so much older than me and yet there was still that joy in singing and working together as a team.'

As his musical experiences developed, Josh took part in many collaborative performances, referring to them as important memories. The school choir which Josh sang in performed together several times with a school choir from the north of England while on tour. He reflected, 'Music if anything could possibly be the thing to bring everyone together regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic [status].' Josh enjoyed collaborating with like-minded students and discussed his enjoyment of the collaboration process. He explained, 'It was the *camaraderie,* the joining together with these strangers and creating something with them and forming connections. I just love singing and making music with people.' The process of collaboration further intensified Josh's feeling of inclusivity. Not only was he being included by his immediate peers but there was also an acceptance from a much wider community of which he was beginning to feel a part. He noted, 'It was being asked to be in stuff and be included with limited experience…music is inclusive of all people…music can take you anywhere and music can connect anyone from everywhere.' Josh felt nurtured and accepted through his involvement in music. He continued, 'Everyone's welcome. Everyone can have fun. We'll help you along.

We'll encourage you.' The idea that musical activity was as much about helping 'the straggler' as encouraging the high-achiever was important to Josh and it is clear how important being accepted by music colleagues was.

Jasper's ability to perform in an unstructured way transferred from being self-identity as musician to social-identity. He reflected, 'sometimes it really worked, sometimes it didn't but no-one really cared.' Jasper also placed a lot of value on events that allowed a sense of freedom and relaxed sense of structure, recalling a performance that was student-initiated. According to Jasper, the students, 'organised it all ourselves, we picked the song, we picked who would play it, we did the orchestration, the instrumentation, the arrangement, everything ourselves. We picked it all up.' This performance known as *The Big Night In*, [7] of all the many performances he was involved in was particularly memorable for him. He concluded, 'It was really good fun because we were able to do it all ourselves.'

The support and guidance provided by various teachers throughout secondary school was a common theme in Simon's interview. He began, 'the teachers like yourself, always there to help with any concerns or questions. Just the other orchestra members and people that were so kind and helpful. The people there, they were encouraging.' Simon felt that the support he received was encouraging. He explained, 'I just wanted to keep striving to do better like what I want to do now.' For Simon support and motivation came in different forms. In reference to me, Simon recalled a somewhat direct approach when preparing for a performance of Beethoven's *Egmont Overture*. He reflected, 'I remember you [the researcher] hounding me to get it right all the time and then I think for the performances, it was alright.' When rehearsing for a collaborative performance with a number of schools, Simon worked with a guest conductor who provided another kind of motivation. He recalled, 'I think Mr [W] really helped with that because his enthusiasm and some of those poor-quality jokes that he made. I think…he made me want to continue because he was making it more enjoyable for not just myself but the entire orchestra.'

Simon reflected on his secondary school experience and noted a relationship where he found a lack of support. He recalled,

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[7] The *Big Nights In* was a series of concerts that allowed the students to have maximum involvement in organising. As well as performing, they arranged the list of performances and organised the logistical aspects of the event. The focus tended to be on contemporary or popular music.

The chemistry teacher didn't like me at all…every time I had Private Study, I'd have to go to you, get my diary signed, go to her, say it's signed, then walk out every single time. And the one time I was going to perform, I invited her to come see.

Unfortunately, he could not perform his concerto on the day. He continued, 'I was really annoyed…because I wanted to prove to her that I was actually a lot better than she thought I was…she didn't think I was that good anyway.' This experience of a lack of support contrasted with his other recollections of supportive teachers nevertheless the result was motivating for Simon.

Discussion

As the students graduated from secondary school and engaged in music making in the community, their sense of personal and social musical identities changed. These changes in identity were shaped by specific types of musical activity and the instruments played. Where the secondary music experience provided a wide variety of experiences, further university studies provided an even more focused community of like-minded musical friends. Looking back to their time in secondary school allowed the participants the opportunity to consider this development of their identity. The five participants produced a total of nine themes for analysis which have been broadly discussed under three main headings; social/cultural, musical/artistic, and personal. The positive way in which they encountered individual and social identity through music making in school is understood to be a major contributing factor to continuing with music after graduating secondary school.

Connections and friendships provide much more than just an enjoyable experience for students. Developing a connection with other students, teachers and musicians outside of the school community all contribute to the development of social identity. Cunha and Lorenzino (2012) assert that, 'Social, cultural, cognitive, affective, and physical expressions that develop naturally as groups interact through music expand the possibilities of learning and human development, and might be viewed more as parallel than secondary in nature' (p. 74). Hewitt and Allan (2012) agree with this position, stating 'Positive experiences of shared social context are critical for sustaining motivation' (p. 258). The participants in this study discussed

having a variety of musical experiences as being important during their time at school. There were no suggestions that one type of activity was more beneficial than another, however for each of the participants to experience a critical moment of inspiration, a wide variety of opportunities needed to be provided. Hewitt and Allan (2012) discuss the importance of advanced ensembles for student motivation. They argue that students 'value the opportunity to experience advanced repertoire, to work with other advanced musicians, and to experience the enjoyment and reward of rehearsal and performance' (p. 268). Each of the five participants discussed the importance of quality in their music ensemble experience.

Music programmes within secondary schools in Australia operate largely outside of school hours. Busy Music Departments encompassing numerous performing ensembles need regular opportunities for performances to maintain the interest of the students. Rehearsing for the sake of rehearsing can be demoralising (Lowe, 2012; Pulman, 2012; Mallonee, 1999). A variety of activities that provide opportunities for music students to work together outside of the school environment invariably helps create cohesion within the ensembles. Spending time with each other outside of the classroom, making music together and sharing a common purpose can contribute to a bonding between the students which increases the sense of social identity. Buckingham (2008) explains, 'who I am (or who I think I am) varies according to who I am with, the social situations in which I find myself, and the motivations I may have at the time, although I am by no means entirely free to choose how I am defined' (p. 1).

For each participant, identity as musician was crucial; they saw themselves as musicians and they saw themselves as part of a collection of musicians. Music was not just an activity in which they participated, it formed their identity. The participants explained that this sense of identity was tenuous at first but grew over time. They each reflected on the many different activities that contributed to their growing sense of confidence in themselves and how they saw themselves within the Music Department community. Hargreaves and Marshall (2003) assert that 'children actively *construct* their own musical identities, and these can determine skill, confidence and achievement' (p. 265). For some, the pivotal moments were tours overseas, for others they were particular concerts and several of the participants noted that it could not really be put down to any one thing but rather, the totality of the busy programme.

Conclusions

If the goal of secondary music teachers and Music Departments more broadly is to produce actively engaged, life-long learners of music, the participants of this study would appear to come from a school with a formula that worked. Each of the former students spoke positively about their experiences drawing on a wide range of factors that encouraged them to pursue music fully. The idea of collaboration with outside organisations is a strong, emergent theme and it is with this theme that developing social identity and providing a variety of opportunities converge. Different forms of collaboration with other schools or community ensembles are discussed in the literature (Bamford, 2004; Bartleet, 2012; Myers, 2003; Robinson, 1998; Sutherland, 2015). The benefits of collaboration are many but the data produced in this research suggests that students who have a strong sense of social identity and are provided with varied opportunities, with which they can engage in music making, are likely to continue being actively involved in music following secondary school. Bartleet (2012) discusses the importance of collaborations in an Australian context pointing out that, 'Such collaborations can lead to creative and rigorous music learning and teaching practices, and provide both school students and community members with rich and enjoyable musical experiences that can extend well beyond the school gate and schooling years' (p. 60). Olson (2005) supports this argument by discussing the approach by leaders of community movements involving adult education, 'Leaders in many of these movements recognized the potential of using music to promote community solidarity, identity, and transformation' (p. 55). The lived experience of the five participants in this study clearly shows an appreciation for the rich and diverse musical experiences they received. Their discussions provide an insight into the importance of being able to connect with people who are like-minded and to share a common purpose with them. Hallam (2011) notes, 'Joint programmes achieve more than each organization or individual can achieve separately' (p. 155). Collaborations allow students to connect with others in a meaningful way and for musicians to develop a sense of personal, musical identity which impacts their decisions to remain actively engaged with music.

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Coda

Having explored the point of view of the participant musician in secondary music ensemble collaboration, it was important to understand the phenomenon from the perspective of the secondary music teacher. The following article follows organically on from this chapter as the events being discussed were referred to by participants in this chapter. Each of the five participants in this article were involved in the first two inter-school collaborative performances. Understanding how music teachers consider the ensemble collaboration experience is essential as they are the ones who ultimately make them happen and in many ways, determine the successful outcome of them.

Chapter 5: Music Teachers

The article that comprises this chapter includes interviews with five former music teaching colleagues of mine in Perth, Western Australia. These teachers all work for separate schools but the schools belong to an association of private schools which has been given the pseudonym, APS. The article entitled; 'I think everyone's been thrilled': Music teachers' perspectives on school music performance collaborations, has been published in the International Journal of Music Education. Sutherland, A. (2017). 'I think everyone's been thrilled': Music teachers' perspectives on school music performance collaborations, *International Journal of Music Education,* 1 - 14.

The participants in this phenomenological case study reflect on the meaning the phenomenon had for their lived experience. They also consider the impact of the phenomenon on their music programmes for which they are responsible. Consequently, several of the music teachers discuss how participation in this collaborative event effect their students. This methodology therefore operates a triple hermeneutic; a three-part process of inductive reasoning based on personal understanding of the world in which we live (Fung, 2016).

Western Australia is the largest state or territory in Australia and with a school in Victoria added the group of schools, this musical collaboration provided considerable travel obstacles. Although the Victorian school sent a soloist, several of the regional schools sent ensembles to participate in the event. One school travelled around 715km or roughly 7.5 hours in order to experience the thrill of the performance. Citing a reason such as prohibitive travel requirements would be understandable. The lack of willingness on the part of music teachers to participate in community performance collaboration is a common hindrance to the enabling of inter-institutional musical engagement (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts, & Schippers, 2009). Although some music teachers were initially reluctant to participate, the overwhelming success of the event and the opportunities that it provided for music students ensured that in following events, all schools participated fully.

'I think everyone's been thrilled': Music teachers' perspectives on school music performance collaborations

Abstract

Music teachers are notoriously time-poor with the pressures of various curricula and co-curricular demands. To find time to provide performance opportunities for students that involve other schools adds layers of administrative complexities to an already comprehensive workload. Although there is literature to suggest the benefits of collaboration, the necessities of getting the mechanics of a Music Department running smoothly often places the idea of musical collaboration in the category of 'luxury' to be considered 'when there is time'. The experiences of several Music teachers from different schools who have collaborated on a series of concerts performed biannually evolved over six years and significantly impacted their Music Departments. An important component of these concerts was the impact of the visiting conductors who acted as 'Artists in Residence' in the lead up to the performance. The findings suggest collaboration as being vital to the building process of a developing Music Department and makes recommendations for the use of guest conductors.

Key words

Collaboration, interpretative phenomenological analysis, motivation, performance, school music departments.

Introduction

Quantifying the development of a school Music programme is difficult but there are several important indicators for growth and positive momentum. For different music teachers, different factors will be more significant than others. Indicators include: numbers of students involved in ensembles (Elpus and Abril, 2011; Apfelstadt, 2011), numbers of students involved in classroom Music (Lowe and Belcher, 2012; Lamont and Maton, 2008), quality of ensemble music-making (Prichard, 2012; Silvey, 2014), the number of graduating students to continue active music engagement (Myers, 2008; Bowles, Dobbs and Jensen, 2014), and the motivation of music students to continue developing their skills (MacIntyre, Potter and Burns, 2012; Evans, 2015). A series of concerts which contributed to the growth of developing Music programmes is

explored from the point of view of the music teachers. The schools that took part have relatively young Music programmes at different stages of their development. Busy music teachers running demanding Music programmes across the globe are searching for ways to create inspirational musical engagement for their students and staff in the hope that their efforts will be rewarded with observable benefits (Georgii-Hemming & Westvall, (2010). The research question is: How can a collaborative process have an impact on the development of a school Music programme?

Globally, despite numerous differences, secondary Music teachers experience very similar challenges. Music Education is experiencing pressures from economic rationalism and the persistent political focus on literacy and numeracy. It is difficult to build Music programmes in the current climate. There are however, examples of performance collaboration taking place internationally in an effort to provide students with opportunities for inspiration and engagement and to maintain a sense of collegial support in places where Music teachers feel isolated or unsupported. The Eastman/Rochester partnership in New York is one such example that involves university, school and community (Robinson, 1998). In Limerick, Ireland, a partnership between a third level institution, a resource agency and a primary school provides musical opportunities for students in a disadvantaged area (Kenny, 2014). In Singapore, the National Arts Council (NAC) works with schools and corporate sponsors specifically to establish arts partnerships between schools and community arts organisations (Chong, Rohwer, Emmanuel, Kruse, and Smilde, 2013). On Prince Edward Island in Canada, school and community music partnerships have helped maintain the historical traditional Irish roots and produced a vibrant music community (Griffin, 2007). In each example, there are different objectives and a multitude of positive outcomes.

Collaboration

Collaboration is defined here as musical performances that combine groups of people from two or more organisations such as schools. Performance collaborations can have positive effects for music teachers, students and the school community generally. Bartleet (2012) explains that such 'exchanges can result in a pooling of resources, an enriching musical experience for the participants, and a significant community building exercise for all involved' (p. 58). Large-scale performances can also be difficult to organise, expensive to run and provide logistical issues. Ultimately, if a performance event involving multiple contributors is to be sustainable, the

benefits need to outweigh the challenges. Roennfeldt (2013) asserts, reaching an 'appropriate balance of venue, scheduling, repertoire choice, program structure and, importantly, organisational support ultimately determined whether even short-term sustainability was achieved' (p. 71).

Background

A biannual concert involving school Music Departments belonging to an association of private schools (APS) in Western Australia was established to provide an opportunity for musical collaboration. Each participating school was invited to perform a piece of music by themselves and to contribute to several combined ensembles; a mixed voice choir, concert band, string orchestra and full orchestra. These combined ensembles were conducted by two visiting conductors from interstate and overseas. One conductor prepared the choral items which included two hymns (with audience participation). The other conductor prepared the combined instrumental ensembles. Both guest conductors spent two weeks as artists-in-residence, visiting the schools before the combined rehearsals. Since 2010 there have been three concerts, successively growing in stature; both in terms of numbers of students participating and in the standard of performance. All concerts were professionally recorded and resulting DVDs have become a promotional resource for the respective Music programmes and the schools generally.

Methodology

I cannot be objective about this research topic as I conceived and organised these concerts. I chose the music for the combined items, booked the venue and conductors, persuaded the school Principals and Heads of Music to participate and then performed many musical roles throughout the performances including being Master of Ceremonies. Given my investment in these concerts the most appropriate methodology for this study is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) because the role of the researcher is fundamental.

IPA is a qualitative process of inquiry which explores the lived experience of individuals involved in a phenomenon. Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006) discuss the two aims of an IPA researcher, the first 'is to try to understand their participant's world, and to describe what it is like' and the second 'is to develop a more overtly *interpretative* analysis, which positions the initial "description" in relation to a wider, social, cultural, and perhaps even theoretical, context'

(p. 104). In this way, IPA employs an analytical double hermeneutic whereby understanding is achieved by both the participant and the researcher in two separate stages. In discussing validity in this research concerning shared music performances, Eisner (2005) argues, 'Validity in the arts is the product of the persuasiveness of a personal vision; its utility is determined by the extent to which it informs' (p. 70). His position allows subjectivity to have meaning and value. By positioning the interests of the researcher at the forefront of the process, IPA provides a transparency that is not easily achieved in other methods of inquiry.

Bresler (1995) asserts that, as the 'researcher is the main instrument, her qualifications, background, and expertise are important factors in the shaping of the study and need to be stated explicitly' (p. 6). In acknowledgement of my position in this narrative, I allow the study to be informed from a position of knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon. Taylor (2014) confirms that undertaking research using IPA 'calls for a very high degree of personal commitment, even obsession' (p. 15). Knowledge of the history of the events being examined allows for better informed understanding of the contexts of the interview responses and an ability to frame interview questions that best invite discussion of the issues. Examining the series of concerts in this study necessitates an understanding of how the different perspectives of the music teachers converge to form an understanding of the reality of the phenomenon. Lincoln and Guba (1986) point out, 'that there is no single reality on which inquiry may converge, but rather there are multiple realities that are socially constructed, and that, when known more fully, tend to produce diverging inquiry' (p. 75).

Data collection

The participants work for schools that belong to a collective group. An explanatory email was sent via the collective organisation to potential participants. Of those who responded preference given to those who had participated in all three concerts. The semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The transcripts were then read repeatedly to ascertain emergent themes. In analysing data, the researcher must decide what is important. Smith, Jarman and Osborn (1999) assert that, 'IPA, while recognizing that a person's thoughts are not transparently available from, for example, interview transcripts, engages in the analytic process in order, hopefully, to be able to say something about that thinking' (p. 223). The most important themes were chosen for analysis due to their prevalence in the transcript.

Participants

The APS was established in Western Australia in 1985 to provide a low-fee option for private school education. At the time of the first combined concert, there were eight schools in the APS. Before this event, there were no formal attempts by the schools to engage with each other, apart from regular meetings of the respective; Principals, Bursars, Deputy Principals and Chaplains. These concerts allowed students from across the APS to perform together for the first time and subsequently the Heads of Music meet quarterly to collaborate. Since then several other music events have been inaugurated including a piano festival, Primary School choir day and Middle School band and orchestra day. Heads of Music have also more informally arranged events between member schools. Pseudonyms were used for the association of schools and all participants.

Kevin

Kevin has been Head of Music at his school for seven years. Prior to his current position, he worked as a contemporary musician and composer. Although he has been employed at several Secondary Schools prior to this one, the APS concerts have been Kevin's first involvement in performance collaborations. When Kevin joined the staff of his current school the Music Programme only existed in the Primary years. The Music Programme has grown significantly in the last seven years with the introduction of a Secondary Music curriculum and several initiatives introduced in the Primary Music programme. The number of instrumental staff at the school has increased and a wider range of instruments are available for students to learn.

Harry

Harry began working at his school as the Primary Music teacher. Between the first and second concerts, he became Head of Music. Harry has a Contemporary music background and that fits well with the Contemporary music focus of the school Music programme. He spent several years living in Glasgow, Scotland and found himself in front of classrooms of children. During this time, Harry realised that teaching Music was a better option financially than being a freelance musician and returned to Australia to complete a teaching qualification. He had some experience with collaboration in Scotland and recalled fondly an inter-school music and drama production that took place in a castle. The Music programme at Harry's school was in its infancy at the time of the first concert but has since been extended.

Trevor

Trevor began working at his school as a peripatetic instrumental tutor while working concurrently with several other schools. He then worked exclusively for the school, teaching in the classroom and taking music ensembles. After several years he became Head of Music and is now Head of Performing Arts which encompasses Drama. Trevor has a background with Classical guitar and singing. His music programme allows for a variety of musical styles, however his predominantly classical background compliments the range of choirs, concert bands and string orchestras at the school. Trevor has had experience with musical collaborations as a student and as a teacher and recalls fondly collaborative concerts that took place many years ago with students from many state Education Department schools performing at the Perth Concert Hall.

Brian

Brian began working at his respective school as a lower brass tutor. He gradually moved towards a full-time position within the Music Department and after several years successfully applied for the position of Head of Music which he has held for around ten years. Brian and his staff have a predominantly classical music background which has influenced their Music programme with choirs, concert bands, and string orchestras as well as a Jazz band. The programme is the longest established within the APS and has a large number of students involved owing in part to a Year Two String Programme and a Year Five Band Programme which has been running for many years. Brian has been involved with occasional collaborative performance projects in his career, most notably with concerts involving several schools in Geraldton (Western Australia) and the local community brass band.

Findings

From analysis, several important themes emerged. Some were found repeatedly in multiple transcripts and others cases were significant for only one participant. The themes include; Developing the Music Department; Staying involved; Promoting the Music Department; Guest conductors; Venue; Implications of collaboration; and Issues with collaboration. These will be discussed in turn.

Developing the Music Department

Two participants lead Music programmes that were still developing resources, musical culture and community in relatively new schools. The other two participants run Music programmes that are notably larger and offer a more diverse range of musical activities.

Kevin discussed the impact that the first collaborative concert had for his Music programme. 'Only been a couple of years ago we didn't even have a music programme at the secondary level and suddenly we were playing guitars and trumpets and flutes at the Perth Concert Hall.' The first concert was an experience that Kevin and his students found difficult to comprehend. For the band the event 'certainly improved the standard of playing, giving us a goal and giving us something to play.' The scale of the performance and the presence of other schools made Kevin aware that people could make comparisons. This encouraged him to go to huge efforts for his students to play something that would be impressive and consequently stretch the capabilities of his young musicians. Kevin composed a piece of music which catered specifically for his ensemble. He commented on the exposure that his students had to the other ensembles at the first concert, '[It helped] in opening kids up to be more aware of the orchestra basically, so that we had something to refer to. "Remember what the orchestra was doing? Remember what the orchestra was like?" Sitting up there, watching because they hadn't actually seen anything [like that].' This awareness impacted his Music programme between the first and second concerts. He noted, 'I wanted the students to get more involved in the ensembles and this time because they were a little bit older, they were able to take on a little bit more leadership.' Kevin's school participation increased significantly for subsequent concerts, with more students participating in the combined ensembles working with the guest conductors. He explained, 'In a nutshell, the more we put into it, the more we got out of it.' The involvement in the collaborative performances raised the prestige and profile of his Music programme. Kevin noted, 'It's more highly valued throughout the school because of the [APS] Concert.' The Senior Management Group at his school have commented that no other Departments within the APS have collaborated. He explained, 'Music is the only subject area that's actually doing this and that's coming through school management, that's coming through Heads of Department meetings.' For Kevin 'Music is now seen as a higher-level thing, we're not just out there doing Rock concerts, we're actually going to the Concert Hall.' He continued, 'it's all been experiential for the kids and giving the Music Department more weight across the whole curriculum.' Kevin saw growth

that over three concerts from 'almost being spectators to being pretty full-on involved.' Demonstrably Kevin owes much of the development of his programme to this collaboration.

Trevor's school was not involved in the first concert. They joined the subsequent two concerts after he became Head of Department. He 'wanted to raise our profile a bit and be involved' and saw the combined concert as a way of achieving this. Although Trevor has a comparatively well-established programme, he still saw the collaborative experience as a way of developing his Department. He noted, 'Doing a big event like that, it just opens, it just emphasises, it just encourages, it just helps to solidify all the things we say.' Brian also observed that there was a strong sense of validation and confirmation through the collaborative experience. Brian stated,

> It's had an impact on validating what we do … what we're doing is quality education and that gives me confidence. I can say to people that we offer a really quality programme here and included in all of that is this opportunity to play with [SW][8] on the stage of the Perth Concert Hall.

Trevor liked the idea of his students taking part in something on a larger scale and different to the usual formula of school concerts. He saw it as 'an opportunity to give as many of our students that chance because they had never really experienced anything like it.'

Staying involved

Encouraging Music students in schools to stay involved in active music-making is a challenge that Heads of Music share. Mechanisms that help disengaged students remain in ensembles and class music are pursued to retain the maturity and experience of older musicians. Harry's school was so new when the first concert took place that his youngest performers were in Year Six. They have now attended all three and 'continued right the way through.' For Harry the combined concerts provided a focal point which impacted student motivation, saying, 'I don't know if that interest would have been sustained for those kids had they not had that experience.' Harry reflected on whether some of his senior students would still be involved in his programme without the interest generated from the combined concerts. He observed,

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[8] SW is one of the guest conductors.

Those kids who were there the first time, one of them is the Captain of Music. I would like to think that it's definitely a highlight for them that has kept them going. All of a sudden our students have senior students to finally look up to.

Harry discussed two other examples of students choosing to continue with Music as a result of the collaborative concerts. He spoke about a student who

did that performance and just burst into tears. Absolutely, almost hysterical. It was because of the joy that she felt from that experience. Probably about two weeks later, she goes, "What can I do to get in to WAAPA[9]?" I believe because of that experience that she had there. She can't imagine doing anything else.

This outcome was a satisfying and rewarding by-product of collaborative experiences. Harry discussed another student who reacted similarly, explaining, 'The bass player who is 99 percentile academic. Shortly after that, he also wanted to go to WAAPA and dropped Physics this year so that he would have more practise time. For me that makes it all worthwhile.'

Similarly, Brian reflected on way the collaborative experience sustained motivation for particular students. He described,

I was thrilled that they were still hanging in on the skin of their teeth on particular instruments. I'm thinking about one player in particular. She was my baritone saxophone player and she was a bright kid. She hung in until the end of Year Twelve just to do the last concert … she'll always remember that stuff.

Brian felt the combined concerts were influential moments in the Music Department calendar. He discussed,

They certainly know it's coming and I think more and more they will be looking forward to the next one. Originally it was probably just for the opportunity, music, the whole stuff with standing on stage, but I think as time goes on too it will be that reconnecting with people.

Promoting the Music Department

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[9] The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) is one of two tertiary Music institutions in Perth.

The combined concerts successfully promoted the values and success of the APS generally. Music is often an effective 'window dresser' for schools and this was the case for these concerts. Promotion can be viewed in terms of emic and etic factors; the Music Departments promoted their efforts within the school communities and the school used the DVD to promote their 'product' to the outside community. Participants discussed both factors.

Trevor mentioned the theme of 'promotion' most frequently. He began by describing his thinking behind collaborating,

> It was, "Alright, let's do something small, let's just get up there and get involved", and by being involved, people who make decisions will be there and witness the concert and see that, "Alright, well it might be worthwhile us doing a little bit more next time."

Initially, Trevor chose to promote the work of his Music Department within the school community by participating on a small scale, providing a Wind Quintet to perform. After the concert, the reaction from the school Principal implied a desire for a much larger presence from the school at the next concert. Trevor explained, 'For the second one, the Principal had said, "Well let's make a bit of a statement. Let's show them what [our] Music Department is, what it does and what it's like."' For this concert, the school sent around 140 students. For Trevor, the increased participation had the desired promotional affect. He described, 'It was great for all the kids, and as far as a promotional tool for the school and the Department and within the school. Just making a positive vibe for Music within our own school, it worked wonderfully well.' The school seemed to fully embrace this collaborative concert, keen to use it as a way of showcasing the maturity and sophistication of the comparatively developed music programme. Trevor continued, 'a number of staff got involved, not just the Principal attending but others. They didn't hold back at all in saying how fabulous it was.'

Brian thought that the concert successfully promoted Music for the APS generally. Discussing the first concert, he recalled, 'I think everyone went, "Wow, look at the standard that [APS] schools can achieve".' Concerning in-school promotion Brian reflected that, 'my impression from people at the APS at the top of the chain, they're very proud of it and have every intention of seeing it continue. I think everyone's been thrilled with how it goes. I think organisationally, from the APS's point of view it's a tremendous success.' Kevin feels that the

combined concerts have given the APS a new sense of identity. He posits that the 'whole APS identity is very much music-driven.' Brian uses the DVD of the concert to promote Music within his school. He described,

> We introduced our Year Five Band Programme … as the kids walk into the room, I had footage of the massed bands in the Concert Hall playing and I said, "If you stick at this instrument, one day you'll get to do that." So it's a carrot that's hanging out there as one of the things, one of the experiences or opportunities that you get to do.

Harry uses the combined concerts to promote his Music programme to prospective students. He reflected, 'We put up pictures … of those kinds of events. When prospective students or parents come to the school, they see that and that's an inspiration point.' He also utilises the DVD for in-school promotion and gave 'concrete example … we always show the DVDs, particularly to the Year Sixes, "Look at what you can do in High School."'

Guest Conductors

The initial decision for inviting two guest conductors to direct the combined ensembles was based on avoiding political sensitivities about ownership of the concert thus introducing an independent voice to the event. Brian felt the role of the guest conductors was the major factor of the events success. He reflected,

> I absolutely loved getting to work with [SW]. It was great to watch him work. It was like P.D. [Professional Development] ... Just reminded me of what really works well with a band and what to focus on in a rehearsal, so personally the highlight was watching [SW] take my kids, start from where they are at and just take them to the next level up.

Brian described a moment before the first concert,

> We went into the carpark, [SW] warmed the band up and I was staggered at how much of the piece they could play for memory. He said, "Let's just play it and see how you go", no-one had music and they got through half this quite long, difficult piece just for memory and I thought, "Wow, that shows how hard they've worked."

He was delighted by the quality of sound that came from the combined concert band involving around 200 students in the third concert.

Brian valued the contribution of both conductors, explaining, 'Watching [JW][10] work with the choir from the kids' point of view, I only ever hear kids say positive things about it.' Brian explained that JW had,

> a very English approach. He was a bit of an 'odd bod' and our kids actually really liked that. Last year, there were kids who would still … conduct the way he would conduct by swinging his arms while they were doing *Porgy & Bess*.

Brian qualified that although JW was remembered as 'a bit odd, a bit unusual and they kind of mimicked that, but it wasn't a disrespectful …they enjoyed the experience.'

Kevin also explained the benefits of having the combined ensembles working with the guest conductors. He noted that in 'the third one was the first time that we took advantage of the conductors. We had both of the conductors coming into the school and the kids loved that.' Trevor's concurred, stating, 'It was great for students to play the repertoire and get to work with the guest conductors.' He elaborated, 'I can't speak highly enough of [SW]. The way he works with the children is fantastic … that was a real highlight.'

Enhanced repertoire opportunities

Kevin discussed his original composition for the first concert, 'It upped the standard of the band really fast because they had to learn this damn stupid thing I'd written and it was actually a little bit hard.' Without the formality and magnitude of the combined concert, Kevin suggests that the experience of playing more challenging repertoire would not have happened so quickly.

The combined ensembles provided a real collaborative experience. Rather than a programme with schools presenting discreet items, the combined ensembles had students playing in a mixed seating formation. The secondary choir in Kevin's school was at the stage of singing predominantly contemporary music in unison. The repertoire chosen for the combined choir performance required four-part singing. Kevin recalled, 'I think the students really enjoyed the novelty of actually performing in multiple parts.' This new challenge introduced part-singing

into the secondary choral experience, extending his singers' skills. Kevin valued the learning experience of the more challenging repertoire and explained, 'We alone would never have done anything even vaguely like it. Either singing in harmony, singing in a big choir or singing in a professional venue.' Kevin's background as a Contemporary and Jazz musician has influenced the style of music his students are most regularly exposed to. The combined concert necessitated participating in other music genres and performance situations for his students. He reflected, 'We're more contemporary that the APS concerts because we can't actually do the orchestral stuff and some of the big choral stuff.' Kevin discussed the importance of doing repertoire that wouldn't normally be approached in isolation by discussing the idea of the concert discontinuing. He stated, 'It would be a loss of being able to do repertoire that we can't do.'

Trevor discussed having repertoire chosen by someone outside of his Music Department, saying, 'Our violinist was one of the lead violins, and the choice of piece was great. It was a great opportunity for them to play a *Concerto Grosso*.' He continued,

> Our choir is a little bit 'Pop' oriented, and so it was a little bit more of an effort to get them on board with some of the repertoire. For instance, *Carmina Burana* was entirely foreign and I knew that would be a thing for them but it was an educational process and they learned a lot through it and it was definitely something that they could grasp and get into in the end. *Encanto*[11] they really liked, that was a great choice too.

For Trevor, the more challenging repertoire for the combined ensembles had an impact beyond the immediacy of easier and possibly more popular repertoire. He noted, 'We did *Skyfall*. By the time we'd done the Concert Hall and one more performance of that, our students were pretty much tired of that piece because it wasn't very challenging.' He continued,

> I could hear some of the other pieces being played. Someone playing a little fragment of one of the other collaborative pieces every now and again like students do. That's always a good sign.

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[10] JW refers to the guest conductor from overseas who worked with the combined choirs.
[11] *Encanto* is a piece for Concert Band by American composer, Robert W. Smith.

Trevor noted that without the combined forces of several school ensembles, his students would unlikely be able to experience performing such music at this stage of their development. He concluded,

> Being able to perform that type of repertoire you can't perform with a choir of 20 and no orchestra. Bringing together all of the resources of all of the schools enables you to produce an ensemble that can perform repertoire that you just wouldn't be able to attain in your own little world.

Brian discussed the change in attitude that his Music staff had towards unfamiliar and challenging repertoire. Initially some of his staff

> felt it was too hard, irrelevant repertoire but when the concert had finished, and we pulled it off, there was acknowledgement that our kids rose to that challenge. It pushed them to a new level, it extended them in a way that they wouldn't have got if we hadn't done something collaborative like that. I think *Zadok the Priest*, which I personally never had a problem with but I know the choral people especially, "It's so high, it's pushing the kid's ranges" and they didn't actually like it but I guess that just comes down to a bit of personal taste and preference. After it had all happened, I think everyone agreed that it had been a great experience.

The repertoire for concert band was less controversial for Brian. He thought that the band piece, *Green Hills Fantasy*[12] was 'great … [it] had the kids holding their instruments above their head and crying like a war-cry.'

The repertoire for the combined ensembles provided some school ensembles with music for subsequent performances. Brian recalled a particular piece for choir, '*Baba Yetu's*[13] a great choice. We sang that for [our school's] Day, we had a Tanzanian priest visiting us, we've got a connection over there and we've sent a school group over to Tanzania. He was thrilled to hear *Baba Yetu* the Lord's Prayer sung in Swahili and he got out of his seat and videoed it while we sang it, right in front of the whole school. It was great, the kids loved it.' Brian concluded by saying, 'It allows us to do things that we can't do on our own', echoing his colleagues. Harry

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[12] *Green Hills Fantasy* is a piece for Concert Band by Austrian composer, Thomas Doss.
[13] *Baba Yetu* is a piece for Choir, tenor solo, piano and percussion by Chinese-American composer, Christopher Tin. There is also a version which includes orchestra. It was composed for the game, *Civilization IV*.

agrees with taking on challenging repertoire for combined ensembles. He elaborated, 'Both with collaborating on bigger projects and taking on the challenge of repertoire that they normally perhaps wouldn't be so keen on. "Imagine what it will be like when there's 400 people singing at the same time." That certainly gives us that opportunity to try and develop a more artistic culture here which is one of the challenges.' He continued, 'They just don't understand what is possible for students, even young students can play all of this beautiful music, rather than if I hear *Riptide* again I will…' Harry seems to suggest that less challenging repertoire can be unrewarding when repeated frequently.

Venue

Another emergent theme was the prestige of the venue. The Perth Concert Hall can be considered as the premier venue for live, Classical music in Western Australia. It seats just over 1,700 people, it has a warm acoustic and a large pipe organ above the choir stalls, utilised in the concerts. Brian discussed the response of his students and their parents, 'Generally, people were positive about it. People enjoyed going to the Concert Hall.' He went on to paraphrase one of the guest conductors during the rehearsal process,

> I remember [SW] talking about the stage of the Concert Hall, "This stage has had the Berlin Philharmonic playing on it", and he talked about, "If you're not practicing, if you're not worthy or deserving, then don't play in this concert. Go and do something else because this stage is special and you need to work hard to deserve to be on it."

Brian felt that without the platform of a combined concert, his students would not have experienced performing at such a prestigious venue. He said, 'It allows us to perform in a venue that as a school on our own, would even think about. It's not [our school's] way. That's too opulent, that's too much money; we don't do things like that.' Harry also relished the opportunity to be in the Perth Concert Hall. He stated, 'For me it was just, "Great, I get to go to the Perth Concert Hall, I get to have this experience."' He witnessed his students' reaction when arriving at the venue for the first time, reflecting, 'I remember the look on their faces, actually walking in there and looking around and just being totally stunned at the venue and what they were about to experience.'

Kevin had not considered that performing at the Perth Concert Hall would ever be possible for his ensembles. He discussed his feelings when such an opportunity presented itself so early in

his time at the school, saying, 'It was a really positive experience to perform in the Perth Concert Hall. It was kind of like a dream.' He continued, 'After the concert, it was a very positive vibe for myself, for the school, just to have our kids there on the stage at the Perth Concert Hall. There was definitely a lot of excitement. There was a big back stage area and lots of other schools.'

Trevor performed at the venue earlier in his career and hoped that the impact would be as significant for his students. He explained, 'Having been involved in events put on as a teacher in the Concert Hall, I was hoping that the students would get a lift and would get a real buzz out of it and they did.' He described the experience further, 'When they got to the Concert Hall and actually saw, 'This is what it is', it starts to work its magic and they aim to do the best they can.' He concluded, 'There's nothing like performing in a Concert Hall.'

Ongoing effects of collaboration

The implications of the collaboration process were far reaching. As a result of the combined concerts, Music teachers and Music students alike interacted and formed a community which collectively sought to work more closely together. Prior to the first collaboration, none of the Music teachers from the respective schools knew each other particularly well and the idea of working together was initially met with a degree of scepticism. Kevin observed, 'So I saw it as yes, it's a good idea, it's a nice idea but I don't have the time to do this and I don't know how they have time to be thinking like this. So I saw it as being just another job that I had to do.' He now views the process differently, stating that, 'You do all your own school stuff but it's always nice to have that thing that takes you outside of that.' Following the first concert, the researcher proposed quarterly meetings of the Heads of Music to discuss logistics for the following concert and to share ideas. This development further strengthened the sense of collegiality among the Music teachers. Kevin continued, 'That whole business of having the Heads of Music getting together, discussing things. That's a whole collaboration at another level again which no other subject area is doing which is discussed at Heads of Department meetings, management level and so on and there's a lot of support for it.' Harry discussed other collaborations that followed as a result of the meetings, 'The few instrumentalists that we did send, they'd also been to the Middle School Band Day…so they had done that collaboration as well. Definitely a level of excitement and confidence had developed from that.' Harry observed that it was not just staff becoming more connected but the students were also starting to sense themselves belonging to a

bigger collective. He notes, 'Perhaps even from the kids, a little bit less worrying about what the other schools were up to and being more supportive, particularly the last one, backstage our students were more comfortable in engaging with the other students which I don't think had happened to start with.'

For Brian, the value of the concerts was in the combined ensembles. He claims, 'We can all get a bunch of kids in our own schools to play something…but I personally think the value, the best stuff is the combined stuff.' Brian went on to discuss the collaboration spin-offs that developed, 'I think it's good that we've formalised these things. We've got a Primary School event, a Middle School event, we've got the Piano event, and we've got the biannual big concert at the Concert Hall so there's a range of activities that are happening regularly which is great.' Brian feels that while it is easy to focus on the daily occurrences of a Music Department, having connections beyond the school community is valuable. He notes, 'So much of the time, you're just so busy in your own little world, you don't have time to stick your head up for air so those meetings are a great opportunity just to realise that everybody else has got the same issues you've got.'

Challenges with collaboration

The collaborative process inevitably produces issues that are not encountered with simpler school concerts. The need to travel to rehearsals off-campus can be expensive as Trevor explains, 'If you're going to have large numbers of students, then it gets expensive; thousands and thousands of dollars.' For Trevor's students, the journey was further than many of the other schools. It is worth noting that several schools not represented by this sample of participants travelled much further. One school sent a soloist from Victoria, nearly 2,500 kilometres away.

For the rehearsal at another school prior to the third concert, Trevor experienced other difficulties. He explains, 'We arrived, and people sort of weren't there. There were people asking me, 'Who's here? What's going on? Should we set up?' … eventually they did arrive.' The frustrations with dealing with people outside of the respective Music Department often involve administrative minutia. Trevor recalls, 'The collaborative rehearsal happened to be on the day that the universities had their open day and so our Year Twelves had issues … They wanted to go to the open day, they wanted to get out of being in the rehearsal.' Trevor seemed philosophical about these types of frustrations and thought solutions could be found. Events

requiring considerable travel are time consuming and with senior students focussed on their academic studies, it is likely that these pressures will manifest. Trevor recalled, 'The issues that I had back at school really arose through a small group of Year Twelves that wanted to go on stage without going to the rehearsal. That caused a lot of grief but that's also part of the learning process.' Overall, Trevor suggested that these issues were not peculiar to this particular event and came with the territory of school concert administration. He concluded, 'The drawbacks really are minor. Those ones that I mentioned were just really logistical little administrative things and given the scope, it's understandable.'

Brian's students had less distance to travel than Trevor's but he was aware of the travel issue, noting, 'That's actually the hardest things and it's the tyranny of distance that kills it for everyone. The schools are across the whole state just about.' The time required to stage a large-scale event inevitably impacted on the rehearsal process. Brian stated, 'I'm sure [SW] feels frustrated at the lack of rehearsal and the fact that there's always kids missing.' The demands of administrative minutia were best encapsulated by Brian. He explained, 'One of the hardest things is…getting all the names and then kids would pull out and, "Oh no, the names are wrong" and then you'd get lists sent back to check and they're wrong and then you'd fix it and then they're still wrong and…that stuff is what drives you nuts. I hate that stuff.'

Discussion

Six important themes emerged from the interviews; Developing the Music Department, Staying involved, Promoting the Music Department, Guest conductors, Venue, Implications of collaboration, and Issues with collaboration. From these themes, three important factors can be considered; the impact for teachers, the impact for students, and sustainability. If the impact for teachers is strong, the impetus for those committing to be involved will likely continue. Myers (2003) argues for collaboration being a logical platform for delivering music education, 'The reasons are familiar: (a) music specialists often work in relative isolation from both education and music peers; (b) music is frequently perceived as peripheral to the academic curriculum; and (c) music educators, musical institutions, and practicing artists all desire a vital musical culture in their communities' (p. 1). If students are benefiting from collaborative musical experiences, there is greater likelihood that support for these activities will continue. Ultimately, inspiring students with meaningful performance experiences can assist with producing life-long learners of music.

Sawyer (2007) states that, 'Because music is a collaborative practice, and communication is central to musical creativity, our educational methods should place greater emphasis on group interaction' (p. 57).

If the collaborative event is sustainable, the positive effects on the community will continue to be felt by all stakeholders. These concerts are part of a growing trend in school-based performance programmes. In discussing a partnership between a school and community arts organisation in the United States, Robinson (1998) states that, 'Groups of arts organizations, schools, and colleges in some locations across the country are now banding together in innovative working relationships designed to break down the arbitrary barriers between agencies and replace them with complementary goals and missions' (p. 2). Shelemay (2013) concurs with this idea, stating, 'Rethinking the notion of community opens opportunities first and foremost to explore musical transmission and performance not just as expressions or symbols of a given social grouping, but as an integral part of processes that can at different moments help generate, shape, and sustain new collectivities' (pp. 349-350).

Participants expressed reticence of being involved in the collaborative process for a variety of reasons. The concerts were seen as an added layer of administration on top of what was an already demanding work load. Participants with smaller Music programmes also felt a sense of inadequacy which contributed to reluctance. Each participant was clear about the change in attitude following the performance. The involvement of their students in collaborating became acentral part of the musical activity of the Department.

Conclusions

Collaboration can be viewed as a luxury to undertake when all of the other aspects of a Music programme are in place and working efficiently. Only once the size and standard of the school ensembles are satisfactory, will collaboration be viewed as appropriate. This research, although localised, provides an alternate view which recommends the collaboration process at the early stages of growing a Music programme. What one school ensemble cannot achieve in isolation can be achieved through collaboration and all of the benefits of high profile performances, particularly regarding student motivation and musical development can be enjoyed without waiting for the 'time to be right'.

The participants reflected on three concerts spanning six years and their reflections show how their experience changed over time. Their reflections are influenced by a variety of factors the six years of experience provided and have given insight into how collaboration affected themselves, their students and their school communities. The effects resonated and reverberated beyond the immediate experience of the students and audience. The collaborative process was more than just an entertainment for parents or a way to impress decision makers, it influenced relationships and forged new ways for Music Departments to operate. The research question must therefore be answered in the affirmative. Each participant responded by emphasising one emergent theme over another and although there were challenges, the narratives were overwhelmingly positive. Importantly they included admissions of positive attitude changes as the collaborative process developed. Myers (2003) notes that, 'If designed and executed well, learning-centred partnerships expand the range of expertise available to schools and engender a sense of community responsibility for education' (p. 1). It is likely that as collaboration between these schools continues, so too will the inspiration of teachers and students, further enriching those communities.

The introduction of guest conductors to avoid potential political sensitivities produced an unexpected finding. The opportunity for staff to enjoy professional development due to the quality of the conductors strengthened the positive experience for the teachers and students. This double positive is recommended if the right person can be sourced.

School music programmes that require a building phase may look to collaboration as an effective way of evolving the skill set of the teachers and students, developing the sense of community and encouraging existing music students to stick with it, both during their time at school and beyond. Collaboration should be seen as important in the early stages of Music Department growth rather than in the fully developed stage. School music programmes that are fully developed however, should look to collaboration as a way of supporting other music programmes and further enhance the level of opportunities of the teachers and students.

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Coda

One of the most significant findings of this article is in the theme of sustainable musical partnerships borne out of an initial ensemble collaboration event. The four elements of Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory include: equal status among group members, common goals, intergroup cooperation with consistent and meaningful contact, and support by authorities (Pettigrew, 1998). The model of the APS collaborative events involved an opportunity for each school to perform a piece of their own choice with any type of ensemble. This included the school from Victoria to provide a single soloist for practical reasons. The representation of each school in the programme on their own terms facilitated a sense of equal status between the institutions. Each of the schools were committed to performing together in a prestigious venue with guest conductors they admired as it constituted one of the highlight events of the year for each member group. The establishment of formalised quarterly meetings encouraged meaningful discussion between heads of music from each school. Finally, the APS was thoroughly supportive of the event through financial, logistical and symbolic support. All four of Allport's components were present in this collaboration and the event has become a long-lasting partnership to occur biennially.

Not all collaborations include successful application of Allport's components, and the following article highlights how group members can feel disengaged from the process. Successful ensemble collaboration does not always need to lead to formal partnerships, however they should allow each group member to feel positive about future events with other ensembles in the future. Collaboration projects that lead to group members preferring isolationism cannot be viewed as successful regardless of the quality of the performance.

Chapter 6: School, university, and community

This article has been published in the journal of *Music Performance Research*. Sutherland, A. (2017). School and university music collaboration: A case study of a performance of Britten's *War Requiem, Music Performance Research, 8,* 98-113. It is the first case study in this research to utilise pre-event and post-event interviews to identify any change of experience following the concert for each participant. Musicians can experience a sense of loss after an important musical event (Dragulin, n.d.; Dobson, 2010). The lead-up to the performance could involve possible factors as; stress, excitement and performance nerves whereas the post-performance experience could involve feelings of relief, personal satisfaction or conversely, disappointment or depression. How each of the contributing members lived experience varied will in some part be due to personality and personal background but can also be effected by the process of collaboration. Not all participants experienced the logistics, social engagement, and musical experience of the event uniformly and this case study explores those differences.

The impact of clear, timely, and meaningful communication is an important theme in this research. When individuals from different institutions and an existing relationship with in-built mechanisms for productive dialogue, the communication for an ensemble collaboration is likely to be successful. If a participant member does not enjoy such a relationship, or is geographically disconnected, the impact of reduced communication can be an isolating experience (Katz, 1982).

Although poor communication pervaded this case-study, there is nevertheless, a strong narrative of musical inspiration through motivational repertoire and Vygotskian performance opportunities with advanced musical peers. Britten's *War Requiem* provided musicians from a high school in Western Australia and their conductor with considerable musical challenges. This is not a work they would normally engage with through the regular, isolated, school music concert experience. The musical challenges provided not only a rich, rewarding learning experience, but a musically memorable one. The opportunity to perform with such a large number of advanced musicians required for Britten's epic piece also provided thrilling musical moments for the students that cannot be easily replicated without music ensemble collaboration with other institutions.

This is the first case study in this series of articles to explore intergenerational music-making. Although the opportunity for inspiration can be found for the young high school musicians, there were issues of disconnect and misunderstanding between the university musicians and the older generation of the choral society. Intergenerational understanding does not occur simply by allowing different generations of musicians to perform a piece of music together. Unless each ensemble understands the benefits that the other ensemble brings to the project and appreciates the value of those musicians in bringing the concert to successful fruition, disconnect and misunderstanding can undermine the collaboration (Jones, 2006).

School and university music collaboration: A case study of a performance of Britten's War Requiem

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ABSTRACT: Britten's *War Requiem* is a large-scale orchestral and choral work requiring a variety of musical resources that are unlikely to be found within a single organisation. The performance reported in this article involved four conductors each responsible for preparing their own group of musicians (an orchestra and three choirs). Musical collaboration is needed to provide all the components for realising the score accurately. If carefully considered, the process of collaboration can provide opportunities for enhanced learning, intergenerational understanding and the motivation for pursuing active music making. If successful, musicians' desire to continue collaborating will be evident. This qualitative case study employed interpretative phenomenological analysis to explore the implications of a performance of the *War Requiem* through the lenses of the four participating conductors. The participants discussed their experiences on two occasions, before and after the performance, and reflected on how they understood the experiences of the members of their 'own' groups. Although the ambition to perform such a work was admirable, not all facets of the process were positive. The implications are discussed in terms of an understanding of successful musical performance collaboration. Empathy and respect between participating groups is recommended for a successful performance and for a continuing desire to collaborate further.

KEY WORDS: Collaboration; intergenerational choirs; peer learning; interpretative phenomenological analysis

In 2015, a performance took place of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* at a university in Australia. Several forces were required for this large concert work. A large orchestra combined with a smaller

chamber orchestra, three soloists and three choirs, each directed by its own conductor, collaborated in this project.[14] The three choirs were an adult choral society, a university student choir and a group of secondary school choristers. In this article the process of collaboration is examined from the perspectives of the conductors of the orchestras and the three choirs. The practical challenges of combining forces and other factors are also explored. Participation in a performance of a large-scale work such as Britten's *War Requiem* can be a transformative experience for a young musician. Moreover, if the collaborative process is successful, participants' desire to engage in further musical collaboration will be evident. The aim of this case study was to find out how the conductors perceived the collaborative process both for themselves and their four groups, involving different generations of musicians, by interviewing them before and after the performance.

Collaboration

Musical collaboration combines resources, human and otherwise, to achieve what cannot be done in isolation. Britten's *War Requiem* has to be performed by a variety of groups, unlikely to exist within a single organisation. Large-scale performances can provide rich and meaningful experiences for musicians that are memorable. Musicians – especially young singers and players – are likely to find performing the work memorable not because the organisers set out deliberately to create a musical experience of epic proportions but because it is, necessarily, a large-scale event in which individuals take part in something much bigger than themselves (McCoy, 2000), and in which they may undergo changes as a result. As Beckman and Graves (1997) point out, "[c]ollaborative performances involve the understanding of compositional intent and something equally or even more challenging: mutual respect" (p. 20). Large-scale musical collaborations demand a high level of mutual respect as they draw on the assets and abilities of the members of all the groups involved. They can have positive effects on music teachers, students and the wider school community:

> A central issue for all involved in the musical education of young people, is how to connect the three contexts of the school, home and community to enhance positive attitudes towards music making, to build on existing opportunities to engage in music making, and to bring together the wealth of music activity, resources and expertise (Temmerman, 2005, p. 118).

If respect is not mutual between the members of the groups that constitute the whole ensemble the benefits of collaboration may not be fully realised. In addition, it can be challenging to mount large-scale events involving different constituent parties each with their own aims:

> Collaborations take time. They're messy. They're sometimes frustrating. Yet collaborations enable us to undertake projects of a scope that might be impossible for an individual to do alone. Collaborative projects often evolve with a degree of richness that individual efforts cannot achieve (McCoy, 2000, p. 39).

The present study involved choirs from the community, a university and a school. Echoing Beckman and Graves (1997, cited above), research into the social, mental and physical health benefits of community music organisations involving older people suggests that, in order for intergenerational collaborations to be successful, mutual respect needs to be established between groups to dissipate stereotypes and lay the foundation for a positive experience between groups (Joseph & Southcott, 2014). Universities with large, flourishing music programmes are well positioned to enable these positive musical exchanges and community arts centres can to establish relationships with schools. Bowell (2014)

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[14]The concert formed part of a series of commemorative events marking the 100th anniversary of the landing of Australian and New Zealand forces in Gallipoli during World War I. The date was also chosen specifically to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II.

reports, for example, that "some cultural centres have become cultural brokers, co-ordinating and instigating arts-based projects within their local communities" (Bowell, 2014, p. 3).

If the collaborative process is a positive experience for the participants, partnerships are likely to be sustained. Schippers and Letts (2013) observe that "the key to sustainability rests with the profound connections among those involved in the various components of music making" (p. 287). Conversely negative experiences of collaboration could result in participants' lack of interest in engaging in future joint projects.

Intergenerational music making

Purposeful intergenerational engagement focused on a shared activity can break down generations' stereotypical ideas about each other, build respect and understanding, and contribute to the development of a more harmonious and understanding society. Intergenerational music making has many and varied benefits. According to Bowers (1998),

> …attitudes of senior citizens and university students can be affected by positive interaction between intergenerational singers. Stereotypical attitudes between the young and old can be affected, it seems, when opportunities to know and appreciate other generations are provided' (p. 16).

In their case study, Beynon and Alfano (2013) describe the process:

> Normally these groups would not associate socially, but as the older singers interact with the younger singers in choir in rehearsals and in social settings … the boundaries of age are blurred. They realize that the stereotypes of the younger generation that they subconsciously develop are challenged by their conversations and musical sharing; likewise, the intimidation that the younger singers feel about communicating with the older singers is broken down (p. 126).

The benefits of intergenerational music-making are not just social. It can create new, opportunities that are different from musicians' usual activities and are therefore potentially challenging. It is not necessarily the case, therefore, that all collaborations produce benefits for the individual performer. To be memorable for the right reasons, the collaboration has to offer the possibility of high-quality music making: "As intergenerational music programs continue to develop, there should be a continued focus on a quality musical experience for all participants" (Bowers, 1998, p. 7). In such programs students can work in new environments with unfamiliar conductors alongside experienced, adult musicians. These factors can be critical in the students' development as musicians:

> To share the stage with accomplished, even professional, musicians performing a large work for orchestra and adult choir is an exciting, memorable experience for a children's choir. The challenges are dramatically different from the weekly repertoire for the youth choir (Lana, 2008, p. 48).

Limited research has been undertaken on musical collaborations involving school ensembles, using quantitative and mixed methods to observe the attitudes of participant musicians (Conway & Hodgman, 2008; Weinstein et al., 2016). The present case study of an intergenerational musical collaboration uses a phenomenological approach to explore the experiences of musical leaders from each group, reported before and after the performance, seeking to establish the factors that allow for successful performance collaborations between musical groups of different generations.

METHOD

Background

In the latter part of 2014, the head of the School of Music (SoM) at an Australian university contacted the conductor of an adult choral society (CS) to invite him to contribute to a performance of Britten's *War Requiem*. There are no formal connections between the SoM and CS although they have collaborated in the past. The SoM at the university is one of two tertiary music institutions in the city and focuses on the study of Western art music. It has a student symphony orchestra, a symphonic chorus involving voice students and other music students, a symphonic wind ensemble and other musical ensembles. The symphony orchestra is often conducted by the Head of School although other conductors take responsibility for particular seasons. CS was established in 1931 and consists of around 100 amateur choral enthusiasts. They have been conducted by their present conductor since 2011 and regularly perform large, choral works in Austral Hall[15], often with orchestras and soloists.

The head of the SoM then contacted the head of music from a secondary school with a specialist music programme and attended a meeting with the music staff to pitch the idea of collaboration. Initially, the head of the SoM suggested that the students in the school orchestra would take part but it was decided instead that a group of volunteer school students would rehearse the children's chorus at lunch times under the supervision of a music teacher who works at the school in a part-time capacity.

The children's chorus rehearsed twice a week for eight weeks until week of the performance; CS, the symphonic chorus and the combined symphony and chamber orchestras each rehearsed once a week for four weeks until the week of the performance when the four groups met in the venue for the first time and rehearsed together intensively for three days. Since time was at a premium there were few opportunities for social interaction or attention to particular details of the score. The three soloists rehearsed with the choirs and orchestras for the first time on the evening of the third day; there was a run-through on the fourth day and the performance took place the same evening.

Choice of methodological approach

Phenomenological case studies use a qualitative, idiographic approach to investigate a phenomenon, in depth, from the participant's perspective. In this case the phenomenon was the experiences of four participants involved in a musical collaboration. Data were subject to interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), which is "concerned with the detailed examination of human lived experience … it aims to conduct this examination in a way which as far as possible enables that experience to be expressed in its own terms, rather than according to predefined category systems" (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 32). It was also chosen because the participants are known to the researcher and an element of contextual understanding allowed for a more focussed approach to data collection and subsequent analysis: "it requires a process of engagement and interpretation on the part of the researcher and this ties IPA to a hermeneutic perspective" (Smith, 2010, p. 10). The participants were interviewed during the two weeks before and two weeks after the event. The longitudinal aspect of the study enabled the researcher to explore the extent to which perceptions of the event changed over time (Yin, 2009).

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[15]Austral Hall (a pseudonym) is a large multi-purpose venue suitable for large-scale concert events on the university campus. It has a capacity of roughly 1000 people and has an extendable stage with tiered seating for around 150 choristers and a large, three-manual pipe organ.

Procedure

The performance of Britten's *War Requiem* took place in August 2015. Two sets of interviews were arranged; the first set took place during the two weeks before the concert and the second set took place during the two weeks after the concert. The same open-ended questions were posed to allow the participants to reflect on their answers, which sometimes generated subsequent questions to explore the issues more fully. Pre-concert questions included:

- What is your role in this collaboration project?
- What challenges have you encountered with this collaboration so far?
- Have there been any benefits for your students being involved in this performance?
- Is there anything you would do differently if you undertook another collaboration project?

Post-concert questions included:

- Do you think your students benefited from the collaboration experience?
- Would you consider another collaboration performance for your students in the future?
- If you had not participated in this collaboration, what kind of activity would your ensemble have done instead?
- What advice would you give to music educators considering a collaborative performance project?

I recorded the interviews and transcribed them verbatim. I then read the transcripts repeatedly, relying on my own close understanding of musical collaborations to identify emergent themes, according the richness of the meaning of the ideas expressed and the emphasis placed on them by the participant or the number of times they were repeated, and annotated them in the right-hand margin of each transcript. Following Pringle et al. (2011), who write that inferences drawn using IPA "need to be firmly rooted in what the participants are actually saying, with direct quotes being used widely to substantiate findings" (p. 21), the themes are illustrated in what follows using the participants' own words.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following important themes emerged from the interview data: Challenges; Communication; Empathy and respect; Peer learning; and Being memorable. These themes are addressed in turn.

Challenges

The obstacles that were presented when staging this performance were varied and considerable, and are discussed under five sub-headings.

Funding

The decision to go ahead with the performance could not take place until the necessary funding had been obtained by the university. Ben explained, "We thought we were putting it on but we didn't

know because of a funding situation." The delay in making the decision had a knock-on effect for other administrative tasks and then rehearsals. He continued:

> Those scores arrived incredibly late, so I had two rehearsals in our first semester with them. Then there was a seven week break between semesters. We've come back and we're now in week three and I've had three rehearsals with them and next week is the performance…I've had the equivalent of about six rehearsals at this point on Britten's *War Requiem* which is exceptionally difficult and that's through no fault of ours, it's through funding situations.

Musical complexity

The music itself was a considerable challenge. Ben noted the difficulty with his double role of preparing the university chorus and singing the baritone solo role:

> …learning notes for starters but actually [being] vocally healthy, doing that while preparing the chorus so when it comes to the actual performance night, I have to balance, how do I warm them up while maintaining my own composure and get myself organised?

Following the concert, Ben reflected that he was unhappy about his own performance, "only just because I didn't have enough time to prepare it as I wanted." Denise also felt unsatisfied with her contribution during the performance, saying, "I did not nail my conducting. I cannot think of a time in fifteen years that I did not prepare myself fully. It's so bizarre, it's so not me." Ben commented further on the difficulty of the *War Requiem*: "Musically this is a difficult piece and it's a different musical language to what most of us are used to, it's not your typical Western Art Music, it's a bit crunch-chordy." This description of the dissonances found in Britten's score was echoed by Lorenzo who stated, "…it's just a very difficult piece. The choral singing in particular is really angular." Denise discussed the musical challenges for the children's chorus, reflecting, "…they were really shocked, they just couldn't make head nor tail of it." Denise found the music quite different to the normal choral repertoire she would work on with her students and noted a need for a change in approach: "When I teach repertoire here I would usually use *sol-fa*. Some of them are used to me working that way and teaching repertoire that way and I haven't felt able to do that."

Limited preparation time

The musical challenges of the work were compounded by the lack of time. Denise stated: "It felt like we didn't get enough of a chance to rehearse anything much beyond learning the notes and singing them in tune." and that "it wasn't perfect, it was far from perfect." Denise felt that participating in this large-scale event was difficult for her as she only works two days each week at the school. In considering whether she would seek out further collaboration experiences she observed that "doing this collaboration made me realise that I'm not full-time any more and to take on a project like this part-time is actually not ideal. I wouldn't actively seek anything out for a year or two." She elaborated further, "…right this minute, it's challenging for me to get in here. Next week I've got to organise a bus, excursion forms…when am I going to do that?"

Spatial issues of the venue

Further challenges emerged relating to the venue for the performance. The university that provided funding for the event stipulated that it must occur in Austral Hall. Lorenzo explained that despite the generous dimensions of the hall, the orchestra and the choirs would not fit on the stage:

> We looked at a whole bunch of options including the back of the hall and having the audience face the other direction but in the end we decided that instead of having what would have been a quadruple thrust stage, we would have had to get extra staging in. We're going to put the orchestra on the ground and we're going to lose seats in the auditorium.

Intergenerational issues

Before the performance Lorenzo predicted that the children's chorus would have difficulty staying awake for the relatively late night that was required of them:

> I think a bigger problem for the children's choir is that if this performance starts at 7:30pm, by the time we've finished it's going to be getting towards 9:15pm. How's their concentration going to be?

Following the event, Denise confirmed Lorenzo's concerns: "Unfortunately on the night I had students battling to stay awake and I think for me that took away a bit from enjoying the music." Generally Denise had found that working with young choristers and adults presented different challenges particularly in relation to illness. She recalled several instances:

> I had a girl ill… her eyes were rolling back in her head and she couldn't sit on the chair… then she walked off. When I came out she was nowhere to be found. … When you're working with adults, you don't deal with it but if you've got a group of kids… I was ringing mum, I called the mum in, the kid was recovering, the mum went home, then by the time I came back, the kid was ill and so you're trying to make sure they're all quiet because the other director [conductor] is trying to talk to their adults over here and mine are like this [hand signs indicating talking].

Denise was the only teacher from her school accompanying the children on the night of the performance. The lack of collegial support in a supervisory capacity undoubtedly added to the pressure she encountered on the night.

Communication

The theme of communication emerged strongly and was discussed positively by three of the participants but the fourth participant experienced a disconnection between herself and the other conductors. David felt that the communication between the conductors was successful: "We all work really well together and so that's been no problem at all." David and Ben created opportunities for the two choirs to attend the other's rehearsals and Ben worked with David's choir on two occasions, which further developed the close communication between them. David continued,

> [Ben] and I have a fairly consistent attitude to the way we prepare a chorus and in particular the way that we work with this piece. We also made sure that we had time between the two of us to sit down and go through the score and actually discuss particular approaches to certain things; the way the semi-chorus is being treated between the two choirs, the way the divided parts were being treated between the two choirs, what version of the Latin we would sing…

Ben values clear and effective communication in the collaborative process, suggesting that other potential collaborators:

> …just have a quick, little check in, even if it's a five-minute phone conversation and to keep a running list of things. … I think this aspect of really planning it early and not being afraid to keep going over the same old ground just to make sure that the various parties are really on the same page…I think it gets a better musical result.

Denise did not experience the same level of effective communication as the other conductors. Before the event, Lorenzo noted, "[School] children's choir, frankly I haven't seen them yet and I feel like… and I'm sure they'll tell you, they're feeling a little bit ignored… the whole thing is barrelling towards us at a rate of knots and organisationally we're struggling." The decision to have Denise conduct the children's chorus was communicated less than two weeks before the performance. As Lorenzo explained,

> Today I was thinking, 'I've got to get out to [the school]', because actually now that I've been studying the score, it's likely that we're going to need a [school] children's choir [conductor] to conduct the children's choir for at least a portion of the *finale* where the whole orchestra stops and the choir goes off on a different tempo.

Lorenzo was keenly aware that communication with the school had not been effective. He continued, "…that's where I need to ring [the school] up and say, 'Can we help? Do I need to come out? Do you feel on top of it?'" Lorenzo also said, "I think the communication issue with [the school] is an issue, we need to resolve that quickly." Nevertheless, he did not visit the school to resolve the communication issue adequately. If there were any inconsistencies between the expectations of the different groups or their musical interpretations, these would emerge in the first rehearsal, which Lorenzo identified as being a high-pressure situation due to lack of time.

Ben was also aware of this issue before the performance. As he explained, "I've been asked to go to [the school] to work with the boys *[sic]* and I just physically don't have time to do it, so that's an issue but that was a strategic decision to say, 'Well okay, it's not vital.'" The children's choir consisted of girls rather than boys. Despite this, Ben felt, before the event, that communication between parties was successful: "I don't think we'd do anything differently. We did what we had to do which is get together early to talk about who's doing what." After the performance, however, he said:

> I think some of that could have been fixed up from a collaborative point of view had there been more attention to detail or time spent on certain elements… the kids' choir; incorrect Latin, incorrect time signatures, 5/4s ended up being 6/4s that had to be corrected in the final rehearsal. … It was a little bit unsteady in the performance but it's okay. The Latin in the kids' *[sic]* was just wrong, 'per-pe-chew-a', and 'loo-chay-at.'

Denise felt that communication was not as effective as it could have been in the early stages of the project. Describing the major challenges, she noted:

> Probably communication-wise. For a little while there, getting it off the ground I think… it was a little bit slow-going to get information. … You can send an email or you can leave a message but the person might not be in their office for a few days and then they need to consult with someone else and then they get back to you and it can take quite a while.

When asked about the prospect of working with older people, Denise revealed that she was not aware this was a component of the project:

They don't know anything about that yet because I didn't know… I can tell them that today because today with be the first time I see them since I chatted with [Lorenzo] so I can tell them, 'these are the other groups that you can expect to see on the day.'

That Denise did not know which groups were involved in the project suggests a disconnection with the process. This disconnection was manifest when Denise arrived at the dress rehearsal and the organist accompanying their sections had not been called. This had implications for their ability to be involved in the rehearsal. Denise elaborated as follows:

We had a call on Saturday at 4:30pm, so I had all the kids come in then but really they weren't required to sing and then I was sort of there supervising them until the performance and it makes for a much longer day when you have the kids there until late at night…it would have been great to have a particular musician there… then we could have rehearsed with him, seeing I had all the kids there at 4:30pm, it would have been good to be able to rehearse then. [The organist] Yeah, so he wasn't called which is fine but seeing as we were there, that's 40 people, just one extra person would have made a big difference but I didn't think to check.

Although Denise was not responsible for contracting any of the musicians, she reflected that her role in communication was something she felt would improve in future collaborations: "Working with someone external to your own school, I'll be more aware next time, just to check that stuff; that it all marries up." Denise suggests that this oversight was hers although she had not been responsible for employing the organist or any other musician to be at the other rehearsals or performance. The oversight resulted in students being called to a rehearsal for which they were not needed. They then spent three hours at the venue before the concert unnecessarily which may have contributed to them being tired.

Communication was an important factor regarding not having satisfactory access to the venue in the week of the performance. Lorenzo summed up the circumstances best:

There are exams in there on Thursday and Friday and part of it is because the guy who booked the hall wasn't in the School of Music, was an idiot and didn't book a rehearsal time at all and it wasn't until two months later that we went back and said, 'You have got us booked in for the Friday haven't you?' We had to scramble to get the Wednesday night. So those things make it tough and I think that's the thing I'm going to regret the most because we're just not going to have enough time.

Lorenzo and the other participants indicated that effective and clear communication in collaborations can have direct outcomes in the musical performance. The transcripts suggest that communication was clear between three of the participants but that there were manifest musical and logistical problems for Denise.

Empathy and respect

This performance project involved three generations of musicians (school children, students, community singers) and the way in which the different demographic groups worked together emerged in each of the transcripts as being important. Although the average age of the overall ensemble was not a critical factor in the social cohesion of the project, age-related differences ultimately affected both process and product. Lorenzo discussed the manifestly different aims of the groups attributable to their demographic characteristics:

…it's not only the different age groups; what I think is more difficult is, the different aims of the ensembles…it's a student group that's trying to be a professional group… CS is an

amateur choir… that's a different approach because you need to keep the choir happy or else they will stop coming to rehearsals…being a high school group; completely different again because they're teaching different things from the ones that we're teaching.

Lorenzo reflected on what can happen if the approach of the conductor does not suit the demographic of the group, observing:

> I've seen a collaboration before with another conductor…he just yelled and screamed at CS, it was just really nasty and I thought, '…if you did that with university [kids] it could be effective, but with CS, you could see then shutting down, the more screaming that you did.' With that group, because of their aims, that's not the way you get the best performance out of them.

This observation suggests that when groups of different ages with different aims are collaborating, careful consideration needs to be given to effective communication. For David, the project suited the aim of his group perfectly:

> The aim […] is…to raise the professionalism of the choir, just to speed up their learning process, give them a better understanding of music in general and the music that they're singing and then hopefully we will have a faster and more interesting rehearsal period and then hopefully, better performances.

He understood that the experience of collaboration with highly skilled music students from the university enhanced the experience for his choristers in the CS and was a motivational factor for them. He also suggested that the university students benefited from collaborating with his more experienced and senior musicians, noting that "there might be something that the university students get from seeing people who are at different stages of their life as still involved in music. I think that's important." Yet seeing older musicians does not equate to collaborating with them successfully, to develop intergenerational understanding. Ben discussed the differences between the university choir and CS members' experiences of collaboration, observing:

> I think in particular with that age gap, where the average age [of CS] is sixty plus, I think that was really quite empowering for CS, so I think they actually got immense benefit from it. … The average age is sixty-something so their voices are comparatively past it. They don't have anywhere near your musical training skills, but that doesn't mean they are not of value.

Ben discussed the collaboration with his university students after the performance, saying, "There was a fair bit of frustration about being with CS … You've got fuller, older, richer voices, arguably a bit more musically inaccurate and arguably a bit more wobbly because they're largely older people." Ben's perception of the mature members of the CS may have been reflected in the attitude of the university students to the adult singers. Lorenzo elaborated on a perceived tension between the two choirs:

> …mixing very experienced community choir singers with what are essentially semi-professional musicians, there's a frustration in that relationship always because CS don't watch quite as much as they should and CS think the kids are whipper-snappers and sometimes inclined to push the CS group around a little bit, which they are.

Although there was no indication of organised social interaction leading to a respect for intergenerational differences, Ben suggested that the older choristers benefited musically from joint rehearsals with the university students:

> To watch…I'll call them seniors and I mean that in a positive sense, come along and work with our students, and at the end of it come up and say, "thank you so much… I was a bit

worried and now I've been to these extra rehearsals and working with the young people, I'm really enjoying this, I'm really getting into it."

David argued that musical collaborations can prove difficult if participating groups are not benefiting equally: "…you would need to make sure that all the constituent groups were getting the same out of it that everyone else was getting out of it."

The collaborative process was experienced very differently by the children's choir. They did not participate in activities that brought them together with the other musicians prior to the rehearsals during the week of the concert. Denise noted, "While I was in the midst of it I became very aware that the group I was working with was a group of young high school students and the groups everyone else were working with were adults." When discussing musical situations in which two groups were being addressed in different ways, David observed, "So you'd need to be careful in this environment to make sure that neither party felt like they were the ones who were just tagging along." All four participants suggested that this was actually what occurred. As Lorenzo noted in relation to communicating with much younger musicians, "I found it quite difficult to ensure that what I was saying to the choir was in the appropriate language for them to understand what I was trying to say."

Peer learning

Lorenzo expressed the view that students benefit from making music with peers who have more advanced skills and spoke of this process taking place in a previous university/school collaboration. He explained,

> For that event we have the ability for our students to help the younger students play the music so there's a capability gap that's being bridged in performing the music. We would have done a better musical performance on our own but by having the collaboration in, we could do a really interesting performance that involved a lot more students and they can get a lot more out of it.

He also discussed one of the practical benefits of peer learning within the context of collaboration, explaining that many music students

> are going to become teachers that deal with younger students and understand what's going on and for them they get to have this inspiring experience of doing repertoire that they could never do before so that's a collaboration that's about lifting skills from their end and from our end doing something about pedagogy.

In some instances, the peer learning that took place in the *War Requiem* performance had an inspirational effect on the students. Lorenzo said:

> The children's choir when [the soprano soloist] sang were just transfixed. She was singing behind them and they all turned around to look and their eyes were huge. … I think that's something most of those kids will carry for the rest of their lives.

Ben also noted that the experience of making music with the more advanced university students was beneficial for the younger school students, explaining that "they're working with a higher level of student and you watch the school kids actually go, 'Oh, here we go', and they step up quite a deal as opposed to working with another school where they may be a better standard." He observed effective peer learning taking place between the university singers and CS choristers in the rehearsals: "I've noticed the odd one sort of just leaning across and singing a little bit more directly into the other

person's ear when they're getting a wrong note in a polite way which I think is great." He also noted, however, that the process of peer learning was not always enjoyable and successful:

> The CS, there were lots of things that undermined the things I had been working on and I know that (a) because I've watched them, and (b) because I know [David] very well because we work together in other projects. I know he's said the same thing to these people over and over again about where consonants go and it actually undermined the performance I thought quite a bit in spots. I felt had some of my senior students not been there, there would have been some major derailments with people with their head in the scores and either racing ahead or lagging behind.

Despite the musical challenges of the collaboration, Ben felt that the process was important, saying, "It's really important for our students to both receive from other groups and give back." He noted that all the musicians were learning from more experienced peers regardless of the stage they were at in their musical development. As he explained to his students:

> Don't underestimate the value you bring to these students by your presence because they look up to you because you're three/four years ahead of them. They're aspiring to be you. You're watching [the soloists]; you're aspiring to be them.

David felt that his adult choristers learned a great deal from their university student counterparts: "…they've been impressed by how quick the kids are at pitching the notes and reading their rhythms and actually getting on top of all those musical aspects." He thought his singers would take the experience with them into the future, suggesting "…well this is how professional young music students go about learning their music and maybe this is how we can go about it in our community choir context." More generally:

> You sit on a stage with a fantastic singer or you stand in a choir with people who you've not stood beside in a choir before and you're going to hear some of the things that they do and it's going to change some of the things that you do.

Denise suggested that the school students would probably see university student musicians who had attended their school and that a meaningful experience would result. She said, "They would probably see them as being some elite students from here and now they're involved and I'm involved too. That would be a bit of kudos for them." After the performance she noted, 'Apart from their own self-esteem, to be involved with groups that they perceived to be just outstanding musicians…the opportunity to work with people like that and musicians of that calibre; the directors and the musicians, to hear the soloists."

Being memorable

The decision to perform the *War Requiem* involved several factors including the appropriate timing of the commemoration of the ANZAC events. Lorenzo reflected on why the piece was so important to him personally:

> This work has a very special place in my heart and even thinking about it, it makes me all *verklempt* [overcome with emotion]. I first heard this work on the night of the Oklahoma City bombing. It just happened to be on in Indiana…what I remember is thinking about that bombing on CNN…there was a fireman walking out of the rubble, holding a baby and the baby was dead, arms were hanging…and I went to see the *War Requiem* that night and when they got to that Wilfred Owen poem that is about Abraham bringing his child to sacrifice and then God comes down and says, 'You don't need to sacrifice your child'. There wasn't a dry eye in

the house. It was an incredibly moving moment and for me that's always made the work a really moving piece.

Lorenzo felt that the performance of the *War Requiem* would be memorable because of the size of the forces required, suggesting that "The ones they remember, and speaking from my own experience, are always the big collaborations … Just bringing together that many people is exciting." He also discussed the suitability of the work for the occasion:

> This is my chance to do something big and exciting so there's a bit of personal in it, there's a bit of musical in it and I can think of no work that better reflects the horror, the grandeur, the massive nature of war than this work.

Due to the difficulty of the music and the cost of staging performances of such large works, the *War Requiem* is seldom performed in smaller cities. According to Lorenzo, this would contribute to the memorability of the concert: "There's a good chance that for 90% of the people who do the *War Requiem* in a couple of weeks' time, that will be the only time they will ever do the *War Requiem.*" Ben concurred with this view, adding, "Kids in [the school] will remember this experience in 35 years' time when they're lawyers, accountants, GP's, council workers, whatever and they go to a concert. I remember the first time I sang with a big orchestra, it becomes a life-changing experience for them." And he also observed the emotional effect of the conclusion of the performance:

> [Lorenzo] stops the whole piece, paused with his hands up as one expects to do with that sort of solemnity, then gradually puts his hands down. While he was doing that I snuck a look at the audience to see what they were doing and no-one wanted to move. Even when he put his hands down completely and it wasn't until he shuffled a little bit on the podium and half turned around that people wanted to applaud.

Ben's observation supports the idea that the performance was as memorable for the audience as for the participating musicians. David discussed the impact of performing such a large work:

> …to feel like it's gone as well as it could have gone but you're also happy that you're now moving on because you inhabit a piece of music like that. … You spent months learning it, you spent months preparing it, you go through that excitement of the last couple of weeks and then when it's done you kind of miss it and you are also relieved that you don't have to think about it any more.

For Denise, it was the lead-up to the performance that made it memorable: "I feel excited. I'm excited for the kids because they are so positive… they think they're quite special." After the performance, she reflected on the enthusiasm of her school students, describing their sense of importance in being involved in such a project:

> …they possibly sensed that their bits were important and the huge amount of other performers were all listening to them… they were contributing and when they had their bit, they were very important.

This sense of importance was not diminished because of the comparatively small size of the group. Rather, Denise felt it contributed to memorability of the event for the young musicians.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The performance of the *War Requiem* resulted in a number of benefits for all the groups involved. The children's choir and CS experienced a surge in enthusiasm and participation rates were higher than

usual: Denise had expected there to be a reduction in the number of children taking part but this did not occur, and David reported that retention of choristers was unusually high for the time of the year, despite the challenging nature of the music. There were, however, inconsistencies between the experiences of the conductor of the children's choir, on the one hand, and the other three conductors, on the other. Nevertheless, they all felt that the experience of being part of a large group of performers, around 250 in all, did not diminish but rather enhanced each individual's sense of their own importance.

The musicians' experiences of working with different conductors besides their own regular conductor and being exposed to alternative musical ideas enhanced their understanding of the work, and potentially their musical learning more generally. At the same time, they were learning from each other, either as the result of direct instruction or more indirectly through observation. Exposure to a range of learning situations helped participants master a difficult work and may have contributed to the memorability of the performance for them.

The disconnection between the conductor of the children's choir and the other conductors was evident in the performance. Communication was lacking throughout the preparation process resulting in the failure to inform Denise fully of the details of the project. When questioned in the first interview about working with older musicians she expressed surprise because she did not know that CS were participating. Denise was the only participant to express insecurity about her involvement in the project, and when asked about future collaborations after the performance responded with uncertainty and little enthusiasm. The experience of turning up to the rehearsal with around forty children aged 12 to discover they could not rehearse as the organist had not been called may have increased her sense of disconnection. Denise reflected on her involvement in the first rehearsal and felt personally unready. She also felt that her students were equally under-prepared. Denise was not enthusiastic about collaborating in the future. When asked about pursuing further collaborative experiences, she responded 'I wouldn't actively seek anything out.' Large-scale performance collaborations clearly require significant commitment and taking a leadership role while working part-time can be difficult. Similarly, Ben felt that his own performance was compromised by his failure to prepare adequately for his dual roles as conductor and singer. Increased social bonding may take place in large groups (Weinstein et al, 2016) but the present case study produced no consistent evidence for intergenerational social integration. This may be because, while Conway and Hodgman (2008) observed in their study of an intergenerational collaborative choir project that "…singers in both groups were seemingly more comfortable singing next to singers from their own groups, and they believed that more time rehearsing in the "mixed formation" would make the experience more comfortable' (p. 234), the university choir and CS in the present study did not sit in mixed formation. Frustrations could have been avoided and musical experiences could have had more impact if time had been spent considering social cohesion between musicians before the groups came together.

Although the present study is limited by the specific circumstances of the project and the personalities involved, musical collaborations between groups from different institutions, of different ages and with different aims, may be informed by the findings reported above. Future research could compare the experiences of participant choristers and musical leaders.

Conclusions

Collaborative performances are exciting for many reasons. They allow musical groups to come together to perform works that cannot be given by isolated groups. They provide opportunities for singers and players to experience music in new ways. In some cases, however, even large-scale collaborations producing meaningful, memorable and powerful performances could be fairer and more inclusive.

In the case of collaborations seeking intergenerational integration, an environment of respect and understanding needs to be engineered with care, by ensuring that each group is aware of the role played by the others before they start working together. In the present study all four participants clearly articulated frustration at missing an opportunity for intergenerational understanding: the attempt to establish social cohesion was made in hindsight by expressing the benefits of working with other groups only after the event.

The study sought to establish the factors that allow for successful performance collaborations between musical groups of different generations. The following factors emerged from the interview data: overcoming logistical challenges, empathy and respect between participants, peer-learning between participants and the memorable nature of the event.

University outreach to schools involving music is highly commendable because it can provide all participants with positive experiences. In response to Temmerman (2005), who wrote, "Conceivably, what appears to be most lacking is an organisational structure or mechanism to bring together in a meaningful way the abundance of expertise, skills and good music practice that exists in the various sectors at the individual artists, arts organisations and school level" (p. 119), it can be argued that the impact of outreach is maximised when participants are equal partners and communication between them is effective. If future collaborative performance projects such as the one described here are to be undertaken, it is important that the impetus comes from the organisational structure Temmerman suggests rather than from a single individual. It would not be difficult to improve the process of collaboration by incorporating the recommendations emerging from the interview data, but it is important to do so if the experience of taking part is to be beneficial for all.

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Coda

The emergent themes in this article make clear that music ensemble collaboration can be difficult and problematic. If not approached carefully, the process can not only negatively affect the performance, but cause social disconnect between ensembles and discourage participants who are isolated by poor communication. The opportunity to explore Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory (ICT) is therefore timely in the following study. ICT provides a theoretical underpinning to the successful cohesion of group collaboration and the reduction of prejudice between two ensembles with different demographics.

This case study also represents the final article to explore the phenomenon from the uniquely Australian perspective. Following the submission of this article, I moved to the United Kingdom which allowed me to investigate ensemble collaboration from a British perspective. The following two articles that comprise this research involve participants involved in intergenerational collaboration from the student and the older, adult point of view respectively.

Chapter 7: Intergenerational collaboration: the students' perspective

This case-study forms the first article written for this research in the UK. It was originally intended to include six participants from a partnership of two ensembles. The three student and three adult interviews provided such rich data and the themes were so divergent, that two articles were considered necessary. This article explores the perspective of the students involved in a school choir / adult choral society partnership. It has been published in *Visions of Research in Music Education, 29,* (2017) and is entitled 'Together but disconnected: Involving parents and children in an intergenerational choral collaboration'.

Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory states that not all four of the components of the theory need to be evident for successful reduction in intergroup prejudice. This case-study suggests that from the students' perspective, the lack of consistent and meaningful contact between the two groups means that the opportunity of intergenerational understanding has been missed. Dovidio, Gaertner and Kawakai (2003) suggest that two additional factors could be considered to strengthen Allport's original four; the opportunity for personal acquaintance between the members, and the development of intergroup friendships. If these factors should also be considered, then the presence of only three factors out of six provides a gloomier prospect of success. To garner a strong sense of community within a music ensemble partnership, structures within the process need to enable friendships to develop. This is harder to manufacture when the two ensembles are from different generations when it can seem they have little in common socially, however much can be made of the common interests that brought them together in the moments before and after rehearsal and performance for meaningful interaction.

Adolescents value community and the sense of belonging that provides them (Osterman, 2000). Relationships with peers is very important to teenagers who are developing a changing sense of personal and social identity (Hamm & Faircloth, 2005). Teenagers who experience a strong sense of belonging through engagement with music ensembles are more likely to enjoy their time at school by feeling more connected to the school community (Hallam, 2010; Parker, 2010). The social bonding that occurs through music ensemble partnerships has the potential to be a powerful force in the community it the benefits are acknowledged by school authorities. In this case-study, support by authorities as reported by Allport (1954) was not clearly present. This

partnership clearly has much potential as a model for school and community interaction but requires development for intergenerational understanding to be fully realised.

Together but disconnected: Involving parents and children in an intergenerational choral collaboration

Abstract

Secondary students have many activities competing for their time outside of the classroom. Establishing choral singing as a viable option with a critical mass of students in a secondary school is no easy task. To do so can develop a singing culture in the school with its concomitant musical, health and social benefits. A school in West London fosters collaboration between students and members of the community in a choral society formed as a permanent partnership to perform large choral works. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, I interviewed pupils involved in the choir to explore the perceived benefits of making music with parents, teachers and adult community members. I used Intergroup Contact Theory to discuss the data which revealed the efficacy of school music programmes to integrate community involvement that ultimately fosters the development of a singing culture. This study identifies positive implications for community engagement but cautions against processes that cause intergenerational disconnect.

Key words

Collaboration, singing culture, interpretative phenomenological analysis, intergroup contact theory, motivation, performance, school music departments.

Introduction

Developing a positive culture of singing in a secondary boy's school is challenging and requires a multi-faceted approach (Ashley, 2015; Freer, 2015). Teenage boys dealing with issues of identity, sexuality, relationships and the changing adolescent voice are not always naturally drawn to choral singing when many other leisure activities are available (Harrison, 2004). Internationally many school music programmes have successfully achieved a critical mass of boys who enjoy singing together (Lucas, 2011; Powell, 2013) which helps reduce negative stigmas about singing being contrary to their forming identities (Harrison, Welch & Adler, 2012).

Boys benefit from singing together as it is an important form of communication and expression. In large boys' choirs, the musical results can be powerful and therefore avoiding the issue of emasculation (Punké, 2009).

Although the literature frequently focuses on the need to adopt a contemporary or 'masculine' repertoire to appeal to the adolescent boy (Palant, 2007) this is not always necessary. Palkki (2015) and Harrison (2007) reject the proposition that masculinity should be expressed overtly and narrowly in the choral context. Boys' choirs benefit from music that is inspiring and challenging. Repertoire with limitations to suit the changing adolescent, male voice should not be chosen at the detriment of the other choir members (Brown, 2016). A multi-faceted approach to catering to the needs of teenage boys takes a wider view of the complex relationships and changing identities of secondary school choristers.

Previous studies into intergenerational choirs advocate for further investment from schools in developing positive community engagement and improved intergenerational understanding (Bowers, 1998; Drummer, 2003, Belgrave, 2011; Darrow & Belgrave, 2013; Jackson, 2016). Participants in this study attend one such school which adheres to this position and their experiences provide constructivist understanding of the benefits of school-based intergenerational choirs. The aim of this study is to investigate factors that impact students involved in collaborating with an adult choir. Specifically, the research question is, 'Does student collaboration with adult choristers, enhance a culture of singing within a community?'

Intergroup Contact Theory

To frame my study I have used Gordon Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory (ICT) as it focusses on understanding and constructing group interactions to reduce prejudice and develop tolerance and understanding between different cohorts (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998; Dixon, Levine, Reicher, & Durrheim, 2012; Harris & Caporella, 2014). The main concept of ICT is that under optimal conditions contact between different groups can reduce prejudice (Harris & Caporella, 2014). Allport posited that the four important components for effective contact were: equal status among group members, common goals, intergroup cooperation with consistent and meaningful contact, and support by authorities. These are explained in turn. Firstly, all groups involved in collaborative processes should feel that their status is of equal importance before the commencement of the activity. Secondly, if both groups share a common goal requiring them to

work together to achieve it, it is likely that tolerance and understanding between groups will be enhanced. Thirdly, the two groups must not feel that their cooperation is in some way competitive, rather common goals should be attained through interdependent effort. Finally, if there is support from an authority or body outside of the participant members, the nature of the collaborative process will be perceived to be important. If social sanction is supported explicitly, intergroup contact is more positively accepted as, 'authority support establishes norms of acceptance' (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 67). The positive effects of reducing prejudice can still occur without all four features manifested but studies have shown that having all four features provides a greater effect (Dixon, Levine, Reicher, & Durrheim, 2012). Stinchfiel and Zyromsky (2010) acknowledge the need for schools to engage with family members to support mental and physical health. They posit, 'to ensure opportunities for student, school, community, and family success, a multidisciplinary approach is necessary' (Stinchfield & Zyromski, 2010, p. 267).

In an intergenerational choir case study in the United States, positive effects of ICT were found. The choir introduced structured activities allowing for meaningful activities between members. This in turn created an environment in which positive change could occur for members feeling a sense of isolation related to mental health issues. Harris and Caporella (2014) discuss the resultant effect was, '"building of community" across generations and health conditions' (p. 279). If ICT is successfully applied to a collaborative music activity, participant members should be respectful of the contribution of both groups. In this case study I explore perceived intergenerational differences between the two groups and seek to identify the presence of intergroup contact theory features.

Background

The participants attend a school in West London with around 1200 students. The school has a single-stream intake of boys in Key Stage Two (KS2) and this is known as 'Junior House'. KS2 refers to students in the United Kingdom studying the National Curriculum. Students are generally aged eight to eleven or in Year Three to Year Six. Another intake occurs at Key Stage Three (KS3) and then there is a final intake for students taking A-Levels at the school. KS3 follows KS2 and students are aged between eleven and fourteen or in Years Seven to Nine.

There is a large Music Department in the school with four full-time classroom Music teachers and around 50 visiting instrumental and vocal teachers. Choral music is particularly strong with five large choirs involving students from every age group. All students in Junior House attend choir rehearsals for 30 minutes every morning before classes begin. Students are auditioned into a high-profile Chapel Choir or may choose to participate in the Chamber Choir which consists of around 80 singers. The Chamber Choir automatically combines with the adult members of the Choral Society for concerts once a term. The adults rehearse separately on Wednesday evenings in the school Music Centre and comprise parents, grandparents, school staff and former students. Student members of the Chamber Choir are therefore automatic members of the Choral Society. The name of the choir depends on whether the performance project is independent or involves collaboration with the adult members.

Initially, adult and student choristers were interviewed for this case study. The data were rich enough to necessitate two separate articles. The themes emerging from the two groups differed and a second article was concurrently prepared exploring the perspectives of the adult choir members.

Methodology

A small group of students belonging to the Choral Society and Chamber Choir were interviewed separately within a two-week period. During this time, the choir performed Verdi's *Requiem*. The semi-structured interviews involved around ten open questions that encouraged the participants to discuss their experience of being in the choir. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was employed as a theoretical and methodological framework for the analysis of the interviews. Applying this approach, I talked to participants and then analysed what they said to understand how they make sense of their experiences (Smith, 2011).

IPA requires the researcher to be close to the phenomenon and therefore have an empathetic understanding of the participant's experience. Engaging in the IPA process recognises that there is no single way of experiencing a phenomenon. The research should express the participants' experience from up close rather than from afar (Smith, 2011) and it is essential to draw out the participant's narrative to encourage depth of understanding. Bonner and Friedman note that, 'IPA is an inductive method that starts by considering individuals to be experts on their own experiences' (Bonner & Friedman, 2011, p. 225). The role of the researcher is to allow the

participant to make sense of their 'lived experience' of the phenomenon, thereby creating a double hermeneutic. Participants make sense of their experiences and the researcher engages in a process of making meaning in the analysis of the data (Bonner & Friedman, 2011). This process is informed by the individual's lived experience first and acknowledges the complexities of human interactions. Smith, Harré, and Van Langenhove explain that, 'It is a methodology concerned with the process by which people define their world, recognises life as dynamic and interactional, and is concerned with persons and individuals rather than actuarial statistics and variables' (Smith, Harré, & Van Langenhove, 1995, p. 3).

In phenomenology, trustworthiness is required in place of validity used in quantitative inquiry. In naturalistic inquiry credibility is used in place of internal validity, transferability for external validity, dependability for reliability and confirmability for objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). In this study, the participants were checked for credibility through confirmation of the choir conductor, thick descriptive data is used for transferability, and the data was checked by a research colleague and sent back to the participants for dependability and confirmability.

With ethical oversight and permission from the school principal, at a rehearsal I invited students to participate in the one-to-one interviews with me. Interested students were asked to complete a consent form with signed, parental permission to be returned to the choir conductor. The conductor, a colleague of mine then passed the forms on to me and I arranged interview times with the students at the following rehearsal. There were around 40 students at the initial rehearsal I attended and four boys volunteered to participate. IPA is best served by a small and homogenous sample or participants (Smith, 2011). All four volunteers are included in this case-study. The interviews lasted around 45 minutes and were conducted in the school music centre at the end of the school day in June 2016. Examples of questions asked include; What do you enjoy most about being in this choir?; Is there anything about being in this choir that you don't enjoy?; What is it like singing with people from a different generation?; Can you describe an important moment for you in the last performance you did with this choir?; If you were to encourage friends to join this choir, what reasons would you give for joining?; and Where do you think singing in this choir might lead to in the future? These open questions were designed to promote personal narrative and sometimes smaller questions were posed to prompt elaboration (Smith, 2011). Once collected, data must be analysed. I first transcribed the recorded interviews for analysis. The analysis process involves creating a column on the right hand side of the text. As

the text is read repeatedly, emergent themes are noted in the column. Strong themes are identified through repeated reference of an idea or concept or by emphasis by the participant. Quotations from the participants are provided verbatim allowing their personal voices to be heard. The names of the school and participants are withheld providing anonymity. Pseudonyms are used throughout the study to disguise identity.

Participants

The four participants attend the same school, are friends who are close in age, and who have similar musical backgrounds. The four student participants who are all members of the Choral Society are; Edward, David, Ian, and Tony.

Edward joined the school at the beginning of Year Seven. He had already been singing in Primary School and when joining Secondary School, considered involvement in the Chamber Choir as a natural step. He has been singing in the choir for five years and is studying GCSE Music. The Graduate Certificate of Secondary Education is offered to students in the United Kingdom as a two-year qualification after completion of KS3 that precedes Advanced Level (A Level) which is a subject-based qualification within the General Certificate of Education. A Levels are also a school leaving qualification which may qualify students for university entrance.

David is aged 17 and is studying AS Music. AS refers to Advanced Subsidiary Level which is the first year of A Level studies and is equivalent to Year 12. David began singing in his Primary School choir and then joined his local community choir in which he is still involved. David entered the school in Year Nine joining the Chamber Choir a year later. He has been a member for three years.

Ian began in the Junior House in Year Three and joined the Chamber Choir two years later. He immediately connected with choral singing at the school feeling it was a great way to start the day. He is studying A-Level Music and has studied voice at the school. He has been a member of the Chamber Choir for eight years.

Tony discovered his love of singing while participating in hymn-practise with his Music class in Year Seven. He was noticed by a Music teacher and encouraged to join the Chamber Choir. He is studying GCSE Music, having now sung with the Choral Society for four years.

Findings

Following an analysis of the transcribed interviews, four important themes emerged; Power of large-scale music, Intergenerational connection, Challenge and opportunity, and Community and unity. Each theme will be addressed in turn.

Power of large-scale music

Each of the four participants spoke effusively of their experiences of singing in large-scale, collaborative performances. Edward discusses the difference between singing in the student-only Chamber Choir and the Choral Society which combines adults. He says, 'It's quite interesting to be in such a huge group of people. It just has such a bigger sound [sic]. It's a lot more powerful sound than just Chamber Choir being the only choir.' When the choral forces combine, the nature of the concerts also changes. He elaborates, 'We often do churches with really high ceilings and a lot of echoes and that makes it a lot more interesting; there's just a lot more sound.' He explains how the sound makes him feel, 'It doesn't always go to plan but it normally works. When you're singing a really loud…everyone's singing a really rich texture, it's just really grandiose; you feel really powerful.' The experience was important for Edward who considered the impact, saying,

> It's hard to explain how it feels being part of a big thing. You feel like you're part of a big group that's all doing the same thing at the same time, it sounds good. You feel like you're making a difference even though you're a small part of the choir.

For Tony, the main difference between the student-only Chamber Choir and the Choral Society is the musical power that he experiences. He elaborates, 'It's different because there is a wide range of ages. It sounds more powerful because the Choral Society is made up of adults and the Chamber Choir and some members of the [Chapel Choir].' He goes on, 'It is a bigger choir and it has more experienced singers inside the Choral Society so it definitely sounds better and it feels like a more experienced choir.'

Edward reflected that not all Choral society concerts provided him with the same feeling of excitement. He recalled, 'It was a tiny concert in Earlsfield. That wasn't the best concert. No-one really liked the music. It was a really long book of not very well-known Christmas Carols.' The repertoire seemed to have a lesser impact for Edward. He goes on, 'We just sang through it and no-one was really very interested in it. It was music that wasn't very orientated towards the

younger people. That's quite a one-off; normally the music is better and more interesting.' Not being orientated to younger people seemed to indicate that the event lacked the excitement of the larger-scale works. In contrast, the most recent performance provided Edward with the thrill of singing in an epic sound world. He explains,

> It was Verdi's *Requiem.* It was just so…it had a much bigger orchestra than the other times and a much bigger choir because they got loads of people from other parts of the school and old school pupils who came back to sing. There was just a bigger sound in a bigger church and Verdi's *Requiem* is quite a loud piece. That was one of the moments when it felt like a huge thing to be part of.

Edward elaborated on the power of the music, saying, 'There's a big part where everyone sings, all the parts are split in two and it's just like the final chord of the piece and everyone was singing really loud all around you.' He continues, 'It was a really powerful sound and all the instruments were playing as well, the cymbals and the trumpets and the trombones, it was just a really loud, rich sound'. Edward feels that being enveloped in such a sound changes how he feels as a young musician. He elaborates,

> I think quite often in youth choirs, it doesn't always sound very professional but with the professional musicians and the adult singers and the soloists, it sounded really rich and professional. I think it boosts your confidence when you hear it sound like that so you sound better and everyone around you sounds better.

Edward explains that the professional orchestral accompaniment is a standard feature of the Choral Society concerts which allows the experience of recognisable repertoire. He notes, 'They use the orchestra whenever we have a concert and that just makes it sound very different and you can start getting pieces that you recognise.' He feels that the combination of orchestral forces and large choir is a selling point for recruiting other student choristers. He says, 'I would tell them to come to hear the sound of the orchestra. That would probably be reason enough. It's quite unique for a choir to have such a big orchestra and such a huge amount of people.' Although this choir's performances with an orchestra may not be unique, for Edward, he feels part of something that is special and unique in his lived experience. He goes on, 'It's having that sensation of the rich sound that's quite a unique thing. I don't think you can get that very easily. I don't think you would find many other places where you would get such a rich sound.'

Although Edward is relatively young, this choir is not his first experience of large-scale collaborative performances. He recalls, 'There was a Primary Schools Choirs festival and they all went to the Royal Festival Hall and all the different schools sang together and that was a really nice experience.' Edward would like to relive this experience. He states, 'I think if you could get loads of choral societies and a really good orchestra and a really famous piece of music that everyone engaged with, that would be a really fun experience; a really big concert hall.'

Ian had also previously been in a large-scale, collaborative performance. He recalls, 'I sang *The Lord of the Rings* Soundtrack at the Albert Hall and that was really exciting. We were one choir which was quite large on its own.' He continues, 'Then there were about four or five other quite large choirs there as well so it was a really, really exciting experience, not just because it was in the Albert Hall but we had a full orchestra and everything.' This was a transformative experience for Ian. He notes, 'That's the first time I think I've sung with a full orchestra and professional choirs and that was a really cool experience.'

David also enjoyed the epic sound of the recent concert. He explains, 'We did Verdi's *Requiem* and I absolutely love it, it's one of my favourite pieces now, but Verdi in this case goes completely off the limit.' He loved the huge, symphonic sound he experienced for the first time. 'It was pretty nerve-wracking because there was a massive orchestra and I absolutely love the Verdi drum. It was amazing. It was big and explosive. It was really, really exciting.' This was a life-changing experience that David had not considered would be possible for him. He reflects, 'No-one would ever think about singing something as massive as the Verdi. I just absolutely love the trumpets and it starts really quiet and then builds and builds, and then the choir come in and it's just really massive.'

David had not considered that he would have the opportunity to be part of such an epic sound. He states, 'Singing that with the orchestra was a very, very good experience because it was something that I never thought that I'd be able to do. It was really, really fun and it's an amazing movement.' The surprise for him was on the day of the concert when the ensemble was fully gathered. He notes, 'It's completely different to what you experience in rehearsals because it's piano and school choir and now you've got orchestra and choir when you put that together it has an amazing sound, absolutely fantastic.'

Ian recalls the first time he sang through Verdi's *Requiem*, saying, 'When I heard it, I was like, "Yes! This is a brilliant piece. I'm really excited to sing this."' For Ian, it was the power of the music that excited him. He explains, 'The first few times that we sung through the really powerful bits, I was like, "Wow. I'm actually singing this piece now."'

Ian now wants to have more experiences with large-scale music events. He remarks, 'I think I'd really like to perform in the Albert Hall maybe one more time.' He reflects on an experience he had as a dancer and explains,

> It might be quite cool to maybe do a chorus to an opera or something. That would be quite fun because I've never performed in that kind of opera house setting or anything and I know I really enjoyed it when I've danced in a setting like that with the orchestra in the pit and the audience around there. So I'd really like to try what it feels like singing there because the music was really…the way it resonated, it was really empowering when I was dancing to it and I'd love to feel what it was like to be part of a choir, especially with opera singers who are unbelievably good.

Tony also enjoyed singing in the recent, large-scale music event, saying, 'It was a lot bigger and the acoustics were amazing. We were doing Verdi's *Requiem*, quite a wide range of instruments as it uses quite a big orchestra.' He elaborates; 'There were strings, there was woodwind, there were these two huge drums. It definitely added to the singing and it was it was a very enjoyable thing, it was very powerful in size.' The size of the venue that matched the size of the piece also had impact for Tony. He explains, 'The fact that the church was big definitely made an impact and there was a bigger audience as well because of the nature of the piece. My mum said that it was definitely the best one we've done yet.' Singing in a large venue helped make the event memorable for Tony. He reflected on another experience, saying,

> We sung at the Royal Albert Hall in a symphonic concert at Christmas, it was quite a big thing. To do more of that, to sing at the Royal Albert Hall to sing at the Southbank…Yeah, and it's something you can tell people, 'I sang at the Royal Albert Hall, I sang at the Barbican Centre', and it's something that would definitely stand out. It would be something that you would talk about later in life.

Tony describes what it was like for him to sing in such a large and prestigious venue. He recalls, 'It's quite nerve-wracking at first because it feels big and it's cool that you're singing in it

but then afterwards when you're rehearsing and you're singing at the concert it's less nerve-wracking.' He remarks, 'Singing in big venues is definitely fun at the end once you've come out of it.' He concludes,

> I remember when I was singing at the Royal Albert Hall, I would say it looks far bigger on the inside than it looks on the outside. Going in there for the first time, I did feel very small. Singing with the choir on the other hand makes you feel very large because you stand out and you're the one that the audience is watching. It's quite a contrast.

The four participants have reflected on several aspects of large-scale performances but did not mention the numerous solo and chamber music opportunities they have at school. Their reflections indicate the importance of the volume, scale and richness of the performance situations. For these young musicians, the bigger the better.

Intergenerational connection

Edward feels that the adults in the Choral Society view themselves as superior singers. He claims, 'The adults sometimes like to think that they are the best singers there. They kind of sing out even when they are not necessarily singing the best.' He recalls an incident, 'When you're standing there and someone drops a book on your head from up high, it can be a bit off-putting.' Despite not appreciating their vocal contribution, Edward can see benefits to having adults involved. He admits, 'Generally they add a bigger sound because they have a stronger voice sometimes but they keep the rehearsals calmer. I think when you just have the younger pupils it's harder to get things done.' He elaborates, 'A lot of the people in the choir, their parents are the choral society so they don't tend to muck around and get told off. The rehearsals go smoother when the parents are there if not always sounding better.' Edward acknowledges the trade-off between tolerating substandard vocal ability and benefiting from a larger sound and smoother and calmer rehearsal process.

Edward describes his sense of social disconnect between the adults and the student choristers, 'I don't think we interact much when we're together because the parents all have their groups of friends that they talk to at the breaks and then the students, they talk to each other in the breaks. There isn't much interaction between the two groups.' He goes on, 'I think they would get along if they did start talking to each other but I don't think they do just by chance,

unless they were made to.' Edward theorises about factors contributing to his perceived social disconnect, 'The Choral Society stands as the Choral Society. The Chamber Choir and the other choirs from school stand around and they don't mix.' Edward notes that when performing, the two groups do not use a mixed formation. He explains, 'You don't get students mixed in with parents all the way through when we're standing. It's more separate in that way.'

Tony prefers the social interaction within the student-only choir to the intergenerational model. He explains, 'I'd say I enjoy the Chamber Choir more because it's all the same age and we go to the same school, we know everyone, it kind of creates more of a social aspect.' He goes on, 'We go on tours and you get to know everyone more, whereas the Choral Society, we only play two or three concerts a year and you'd be singing with the adults but it doesn't create that social aspect.'

Ian suggests that there is a disparity in vocal ability between the two groups. He notes, 'There are people who are...let's just say not as gifted with tuning. Sometimes they take a while to settle their nerves or get something and it puts you off if you're not quite sure of yourself.' He sees the situation in positive terms, stating,

> Now that I am more confident, I find that it gives you a sense of what it's like to have to lead others because even though you're a lot younger than them, you actually have much more singing experience than them.

David concurs with Ian's perception of skill disparity. He says, 'It depends on their musical experience because adults like my Mum for example doesn't have any form of choral training or musical experience, so if they don't have a lot of musical experience...it can be really stressful.' He elaborates, 'There are things you are trying to do but they just contradict it so it doesn't sound as good so it can be a bit of a pain sometimes.

Ian feels that singing with choristers of lesser ability helps him develop his skills. He posits, 'It's a bit tricky because they get something's wrong and that can be really off-putting but you have got to learn to zone that out and push forward and then eventually they actually join with what you're doing.'

David has a slightly more positive perspective of the intergenerational relationship between the two groups. He states, 'Most of the Choral Society are made of parents, one of my friend's

Mum is in the Choral Society actually. Yeah, we get along and they're understanding. He notes the mutual love of music, saying, 'They tend to have really nice chats with us and I guess they convey…they're showing that they love the piece of music that they're singing so we have that common interest as well.' David expresses mixed feelings about the social dynamics. 'They are older and they've gone through the whole process of school and things so they understand what it's like to be in our shoes. It has its ups and it has its downs.' He feels that the intergenerational relationships vary with individuals. He states,

> It depends on the person because some adults tend to talk to other adults whereas students tend to talk to students so you have that sort of line but then there are other adults who do talk to students and get along with them, especially when we're singing. We discuss bits that could be fixed or things that people joke about.

Ian suggests that the two groups relate well to one another. He explains, 'Oh yeah, they get along. Especially because some of our parents are in the choir so we do get along with them.' Despite feeling negatively about the social interaction, Tony considers the benefits to intergenerational singing. He suggests, 'It feels a lot better because you're singing with people of different ages. Of course it sounds better and it also feels like you're contributing to something better.' Once again however, he notes the lack of social cohesion, 'I know the adults might get together socially. Apart from the odd conversation about maybe the music or just whatever is happening on the day. There's nothing really apart from the connection between the adults and the children.'

Tony believes he would feel comfortable singing in the same choir as his parents. He states, 'My dad has been trying to convince my mum, she has quite a good voice. She doesn't think it would be a good idea but it would be.' He continues, 'It would kind of be weird at first. It's up to her really, I mean I sing in the choir and it's definitely something I enjoy but if she would enjoy it too then I think she should.' Tony thinks the boys with parents in the choir are mature enough to be happy about it. He says, 'I don't really hear of anything that they feel embarrassed or something, it's just that they go and they are at an older age now, it's something they can cope with and they seem fine with it.'

The views about the intergenerational connection in the Choral Society are divergent and provide several facets of the collaboration for discussion.

Challenge and opportunity

The four participants are in the last stages of their school careers and their thoughts turn to their futures as they discuss the challenges and opportunities of singing in the Choral Society. David finds learning a variety of skills valuable for his future as a musician. The Choral Society places him, 'out of my comfort zone. Initially when I first joined, I wasn't used to seeing a piece of music and singing it on the spot but now it's got better and better and better and helps with all my aural tests.' He says that choral singing is important for his current studies and possibilities as a composer. He clarifies,

> I'm doing A Level Music at the moment and it helps with that. It helps with … aural tests, different graded exams and identifying notes and listening out for certain techniques or ideas you have in a piece of music that you've never thought of before. It opens a whole new door.

Being challenged is an important facet of David's enjoyment of Choral Society. He says, 'The Brahms German *Requiem*…it was quite difficult but it was really good fun and it was a massive challenge and something out of my comfort zone.' Prior to joining the Choral Society, David had only considered composing for instruments. He explains, 'It was a completely different experience and I'm still learning as I go; how to harmonise, how to write for S.A.T.B. and four-part choir. That's what initially got me into joining the choir.' David also found that being in the Choral Society changed his perception of the process of learning ensemble music. He notes, 'One thing I noticed when I first joined was that you had to learn music for yourself and that's something I was never really used to.' He contrasts this experience with previous ensembles he performed with, saying, 'Before we were spoon fed and they would teach us the parts and different parts of the music, now you have to learn it for yourself, you have to sing bits on your own and it can be quite difficult.' David feels that these skills are helpful with his music studies. He reflects on learning Verdi's *Requiem* and Poulenc's *Gloria* stating, 'It really helps with me when I'm doing my aural tests. It really helps because if you're able to sight-read something like that, then sight-reading five notes in a grade five to grade eight exam is fairly easy.'

Ian discusses how it felt when he realised his skills had developed, allowing him to cope with the demands of singing Verdi's *Requiem*. He states,

I was like, 'Wow. I'm actually singing this piece now.' That was really quite amazing and the great thing was that I could hit the notes and I could understand it and…that was quite a moment for me actually because I spent so long developing my musical skills and I got to this point there this really famous piece which I thought was fantastic to listen to, I can read and I can sing it and I can be a part of it and that was really great for me.

Tony considers that his Choral Society training has developed numerous facets of his musicianship. He says, 'With the wide range of repertoire, I definitely feel I am a more experienced musician with knowledge of different composers relating to choral music and with music theory. I'm a lot more comfortable singing.' He elaborates, 'I know how to sing relative to the notation and I guess I feel that it's less nerve-wracking singing because I've done it so many times and I'm used to it and it's just something that comes naturally now.' Tony thinks these skills will be helpful in the future. He says, 'I am doing GCSE Music right now and I'll be continuing in A Level and hopefully later in life. It's something I can adapt; I can use what I've learned and apply it in my work.' He elaborates further, 'You can put it on your CV and in later life say you've sung in the choir and all the places you've sung if you're looking at going further into music.' For Tony, every time the Choral Society performs in a concert, 'it's more experience and it's more interesting, it's opening up a wider range of opportunities.' He feels however, that the Choral Society could capitalise more on opportunities. He states, 'Maybe if we sung more concerts, sung in more places, had more opportunities because Choral Society is only Thursday after school, it's only an hour.' He contrasts Choral Society with the Chamber Choir, explaining, 'It's quite different from the Chamber Choir when we rehearse a lot more and we go to more places, we go on tour.' Tony feels that the Choral Society should perform to a wider audience, saying, 'I'd like to see it opened up more to the public rather than just within the school because maybe about 90% of people attending would be related to the school.'

Edward feels that choral singing compliments other career interests. He notes, 'I don't really see singing as a career path. I think it's something that you can do.' He continues, 'I would come back to sing in the Choral Society like other students have come back when we have big concerts but I don't think it would take me to sing like the soloists do as a career.'

Ian considers that the Choral Society demands little of his time for the reward that it brings him. He says, 'For the little amount of time you're going to do for this, you're going to get a lot out of it.' Each of the four participants felt that being in the Choral Society was a positive activity which will influence their future.

Community and unity

The theme of community and unity emerged as the participants provided a sense of belonging. David expresses how the choristers feel connected, noting, 'Everybody is very, very close and there's a strong sense of unity within the choir. Everybody wants to work together to try and reach a goal and I think that's really nice.' He feels that the Choral Society is inclusive regardless of ability. Asked whether the adults and students relate effectively, he notes, 'I think so because of the strong sense of unity. I don't know whether they have that in [Chapel Choir] as well. It's sort of for people who have never done choral music before so I'd say, yeah.' The Chapel Choir is auditioned and highly selective. Ian elaborates further about his experience of the inclusive nature of the choir. He states,

> Whereas this choir has a wider range of people and not all of them quite have that same level of experience. It does make rehearsals a little bit tougher sometimes, I think it frustrates [the conductor] now and then but I think that's the whole point of the choir, everyone can sing and that's what makes the choir really great.

Ian feels that, 'The choir isn't the really tuned-in, professional choir, everybody can join', which helps provide a sense of community. He concludes, 'What I really like about that is you get lots of different people, and lots of different vocal skill levels but it actually comes together really well and it really works.'

Ian describes the support he felt when he first joined the choir, saying, 'I felt really safe, really secure with all the other boys around me. It was quite a shock; actually, it was quite a different experience.' He continues, 'Even to this day I'm still a little bit nervous about singing on my own. I still prefer singing in a group because I think I've sung in a group for so long I've forgotten my insecurity.' Ian discusses his perception of unity in the Choral Society, claiming, 'Everybody is friends with each other, knows each other. Everybody's great friends actually which is really nice. My dad isn't [in it] but my mum is.'

Tony remembers joining the school and found that membership of the Choral Society and Chamber Choir helped him feel part of a community. He recalls, 'When I first joined Choral Society I didn't really know many people because joining secondary school you have to make friends and all of that. It's how I got to know people who were in my year more.' He goes on, 'Going on the tours with the Chamber Choir and singing in the Choral Society concerts, the friendships grow as I spoke with them more.' Edward describes the environment in the choir, saying, 'I think quite often it's the musicians making fun or [the conductor] making jokes with the students or about the music or the composer. If it's fun, it just makes it more interesting.'

David is a member of another choir and states the reason for remaining in it for many years. He posits, 'The reason I stayed in the Camden Youth Choir for so long is not just because of the music but because there's a very strong sense of unity there.' He goes on, 'I've been doing it with people I've been growing up with for the last 16 years of my life so I think the strong sense of unity would have to be something that would keep me inside.' Belonging to a community is clearly important to David. He concludes, 'If there's not a strong sense of unity I don't think I would stay but if there is and everybody is really friendly toward one another then that would be the driving force for me to stay.'

Discussion and conclusions

There was no evidence in the data to suggest any perception of unequal status between the two choirs. The two groups share the same conductor and the participants articulate that each group is stronger for the collaboration. Similarly, the two choirs appear to share a common goal; the successful performance of the work. The participants did not articulate any particular support from the school administration. Equally there was no discussion of a lack of support. The participants did express a desire to perform to a wider audience than the school community which suggests a level of support in terms of attendance from school staff.

The only element of Allport's four factors to decrease prejudice which was found to be lacking was consistent and meaningful contact in intergroup cooperation (Allport, 1954). Regarding this concept, the participants articulated a need for more time spent connecting with their adult counterparts. They also stated that there was significant intergenerational disconnect between the two groups. Although the family connections with parents or grandparents singing

together with children is helpful in encouraging a strong singing culture, in this research, elements of prejudice, although polite are evident.

The level of enthusiasm and excitement the participants expressed for large-scale choral works was clear. The singers not only enjoyed singing in them but felt that the experience of learning this repertoire was important for them. In a study of student identity in music ensembles, Adderley et al. note that 'Students' love of music and their understanding of its power was acknowledged' (Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003, p. 198). The participants described the physical and emotional impact of singing in such epic performance opportunities. Such physical and emotional responses are important as they can reinforce and expand the possibilities of working on a larger scale than people are accustomed to (Oddy, 2005, p. 1). My own reflections of large-scale, collaborative performance projects were identical. It is to be expected that a large ensemble creates a sense of power in performance but 'It is the anticipation of this power however, the moments before it is realised that creates excitement and adrenaline' (Sutherland, 2015, pp. 1642-1643).

The participants in this study repeatedly articulated their desire to be challenged. These challenges allowed them to develop their musical skills which they saw as important. In a study by Freer which involved the engagement of adolescent boys sing in choirs, the observations made were congruent with those made in this research. Adolescents are motivated by providing a nurturing environment, giving specific feedback, providing interesting repertoire and achievable challenges (Freer, 2009). The challenges that the singers referred to primarily involved repertoire. They enjoyed learning about music they perceived to be important and they spoke enthusiastically about the pieces they had encountered. Although the participants were all adolescent boys, there was no desire to sing easier music; they wanted to be pushed to the next level. Freer posits, 'The problem is that young men are not attracted to what is easy—they are attracted to that which is challenging yet attainable, specifically in choral music' (Freer, 2012, p. 14). The participants discussed the need to learn the music for themselves rather than being spoon-fed. This approach meant that these adolescents were given responsibility and were treated maturely which they valued highly.

The theme of community and unity was a prominent theme to emerge from the data. The sense of unity was felt strongly within the members of the Chamber Choir. Clift et al. state,

'Choral singing offers social support and friendship, which ameliorate feelings of isolation and loneliness' (Clift, et al., 2007, p. 205). The singers reflected on experiences in which they felt supported by one another despite differing levels of singing ability. In discussing friendships formed in music ensembles, Adderley, Kennedy and Berz note that 'the social climate of these surroundings contributes to the solidification of these unions' (Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003, pp. 200-201). The feeling of community and unity was not expressed in relation to the Choral Society. This suggests that the types of activities such as tours which provide bonding experiences for the Chamber Choir and do not happen for the Choral Society are important. The infrequency of the collaborative occasions for the two choirs does not provide for a strong sense of community. Although there are family connections between the two choirs, the general membership from the two groups are relative strangers.

This case study provides insight into a collaborative model between two choirs belonging to one institution which allows for intergenerational connectivity. The positive features of the model outweigh any shortcomings identified by participants. Through ICT, it is clear that three out of the four elements needed to reduce prejudice between two groups are present and one is lacking. If alterations to this model could allow for greater connection between the two choirs through structured rehearsals and informal social opportunities, the benefits to participant members and the wider community could be far reaching.

The research question asked if student collaboration with adult choristers enhances a culture of singing within a community. The enthusiasm with which so many boys engage with this intergenerational choir suggest that they find purpose in performing with others. The boys became aware of their choral skills through juxtaposition with their older counterparts which encourages feelings of self-worth. Although intergenerational understanding could be improved in the model presented in this study, the positive culture of singing is clearly articulated by boys who are supported by interested adults. Through collaboration with the adults, the boys experience the power of the large-scale performance which is motivational. The adults who collaborate with the boys can bring much to the school singing culture and this study suggests that with increased interaction, their contribution could be even greater.

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Coda

Understanding the perspective of the student singers in this musical partnership needs to be balanced by the view point of the adult choristers. The experience of intergenerational understanding should not be considered only by whether younger people appreciate interacting with older people. At a time when the world's population is ageing, (Bauman, et. al., 2016), how the expanding generation of older people relate to the younger demographic is equally important. In terms of musical partnerships, little research has been afforded to this area of enquiry. If the older generation have difficulty connecting with the younger generation, this should be remedied if our understanding of intergenerational prejudice is to develop. It is hoped that the following article provides some insight into the perspective of the older generation in intergenerational music ensemble partnerships.

The similarity between the findings of students from Australia and the United Kingdom deserves mention. Both groups of participants involved in music ensemble collaboration discussed the importance of friendship, connectedness, and community. Although both groups share more common interests than their geographical distance provides as a point of difference, the importance of this theme further unifies the two.

Chapter 8: Intergenerational collaboration: the adults' perspective

This article is entitled 'I tried hard to control my temper': Perceptions of older musicians in intergenerational collaboration, and was submitted to the *International Journal of Community Music*. It is currently under peer-review. This is the second section of the case study exploring an intergenerational music partnership operating out of a school in West London.

There is a correlation between the sentiments expressed by participants in this research with their Australian counterparts in Chapter Six. Both phenomenological case studies involved older musicians collaborating with an ensemble of younger musicians from a different generation. In each case, the perspective of the older participants revealed frustration and disconnect with the younger musicians. Both groups of singers representing the older generation belonged to choral societies and although skill level and experience varied between members, it was not a prerequisite for joining the choir. The musical challenge for many of the older generations involved in the research was notable and there was a mismatch of vocal and musical skill between the older choristers and the younger singers. Frustration borne out by the variation of abilities was observed with both case studies. Allport (1954) does not express the view that both groups must have the same skill level, but that the two ensembles have equal status. This sense of equal status must therefore be clearly articulated by the conductor so that each ensemble understands the importance of each ensemble in the success of the project.

Another comparison to be made between the responses of adolescent musicians and older, adult musicians concerns the theme of friendships. Although it is not suggested that friendships are not important for older ensemble members, it did not emerge as an important theme in the same way that it did consistently for teenage participants. The adult choral society members discussed difficulty with making friends and that it took time before they felt socially connected with their ensemble members but remained involved despite this. Of far greater importance was the need to be musically challenged and to find fulfilment in achieving a successful performance of a demanding work. This difference between what is important for adolescent and older musicians is fundamental to our understanding of intergenerational music ensemble collaboration.

'I tried hard to control my temper': Perceptions of older musicians in intergenerational collaboration

Abstract

Combining choirs for a large-scale performance can be rewarding. If the choirs comprise different generations, differing vocal timbres can add musical possibilities. A school in London operates two choirs in partnership; one for adult members of the school community and a student choir. They perform large-scale works together regularly. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, interviews were undertaken with adults to understand their experience of the partnership. Intergenerational music-making involves challenges such as participants working collaboratively and not in competition. Participants discuss the impact of singing in a choir with sons or grandsons and implications for family and community cohesion are explored.

Key words

Collaboration, intergenerational music making, interpretative phenomenological analysis, music performance, school music departments.

Introduction

Choral singing can provide connections between demographically varied people in a homogenous, communal activity (Bithell, 2014; Parks, 2013). Connecting people in positive, community activities such as singing promotes a sense of purpose and well-being for participants (Custodero, 2006; Johnson, et al., 2015). These health benefits are an important factor for older adults who can feel more isolated in later life. To strengthen family connections at the same time is an attractive proposition for older adults (de Vries, 2011; Varvarigou, Creech, & Hallam, 2011). As teenagers approach adulthood, finding a mutually satisfying activity to participate in is an important way for parents to maintain a connection with children and grandparents with grandchildren (Stollak, Stollak, & Wasner, 1991). Choirs with different generations can benefit musically as well as socially. Intergenerational music making is usually found in community ensembles as, 'The strength of the community choir comes in the diversity of its age groups' (Smith & Sataloff, 2013, p. 17). In the intergenerational partnership that is the focus of this study, two choirs that both belong to a school community combined. Interviews were carried out with

adult and student participants. The data was so rich and the themes so divergent however, that two separate articles were deemed appropriate. This case study is focussed on the adults singing in the Choral Society. The second case study reflecting student perspectives is reported elsewhere. The research question for this study is, 'What perceptions do older people have of younger people in intergenerational music making activities?'

Intergenerational Collaboration

For adults taking up choral singing for the first time late in life, developing the skills to participate effectively can be difficult. Opportunities for involvement in the arts can decrease with age and this is exacerbated if music skills are underdeveloped or have lapsed over time (Parks, 2013). Adults who are raising teenagers often need to find a reason for adding choral singing to their list of activities rather than delaying the decision until later. A study in Ontario revealed that few institutions with the facilities and human resources were initiating intergenerational choral programmes and that, 'The prevalence of intergenerational singing programs is surprisingly low, with only about one-quarter of the total institutions indicating that they had such programs' (Beynon, Heydon, O'Neill, Zhang, & Crocker, 2013, p. 181). Although research literature recommends intergenerational singing as a way of enhancing a sense of community and well-being, it is not always successful. If not properly structured, there can be negative effects for participants (Beynon, Heydon, O'Neill, Zhang, & Crocker, 2013). Intergenerational connections must be nurtured and developed in an organisation alongside musical considerations in order to be successful.

Background

A school in West London operates a well-established choral society incorporating an adult choir and a student choir. The adult choir rehearses on Wednesday nights in the school Music Department. A letter is sent out annually to the school community inviting new members. An open invitation also exists on the school website throughout the year. The choir consequently consists of parents, grandparents, ex-students, staff and friends. Many of the current members have long since had their children or grandchildren leave the school but remain singing in the choir. There are no auditions. Membership requires a subscription fee of £35 single or £60 for a couple per term, which covers the cost of hiring a professional orchestra and soloists for each

concert. The Choral Society typically performs large, choral and orchestral works in churches around West London. At the time of these interviews, the choir was preparing for a performance of Verdi's *Requiem*. The musical director of the choral society also directs the students in separate rehearsals during the week. The student choir is known as the 'Chamber Choir' and includes around 80 singers. The Chamber Choir automatically joins forces with the adults to present the large-scale choral works each term. Both parts of the choir do not rehearse together until the day of the concert when they both join with the orchestra for the first time.

Membership of the choral society fluctuates between 60 and 80 adult members with each performance project. The choristers enjoy a 30-minute break during their weekly rehearsal where wine is available. The rehearsals typically start at around 7:15pm and finish at 9:00pm and take place in the choir room in the school's Music Centre. The school has a flourishing choral programme and the Choral Society is one of several school choirs. In addition to the school's musical outreach, a choir for children between the ages of four and eleven rehearses on Saturday mornings in the Music Department. Some of these singers later apply to attend the school.

Methodology

This phenomenological case study used interviews to explore the lived experience of a small group of choir members. The analysis methodology used is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA was chosen as it is 'concerned with the detailed examination of personal lived experience, the meaning of experience to participants and how participants make sense of that experience' (Smith, 2011, p. 9). As the pupils attend the same school that the researcher teaches in, a methodology which allowed an emic view into the participant's world was necessary. IPA was appropriate as it 'emphasizes that research is a dynamic process in which the researcher takes an active role as they try to approach the participant's personal world' (Southcott, 2009, p. 145). IPA allows for the researcher to be closely involved with the participant's world in order to understand it. IPA acknowledges that there is no direct route to experience but closely experiencing the phenomenon is preferable to experiencing it from a distance (Smith, 2011). A researcher's understanding of the phenomenon is required to make sense of the participant's world through a process of interpretative activity (Smith & Osborn, 2008). A double hermeneutic is required whereby the participant is making sense of their own life and then the researcher makes sense of the participant's understanding. The double

hermeneutic is both empathetic and questioning, thereby the researcher understands the participant's world from their viewpoint. IPA is idiographic, inductive and interrogative (Taylor, 2015). IPA is idiographic in that analysis is made of the data of each participant in turn to understand similarities and patterns. It is inductive as it allows themes to arise unexpectedly during analysis rather than from a predisposed position of the researcher. It is interrogative by questioning and informing existing research. The interviews included a set of open questions designed for the participants to explain in detail their personal experiences.

Ethical approval to conduct the research was given by Monash University and the Headmaster of the school. Participants were then invited at a rehearsal to participate in the one-to-one interviews by the researcher. Interested choristers were asked to complete a consent form and hand to the choir conductor. The conductor, a colleague of mine then passed the forms on to me and I arranged interview times with the participants by phoning them. The interviews took place in the school Music Centre before four respective Wednesday evening rehearsals. Examples of questions in the interview include; Why did you decide to be a member of this choir?; What do you enjoy most about being in this choir?; Is there anything about being in this choir that you don't enjoy?; How does this choir differ to any other choirs that you sing in / have sung in?; and, If you were to encourage friends to join this choir, what reasons would you give for joining? I then transcribed the recorded interviews. Once the data is collected, it must be analysed. A column is created on the right-hand side of the interview transcript. As the data is read repeatedly, emergent themes are noted on the basis of repetition or emphasis. Strong, emergent themes for each participant are included in the findings. The names and identities of the participants and the school have been supressed and pseudonyms have been used. Quotations from participants are provided verbatim to appropriately represent their voice.

Participants

IPA is best served by a small, homogenous sample allowing for depth of understanding. The four participants who belong to the Choral Society include; Fiona, Lucy, Sally, and Tracy.

Fiona moved to London from Italy around 23 years ago. She had previously sung in a small parish choir and was waiting for an opportunity to sing in another choir, once her children had grown up. When her son joined the school, she received the letter of invitation to join the

Choral Society. Her children have all had music lessons and so she has some music knowledge but 'can't sight-read'.

Lucy is a staff member at the school and joined the Choral Society with persuasion from the director, a close friend of hers. She sang in a very good school choir as a student and later, joined a community choir which she did not enjoy as she felt it was very unprofessional. Lucy is currently the only staff member singing in the Choral Society although there have been to her knowledge several others in the last five years.

Sally moved to London from Northern Spain where she has been singing in choirs since she was ten. She attended the local School of Music in Bilbao, singing in the choir which frequently performed with the orchestra. Although Sally's sons attend the school, they do not sing in the choirs but she was keen to join after receiving the letter. She has been a member of the Choral Society for three years.

Tracy began singing in her school choir in St. Albans and has sung in several community and church choirs including during her time spent living in North Yorkshire and Luningiana in Northern Tuscany. She joined the Choral Society seven years ago as the grandmother of choristers at the school as her daughter was too busy. For Tracy, singing is an integral part of family life.

Findings

Following an analysis of the data, four important themes emerged; Family, Intergenerational disconnect, Challenge and reward, and Professionalism. These themes are discussed in turn.

Family

The adult choral society and the student chamber choir combine on the day of each concert to rehearse together for the first time. There are sometimes family connections between the respective choirs. For Fiona, being able to sing together with her son was important. She explains, 'My son also is in the Chamber Choir and I found it was just the cherry on the cake. Being able to share an interest with my son because he's my youngest of four and I know once they grow up, they just go.' Fiona felt that singing together in the same concert not only helped bond their relationship, and that she was participating in engendering his love of singing. She

continued, 'This is my chance to share something with him and also maybe cultivate this interest within him because I know how good it is to cultivate the interest in music and singing.' Although the two parts of the choir rehearse separately, the connection occurs regularly at home. Fiona recalls,

> When we are at home at weekends, if I struggle to sing certain parts I'll ask for his support and we'll be singing it together and we'll be looking at it together and … most of the time he would correct me or I would correct him. It's lovely too. The best thing that has happened to me after these two years is the first time with my son, just before the *Requiem* he told me in the morning of the concert, 'Shall we put it on the internet so we can listen to it?' That told me a lot. It told me that he was enjoying it and there was a deep interest within him as well.

Fiona felt that she had achieved something meaningful when she experienced this moment with her son. She concluded, 'I was rushing and he said, "Maybe we should listen to it." It made me very happy.' For her, it was a confirmation that he was enjoying being involved in something positive with her.

The intergenerational structure of the choir also provides the adults opportunity to form friendships through the connection of their children. Sally elaborates about her friendships saying, 'Oh we have because you end up meeting people who have children in the same years as your own boys.' For Sally, these friendships are an important part of her sense of belonging and connection. Sally's children do not want to sing in the choir, but they are happy that she enjoys it. She continues, 'They loved it. They really like it but it was a bit too long for them, especially the younger one.' Fiona's experience with her children supporting her is very similar. She states, 'They are also quite musical but they find when I am practicing, they find it quite comical sometimes and annoying but I think they are pleased because they can see I am enjoying it.' She continues, 'They reluctantly come to the concerts, you know…teenagers. Some of them, not all of them. They are not great supporters but they kind of like that I enjoy it. They are pleased.' For Sally and Fiona, their family support is important.

Tracy feels that singing was very much a part of her family life. She recalls, 'I think it's possibly your upbringing. My mother sang to me, I can always remember her singing nursery

songs and folk songs. She was from South Yorkshire.' To continue having singing as a central activity in the home was a natural step for her. She explains,

> I did the same with my own children, they sat on my knee, I played the piano and sang them nursery rhymes. I did it with our grandsons as did our daughter. It was something you did in a family, you played and you sung. Just family background I suppose.

Tracy discusses the social interactions between family members at rehearsals, observing, 'I think it's interesting in terms of the dynamics between in my case, grandson/grandmother or between mothers who have got their sons. It's often quite interesting to observe the diversity of parenting behaviour.' For Tracy, the family relationships in the choir are varied and provide her with another perspective from which to consider her relationship with her grandsons. Tracy continues,

> It's just highly amusing sometimes because you can see the boys thinking, 'Oh God Mother, why did you say that?' It's usually mothers who have got sons. I don't think I know if there's a father, a tenor or bass. I know my grandsons have probably cringed as well.

Tracy's reflections suggest that by observing other familial relationships during choir rehearsals, it provides her with an insight into her own grandson's view. Tracy is able to understand how to relate better with her grandson through observing others and avoid moments of cringe-worthy embarrassment for him.

Intergenerational disconnect

Tracy considers that collaboration between different generations as the choir's *raison d'être*. She states, 'It is the [school] Choral Society so I think we should actually do things with the boys, otherwise it could be any choral society. So I think whatever we do, the boys ought to be involved.' Sharing music-making between generations is the point of difference for her experience in this choir. Sally also notes the advantages, saying, 'In this choir, there are all ranges of voices and all ranges of ages as well which means that you can achieve a lot.' Lucy similarly suggests that combining different generations is advantageous, she explains, 'I think on the whole people like it. It's good because you've got someone else supporting you. Isn't this

what it's all about? These are meant to be friends of or parents so you're actually singing with the boys I think is very good.' Despite these positive view points, there are difficulties during the process of putting on a concert.

Fiona feels that bringing the two halves of the choir together on the day of the performance does not allow enough time to put everything together. She explains, 'I wish we rehearsed at least once more. Not with the orchestra because I know that is practically difficult but with the Chamber Choir and with the [Chapel Choir] or whoever is joining us for that particular performance.' Fiona suggests that there is not enough time for the two choirs to get to know each other. She continues, '…because we only see each other a few hours before the concert and we have so many things [to do].' Fiona discusses the need for more time for the choirs to work together for musical and emotional reasons. She concludes,

> You really need more time to practise together so you can have a better outcome. Once only before the concert is just not enough. It's not enough. Especially because you are doing it with the orchestra as well so there is a lot to sort out. The outcome of the concert would be better and everybody else would feel good if things had been done properly and we would approach the concert happier.

Bringing the two choirs together so late in the process, does not allow for purposeful interaction between the choristers which Fiona feels results in behaviour issues with the younger singers. She states that these issues are, 'Musical and also behaviour with the boys. The last experience has been dreadful. It was marked by the boys and it was a very difficult concert to enjoy because they were so badly behaved.' She describes the boys as being, 'so badly behaved that even people at the end of the church noticed and some friends of mine told me, "What a shame, what a shame. You could see."' Fiona goes on to suggest, 'Eventually, if you do get the chance to rehearse a few more times together, you kind of set the boundaries.' Fiona concludes, 'There must be a particular year. You always have some years more difficult than others. You don't get the chance really to sort things out on that front behaviour-wise with the boys.' The most recent concert was generally felt to be successful, however the concerns about the boys' behaviour during the performance was important. This impacted on the level of enjoyment experienced by Fiona who clarified,

The latest experience with the boys has been quite frustrating, there was a phone going off and they were playing pass the bottle. All this in the middle of the concert. I tried hard to control my temper but there were occasions when I was getting so cross, I and another member, a continental lady. Everybody else was very composed. I couldn't help myself. How could you just sit and watch?

Lucy expressed similar concerns about the disconnection between the adults and students being linked to the limited time spent rehearsing together. In discussing the events on the day of the performance, she states, '[The conductor is] suddenly focussed on the orchestra, he's got to get that right. Nobody knew where they were, where they were going to be sitting, where they were going to be standing, you've got the boys all over the place.' As a teacher at the school, Lucy's enjoyment of the experience is diminished as she feels she is on duty when there are issues with the boys. She states, 'My perspective, I'm suddenly teacher-in-charge because I'm not a parent there. The parents are looking to me to sort of say, "Shh, stop. Put that away. Do that."' Although Lucy is aware of the fact that she must assist in her role as a teacher, she feels that it could be avoided with a more prepared approach. She continues, 'Suddenly on the day it does change very much for me really. In previous times I have been asked just to sit there and look after the kids because…somebody needs to. I think it's quite crazy actually. I think it's not so nice.'

According to Lucy, the two choirs do not interact socially. She describes the interaction, 'Socially I think there's no connection. There isn't really because they're kids and these are parents or grandparents.' Lucy suggests there is respect for the boys but is unsure whether it is mutual. She states, 'I think the Choral Society are very respectful of the boys and what they can do. I don't know what the boys would think of us really.' She continues, 'I don't think they're merged into one choir. I think there are two choirs there that just actually happen to be singing the same thing.' Lucy recommends more time spent with the two choirs together. She concludes, 'I think actually, if it was possible, it wouldn't do any harm to do it a bit more often, actually get the two together.' Sally concurs that there is little social interaction between adults and student choristers. She says, 'It's not social. They would probably be too embarrassed to be talking to us or not interested in people who are the parent's age anyway.' Sally is more philosophical about the lack of time spent together. She states, 'We haven't really got the time to be together. Most

of the time is spent just rehearsing so it's really no time for any other socialising. It's just the way it is.'

Tracy adds to the view that there is a lack of intergenerational understanding. She reflects, 'Sometimes I feel sorry for them because very often I suspect the boys are far more competent than we are. Some of them are musically gifted and I think, "Poor souls, they've got us warbling in their ears."' Conversely, Tracy also observes that the boys need more direct instruction during the collaboration process. She claims, 'Sometimes they turn up and they don't sing or they're all over the place.'

Fiona observes the experience of the conductor rehearsing with young students and then rehearsing with an adult choir. She notes, 'Just when he gets cross with us and he treats us like children, he says "I just want to get rid of you. I can't cope with you anymore."' Fiona enjoys the comments, stating, 'It's just hilarious. He doesn't mean it, it's just frustration, he tries hard and we are so disappointing. In the end, all of his comments are out of frustration.' This interaction allows Fiona to understand the connection the conductor has with the students. Sarcasm from teachers can be misinterpreted by parents when reported anecdotally by children, but here it is understood and enjoyed. There are mixed feelings about the intergenerational connection and the negative perceptions from the participants are substantial.

Challenge and reward

The theme of challenge and reward occurred frequently and was a major factor in the participants' enjoyment of the choir. Lucy expressed a view of the challenges she experienced that differed from the others. For her, there was a paradox. She found some aspects of the choir repetitive and tedious, while at the same time feeling that there needed to be more rigour and time spent on detail. She explains, 'it would be nice to see a completely different style of doing things really. I think I've done enough of just overdoing it.' She suggests that the process of rehearsing needs variety. She continues, 'It's continuously the same music. Last Christmas, we did *Messiah*. When I first started five years ago, we did *Messiah*. I can't believe there's not enough music out there that we have to do *Messiah* twice in five years.' Repertoire was felt by the other three participants to be a positive factor but for Lucy, repetition presents a problem. She notes,

Most of the pieces we're doing now are pieces they've done before. They [the other choristers] said, "Oh yeah, when we did the *Requiem* last time…" which also means that a lot of the members of the choir have been doing this for a lot longer than I have, so they all know it which is quite hard really because he [the director] says, "Oh we won't rehearse this bit because we've done this before, you all know this." I don't know this bit.

Lucy feels that some members of the choir miss out on the opportunity to carefully rehearse the music that has been done by the majority of members in recent years. She infers that the conductor does not cater for the individual needs of the singers.

Fiona discusses how she enjoys being challenged,

I found the challenge rewarding and [got] great satisfaction from it. At the end of the day when you're tired, and in winter, the last thing you want to do is come out in the rain and in the cold but I always found it to be really rewarding and really fulfilling.

Fiona works hard at learning the music at home. She describes the feeling of mastering her part, 'It's being able to manage it, just to manage the challenge and especially the result, the outcome at the end.' She explains further, it's not only about doing it here, if you don't do some work at home, you don't achieve much.' The challenge is provided by the opportunity and the pace of the rehearsal. Fiona gets fulfilment out of knowing she has worked hard. She says, 'When I know that I've covered it on my own and we are about to perform. It's fulfilling. We worked hard and it's like an all-day of work and you get a reward, it's your reward, you feel fulfilled.' She continues, 'It's satisfying, it's difficult to put it into words but I found it really rewarding and fulfilling, just the sense of achievement. A sense of calm as well, very therapeutic coming to choral society.'

Being challenged in a choir was not always the case for Fiona. She notes, 'Previously, I was in a little parish choir and it was nice but there was no challenge. I like the challenge and I like the final results, the beauty of it.' Aesthetics were important for Fiona, she goes on, 'It's also interesting that at the end of it, there's a sense of emptiness. It's all gone, it's finished and that makes me a bit sad but then I say, "We'll do it again". It's all that work and then it's all gone within an hour.' Fiona explains what the level of difficulty if like for her, 'It's more of a serious choir. It's more challenging for me as a complete beginner with experience to choir. For me

personally, it's the challenge. She reflects on the importance of the repertoire to remind her of her roots, saying, 'I've always had a deep love of classical music, my parents introduced me to classical music. Being able to join a choir that comes back to my childhood and where I can train into it makes a difference.' This is music that Fiona is familiar with but never had the opportunity to perform. She states, 'It's the difficulty of the repertoire. Not having done it before, that is the main thing.' It is this sense of challenge and reward which provides the greatest sense of fun. She concludes, 'It's quite enjoyable, it's not boring, it's fun. You're doing something challenging but if it's fun at the same time, why not?'

Sally values the high musical standards of the choir. She explains, 'I find the level is very, very high and it's not only enjoyable but it's a bit challenging like the last concert that we did, Verdi's *Requiem,* that was fantastic.' For Sally, the reward came from presenting a work of an epic scale. She claims her enjoyment is 'because the music itself is challenging, it's much more operatic to anything else we have done before and also because the orchestra was a bigger orchestra and the sound was fantastic. I can't describe it any other way.'

Sally further discusses the reward she experiences from the challenge of the learning process. She states, 'The level is fantastic. It is very funny as well, very enjoyable although by the end of it. When the concert is getting closer you can feel the pressure. You really have to put the effort in. It's definitely something to join in.'

Conversely, Tracy values the relaxed atmosphere she experiences in the choir. She explains not joining another choir because of a sense of pressure. She recalls, 'There's the Leeds Festival Chorus which is actually conducted by a friend of mine and I didn't fancy auditioning for him. It would have been terrifying.' Unlike the sense of challenge that Sally and Fiona enjoy, Tracy finds the choir relaxed. She explains,

> It's a very good choir to join because you don't have to audition, you don't have to tie yourself in knots, run through hoops learning music thinking, "Oh my God, can I hold a tune properly, am I singing in tune, can I sight-sing?" It's friendly, we sing some lovely music, [and] you are not expected to audition.

The participants experience the choir in very different ways. For Sally and Fiona, the level of expectation provides a satisfying reward. For Tracy, the absence of challenge is

what makes the choir enjoyable and for Lucy, the repetition of repertoire and rehearsal style provides unwanted challenges which she feels should be avoided.

Professionalism

The final theme of professionalism was expressed most frequently by Lucy and Sally, however Fiona discussed how she felt her abilities fit into the context of the other choristers. She recalled her first rehearsals with the choir, saying, 'I can't sight-read but I have basic knowledge. I was a bit scared, I thought I wasn't up to it.' She continued, 'Eventually my confidence built up and I could see there were a lot of people who were beginners like me and I started enjoying it.' This reflection suggests that her perceptions of the standards of the choir were higher before joining. Lucy reflected on another choir that she once joined, stating, 'I joined this public choir, this local thing and it was terrible. Nobody really cared what note they sung.' She goes on, 'There was no going back and checking it and I thought I didn't like that which actually put me off singing in choirs for a long, long time.' Lucy considered this choir to be somewhat unprofessional in its approach to rehearsing the music which contrasted with the Choral Society. She explains further, 'It wasn't really professional in my mind. It was purely, people wanted to have a sing-song. There's nothing wrong with that. It's actually quite nice. It's like singing in the shower isn't it? Or singing in the kitchen, it was that type of thing. She explains how she felt about joining the Choral Society, 'When I joined the [Choir] I recognised that actually, this might be a real choir and I could sing and do it properly. Lucy felt that the Choral Society offered a professional environment. She then described her musical commitment in context of the other choristers. She noted, 'I think everybody else is very dedicated in the sense that they all go and get the CD and they all sit and practise and they come back and they've perfected that bit.' Lucy suggests a professional approach by the other singers. She continues, 'I do nothing from the moment I've left rehearsal to the next rehearsal. It's a bit like Groundhog Day. That's me and I haven't got time to put anything else in really.' Lucy insinuates that her commitment is not as professional as her fellow choristers.

In contrast, Lucy considers aspects of the Choral Society to be less professional. She notes, 'It is professional but it is only two hours a week. Invariably it doesn't start until 7:30pm and then they have half an hour to drink, so it's an hour. That doesn't give you much time.' Lucy feels that the limited rehearsal time does not allow for a professional outcome. She goes on, 'I

think it's just a big social. Everybody likes a wine. I think in a way it would be better if it went on longer. I do think that 7:30 – 9:00pm isn't long enough.' She elaborates, 'You look at what we've just done, Verdi's *Requiem,* how big that piece of music is. Probably all-told, maybe twelve rehearsals. That isn't very much time is it? I would rather probably work on something until its perfect.' Lucy feels that the standard of the performance could have been higher.

Lucy does not always describe the behaviour of the other choristers as professional. She recalls the dress rehearsal in which the choir was resituated in a double choir formation. She says, 'We had one set of altos over there and one set of altos over here and suddenly there was a complete, "We can't exist, we can't do this, we've got to have all altos together, we've got to hold hands – panic."' Lucy describes the reaction from a chorister, 'One person actually said, "That's it, if we can't be with those people, I'm leaving now." I did say to her at the end of it, "We did OK didn't we?" She said, "Yes, maybe I was over-reacting."' Lucy feels that this kind of over-reaction was more amateur than professional. She then clarified how she considers the choir to be both amateur and professional in approach at the same time. She posits, 'Generally it's a professional choir because there is a set amount of people who do know what they are doing because they've done it before.' This is not the case for everyone however. She continues,

> There's whole bits that you look at the score and you go, 'When did we cover this?' And I'll know if I've been there because I'll have my notes on it, and we all sit there and go, 'We haven't been through this, we haven't seen it.' And it's only on the day sometimes that you're suddenly going through bits and you're going, 'Hold on a second we haven't covered this at all', but because there were enough people there who sing in lots of other choirs, who have covered it maybe somewhere else, they will make it, they will keep us going.

Lucy feels that the professionalism of the conductor is partly responsible for the sense of the choir being professional. She notes, 'When we rehearse it, he rehearses it well. He is very precise, there is a lot of help; there is a lot of support. In that sense, it's good. He doesn't let anything go which from my perspective is good.' Equally, Lucy considers the conductor to be contributing to the difficulties with achieving a professional standard. She says, 'I think what happened with David is he's tried to get more complex and more complex pieces.'

Sally feels that the Choral Society is professional which contributes to her enjoyment of it. She says, 'Here the level is very high and I quite like that. I do enjoy it. I loved it.' She reflects on her first rehearsal with the choir, 'I found it absolutely hilarious because I thought if anyone who doesn't know anything about music comes here thinking, "Oh, I like singing", they will really have to work hard to follow it.' Although people of all abilities were invited, Sally suggests that the reality is that it is aimed at experienced choristers who have a professional approach. She continues,

> The new ones didn't know what it was going to be like and certainly they found that unless they knew some music, it would have been a bit hard to follow. It's not because it's hard, it's because it's fast and you have to know the music terminology. So unless you know the very basics, you will be struggling to really know where you are at.

Ultimately, Sally feels she belongs to a professional choir. She explains, 'The last piece we did which was on Saturday, I felt like I was in a professional performance. It was really good. I don't know about the public, but that is how we felt from our side of things.' She continues, 'The orchestra was amazing, the soprano and the tenor were fantastic and the choir sounded really good from our side of things.' Sally then clarifies her sense of the word 'professional' by stating,

> The standards are very high and the director, Mr Terry is wonderful. It is very enjoyable because obviously we are not professionals we are just amateurs but he tries to reach a very high level, as high as possible. It doesn't mean that because we are not professionals that the performance has to be lacking. Nothing like that, he's expecting the best and he really put the effort [in] to make sure that we reach the level.

Tracy concurs with this view, stating, 'I think that's what he brought into focus, it was done with humour but discipline as well.' The participants feel that the conductor makes the most of the limited rehearsal time available. Lucy simply thinks there should be more of it.

Discussion and conclusion

In providing families the opportunity to participate in the Choral Society, this West London school has made a positive statement about the significance of community. The participants with

children or grandchildren also involved in the choir reflected on how importantly they viewed this connection. Participants who did not have children or grandchildren involved held similar views and held up this model of family participation as fundamental to the life of music at the school. As well as strengthening relationships within families by providing a positive and common goal, the inclusion of adult family members helps strengthen the choral culture in the school. These adults fully appreciate the difficulty of choral singing and music-making generally and they respect and admire the skills of the student choristers. Studies of intergenerational collaboration tend to focus on changing attitudes of younger people to older people (Alfano, 2008; de Vries, 2011; Smith & Sataloff, 2013). The attitudes of older people to younger people in such interactions is under-represented in the literature. The fact that the school operates a choir of children, still too young to attend the school, completes the intergenerational outreach efforts. Family members of all ages can contribute to the flourishing musical community of the school.

In some ways, the intergenerational aspect of the choir seems to be a missed opportunity. The participants enjoy singing with the students but there is consensus that not enough time is spent together. A lack of rehearsal together for the two choirs produces musical, logistical and social problems. Musically, the choirs could be benefiting from each other and intergenerational learning could take place. Logistical issues such as time to seat people so they feel comfortable and familiar with who they are near is important to singers. Difficulties with behaviour could be dealt with much more satisfactorily if the different generations felt more connected. Rather than feeling awkward or frustrated with the behaviour of the boys in the recent concert, adults would feel more at ease in communicating with them effectively. A greater sense of connection and *camaraderie* with the group as a whole would from the perspective of the adult participants, improve the experience and reduce stress on the day of the performance. The importance of singers being appropriately placed was discussed. Daugherty notes, 'the issues of choir spacing and choral sound are concerns that refer to simultaneous, multiple strata of data in complex relationships' (Daugherty, 2013, p. 86). Ignoring the complexity of collaborative relationships and the importance of how the choristers are placed was a significant cause of anxiety.

The adult choristers are motivated to perform the works chosen by the conductor. They are keen to get it right and take what they are doing seriously enough to put work in between rehearsals. The sense of challenge however, is not uniformly experienced. Some participants feel that more time needed to accurately perform the music. The rehearsals are felt to be too short and

the length of the rehearsal season is also. The participants suggest that more attention to detail so that they feel less rushed in rehearsals will help maintain chorister motivation. The singers enjoy feeling competent about their singing and their reward is intrinsic. Furthermore, 'choral singing may allow attainment of the needs essential for motivation and meaningfulness, leading to improved wellbeing' (Livesey, Morrison, Clift, & Camic, 2012, p. 21).

The participants frequently used the term 'professionalism'. The definition of professional and amateur choristers is complex, however Finnegan (1989) and Green (2002) discuss the concept as being contextual and existing on a continuum. An external definition could detract from the voice of the participants who suggest that there are several components which they find professional about the Choral Society; the repertoire, the orchestral accompaniment, the efficient use of time in rehearsals, the general standards of the choir and the attitude of members to take responsibility for knowing their music. Rensink-Hoff (2009) notes, 'Singers with higher estimations of their respective choirs were most inclined to appreciate and value the exposure to quality choral repertoire and the presence of personal challenges and self-discipline' (p. 188). Although the participants in this study noted that certain individual singers have limited skills, the choir generally had a professional attitude. Participants who had participated in other choirs uniformly felt that the Choral Society had a professional approach which impacted their enjoyment of it. In a study of choral collaborations between amateur and professional choristers, Ruck Keene (2015) notes, 'The arrival of singers perceived to be better seemed to undermine the achievement of the amateur singers, and to challenge their musical self-confidence' (p. 15). This was not the case in this study in which the student choir was not introduced into the process as 'better' or 'more professional' even though they are generally perceived to be by the participants.

The literature dealing with singing in a family context is mostly concerned with parents of young children where the parent acts as teacher or facilitator (Custodero, 2006; Berger & Cooper, 2003). In this study, the children are now adolescent and have had a significant amount of choral training. The parents find themselves impressed with what the boys at this school can do. When singing together, the adults know how difficult it was for them to learn the music and the boys seem to do it skilfully and with relative ease. In this way, the paradigm has shifted. The child becomes the expert, assisting the enthusiastic parent.

The adults appreciate singing with the students. Although, there is not a strong social cohesion between the two choirs, there is an abundance of musical admiration from the adults for the students. If more time was provided for the two choirs to sing together, the issues raised by the participants could be addressed. The frustrations of adult choristers for details being left to the day of the concert when so much collaboration happens at once could be alleviated. Further opportunities for informal learning, Vygotskian peer-learning processes and intergeneration understanding could enhance the sense of professionalism the adults are already perceiving. de Vries (2011) recognises the importance of bringing older musicians into schools, stating, 'I strongly recommend that, rather than simply keeping such music making in the wider community, music educators bring these older musicians into schools to be part of a rich music curriculum' (p. 354). This study shows the strengths and weaknesses of this collaborative model in recognising intergenerational music-making but also demonstrates where it misses important social and learning opportunities. Varvarigou et al. (2011) recommend an intergenerational approach, positing, 'More intergenerational group work could be promoted by local authorities, schools, universities and organizations that cater for activities for the elderly, given the considerable benefits that bringing different generations together in musical activities can have for both younger and older participants' (p. 218). More schools should adopt this model of intergenerational music making with family involvement but should take care of the needs of the older generation. It is hoped this case study will help address the imbalance in the literature of the perceptions older people have of younger people in intergenerational activity.

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Coda

This case study explored the lived experience of older musicians in a musical partnership with an ensemble of high school student musicians. The success and weakness of this ensemble partnership can in part be attributed to the direction of the collaboration process. The missing voice in this case study is that of the director. In this case, the director is common for both ensembles, however in many ensemble collaborations, there are two separate directors for each ensemble. This creates an immediate problem to solve; that of who should conduct the combined ensemble. As the conductor brings an important voice to direction of the project, it is important that both ensembles enjoy working with them. In some cases, rather than either of the musical directors conducting the performance, a guest conductor is invited to preside. This can add gravitas to the project if the guest conductor is well respected and can alleviate the issue of deciding which of the two directors should be chosen. Making use of a guest conductor can also however be fraught with difficulties as will be discussed in the following article.

Chapter 9: Utilising a guest conductor in musical collaborations

The final article examines the process of music ensemble collaboration from the perspective of a conductor who has worked with collaborated ensembles throughout the world. His point of view provides insight into the world of a guest conductor but also as a regular ensemble conductor who has employed other guest conductors. This article is entitled 'It was more about his ego than about the choir': Jonathan Willcocks reflects on a career as a guest conductor and was submitted to the *Psychology of Music* It is currently under peer review.

In reflecting on his experience as a guest conductor and working with other guest conductors, Jonathan Willcocks observes the importance of the conductor's personality. The personality traits of a musical director can significantly affect the success or weakness of a performance project (Gooty et. al., 2009). Musicians are acutely affected by the mood and atmosphere of a rehearsal or performance which is substantially provided by the director (Olesen, 2010). Having a healthy ego may be an advantage for leaders of large groups of people (Greenleaf & Spears, 2002), but egotism when manifested in music ensemble collaborations can be difficult for participants and negatively affect the performance. Social cohesion between two groups of musicians must not be taken for granted but if leadership displays egotism when communicating with other participants, it becomes unlikely (Sorensen, 2013). The theme of egotism in relation to guest conductors of music ensemble collaboration has so far attracted little research attention and it is hoped that this article will contribute to future academic discussions.

The importance of flexibility and adaptability emerges for the first time in this article. Music projects with large numbers of participants, multiple representative institutions and a myriad of other variables such as an unfamiliar venue will invariably offer organisers with unpredictable issues to attend to. Invariably, the amount of time with which all participants are gathered in situ is limited. This allows leaders little time to attend to any issues which arise and flexibility and adaptability may require plans to be changed suddenly. Factors such as: sight lines to the conductor, acoustics, lighting, and ensemble seating may not be evident until all musicians are in place in the venue (James, 1997). If plans formulated before this time are adhered to strictly regardless of the detriment they may cause the performance, the musical participants may experience an inferior outcome.

'It was more about his ego than about the Choir': Jonathan Willcocks reflects on a career as a guest Conductor

Abstract

The use of a guest conductor for large-scale, collaborative choral works is a common practice. It allows fresh insight into the performance of a work into which the guest conductor may have unique or expert insight. Working with a guest conductor can allow a fresh perspective for choristers and allow for the exchange of musical and pedagogical practices for the regular conductor. Such exchanges are not always successful however, and egotism on the part of musical leaders can provide for tense situations which is harmful to the musical process. Jonathan Willcocks has emic and etic perspectives of numerous international and large-scale collaborative performances and reflects on projects that were enjoyable and in some cases problematic. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, Jonathan's reflections are explored to understand the manifestation of factors when a guest conductor is engaged for a performance. Implications for positive use of a guest conductor are discussed and recommendations made for efficacious interaction.

Key Words

Choral music, collaboration, guest conductor, interpretative phenomenological analysis, egotism, flexibility

Introduction

Choirs involved in collaborative projects such as festivals and multi-choral works frequently engage guest conductors to guide the assembled ensemble. An ensemble will usually experience two conductors during the process; the regular conductor (RC) who will help the singers learn the music, and the guest conductor (GC) who will typically take over the leadership of the choir for the final rehearsals and performance (Freer, 2007). The GC can bring fresh insight into the music being rehearsed and provide the RC with new pedagogical perspectives (Lanier, 2007; Glosser, 2005). While the process can inject fresh enthusiasm and energy into the activities of a music ensemble, it is not always positive or successful (Khodyakov, 2014). Difficulties can arise when the conductors have different interpretations of the music and resulting tension can manifest in the singers' performance and affect their experience of the

project. Issues of territoriality and ego can influence the relationship between the two conductors bringing singers into personal conflict situations (Sateren, 1982). In exploring the emic and etic experiences of the guest choral conductor, Jonathan Willcocks reflects on his experiences and the issues associated with handing an ensemble over to a GC are explored. The research question is, what factors determine the successful interaction with a guest conductor?

The guest conductor

The often GC encounters large groups of new people within a short time period prior to a performance. How the GC relates to an unknown group can impact the outcome of the project as 'if he is not able to establish a psychological bridge to the members collaborating with him, attempts to make music will be in vain no matter how good his musicality' (Chuang, 2005, p. 2). By necessity, the GC will have a different approach to the music than the choir has become used to (Neher, 2011). Changes in conducting style, musical interpretation, and communication style need to be processed and accepted in a relatively short space of time. The GC therefore needs to be sensitive to what has occurred in the rehearsals prior because 'The most important person in this part of the process is not the guest conductor, but the school director who prepares the students prior to the first rehearsal' (Freer, 2007, p. 32). The process of handing over a choir to a GC requires an acceptance on behalf of the RC that musical differences will be communicated with the ensemble and this possibility needs to be expressed and accepted by the group to enable an acceptance of change (Marroquin Velasquez, 2011). Encountering fresh perspectives from a GC can be a positive process for a choir. Attitudes toward a choral director can decline as complacency and familiarity increases over time. Gleason asserts that, 'Since attitudes decline as singers grow in experience with a conductor, it is recommended that directors continue monitoring attitudes, challenging singers, and striving to be sensitive to musical and emotional needs of singers' (Gleason, 1992, p. 105). Providing a renewed viewpoint for choristers can be achieved by through the use of a GC or by participating in a collaborative event with other choirs (Sutherland, 2015).

Egotism and musical leadership

The Ego as defined in the second layer of Freud's structural model of the psyche concerns the view of oneself (Swart, 2016). Egotism can present itself as a desire to enhance favourable

views of oneself and often provides an over-inflated estimation of one's personal features (Federn, 1952). The egotist has tendencies to centralise the concept of 'me' and relegates concerns for others (Ostercamp, 2009). The ego is largely formed by the age of eight and is developed over time with deep, personal memories and experience. Each ego is therefore unique as it consists of genetic makeup and experience (Rajvanshi, 2012).

In the process of mastering music, having a strong ego can be an asset. One view is that high-achieving musicians 'are not conceited because they are gifted. On the contrary, they sing well (or play well) because they have strong egos' (Vennard, 1997, p. 25). Musicians can therefore be encouraged to develop their ego which can develop into egotism. Musical leaders working with teams of people however, are not afforded the luxury of centralising the 'me' concept over consideration for others. Ensembles need to be motivated and two types of motivational climate are: task-involving orientation and ego-involving orientation. Individuals with a task-involving orientation measure their performance by personal development and mastery. Individuals with an ego-orientation gauge their achievement in relation to the performance of others. In group motivation, ego-involvement is linked to greater reported pressure and tension, whereas task involvement provides positive motivation. Musicians who experience a task-oriented climate are more likely to perceive their conductors as supportive. (Matthews & Kitsantas, 2007).

For musical leaders, an important aspect of self-concept in the psyche is with 'Interpersonal relationships in which the individual is feeling threatened, he/she may respond defensively (Sharlow, 2006, p. 15). Defensive behaviour refers to interaction that serves to protect the self from perceived attack by deflecting responsibility or blame and can incite reactionary defensive behaviour in others (Lannin, Bittner, & Lorenz, 2013). This negative engagement can detract from meaningful music-making and adversely impact the enjoyment of the members of the ensemble. Keene poses this question for conductors, 'If you are contemplating a career as a conductor, you first must examine your motives. Do you seek this vocation out of a genuine and total love for music, or out of a wish for ego gratification?' (Keene, 1982, p. 48). English conductor, Sir Colin Davis noted a prevalence of egotism in the music industry, stating, 'Certainly less ego would be welcome, and more attention to problems that are actually concerned with the music' (Hall, 2001, p. 40). Leonard Van Camp, American

choral conductor also posits, 'A conductor cannot allow his ego to get in the way of music making' (Freer & Buske, 2012, p. 40).

Background

Jonathan Willcocks (JW) has spent many years conducting collaborative performances involving numerous ensembles, mainly choirs, around the world. From the age of eight to thirteen he was a chorister at Kings College, Cambridge under the direction of his father, Sir David Willcocks and recalls one of the earliest performances of Britten's *War Requiem* as a pivotal moment in his passion for large-scale, collaborative projects. He graduated from Cambridge University where he had a choral scholarship at Trinity College and spent 10 as Director of the Junior Academy at the Royal Academy of Music in London. He is the conductor of several community choirs and orchestras in the United Kingdom and travels internationally as a guest conductor. Some of his work as a guest conductor leads to commissions for choral works which has enabled him to compose frequently. I met JW at a choral festival in Leipzig and subsequently invited him to be guest conductor for a collaborative performance project in Perth, Australia involving around ten schools which he did twice.

Methodology

The methodology used for this study is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA draws upon the fundamental principles of phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Phenomenology is used in social science research to observe the world according to the manner of appearance (Silverman, 1980). According to Husserl, the natural function of reflecting on, seeing, thinking, remembering and wishing is the basis for phenomenology (Stewart, 1933). Hermeneutics was developed by Heidegger and addresses the ontological question of human existence, acknowledging the practicality of human activities and relationships and through which we gain meaning of how the world appears. Temporality is an important concept in this existential idea and time is therefore considered as a horizon or context (Wilson, 2014). IPA was developed by Jonathan A. Smith. Smith discusses the early work of Schleiermacher who wrote systematically about hermeneutics as a generic form. Schleiermacher suggests that interpretation can be grammatical and psychological. Grammatical interpretation requires exact and objective meaning to text whereas psychological interpretation acknowledges the individuality of the participant (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). In IPA, a double

hermeneutic is required whereby the participant is making sense of their own life and then the researcher makes sense of the participant's understanding. IPA is idiographic, inductive and interrogative (Taylor, 2015). IPA is idiographic in that it concerns a phenomenon in a specific context rather than general or universal. It aims at 'generating rich and detailed descriptions of how individuals experience phenomena under investigation' (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014, p. 9). It is inductive as it allows themes to arise unexpectedly during analysis rather than from a predisposed position of the researcher. It is interrogative by questioning and informing existing research.

IPA was employed as it 'emphasizes that research is a dynamic process in which the researcher takes an active role as they try to approach the participant's personal world' (Southcott, 2009, p. 145). IPA allows for the researcher to be closely involved with the participant's world in order to understand it. IPA also acknowledges that there is no direct route to experience but closely experiencing the phenomenon is preferable to experiencing it from a distance (Smith, 2011). A researcher's understanding of the phenomenon is required to make sense of the participant's world through a process of interpretative activity (Smith & Osborn, 2008). IPA is best served by a small, homogenous sample, in this case an individual participant, allowing for depth of understanding.

Data Collection

Ethical approval to conduct the research was given by Monash University. I contacted JW by email and forwarded him a consent form which he signed. I then visited JW at his home in August, 2016 and conducted a face-to-face interview which was recorded. Open-ended questions were asked to encourage rich, descriptive language such as: Can you recall your first musical experience involving two ensembles from different organisations? What is the most memorable collaborative music project you have been involved in? What do you think makes a good collaboration between two or more music ensembles? Is the international element a factor in success or does it add complexity? I then transcribed the recorded interviews. Once the data was collected, I then analysed it. First, I created a column on the right-hand side of the interview transcript. I then read the data repeatedly, noting emergent on the basis of repetition or emphasis. Strong, emergent themes were then included in the findings. Apart from JW, the names and

identities of other individuals or identifiable associations were supressed and pseudonyms used. Quotations from JW are provided verbatim to appropriately represent his voice.

Findings

After the data was analysed, three important themes emerged from the transcript: Ego and collaboration, Gaining new perspectives, and Flexibility and adaptability. These themes will be discussed in turn.

Ego and collaboration

JW feels that the psychological interaction between choir conductor, guest conductor, and choir determines the success of a musical collaboration more than musical aspects. He states, 'You've got to have technical things, you've got to be on top of your brief, but how you get things out of other people is as much psychology and person management, as it is just being musically skilful.' The relationship between the choir's regular conductor and visiting conductor is especially delicate and requires care. He notes that it would be 'utterly counterproductive and wrong for anything you do to be viewed or to be able to be viewed as a criticism of what their own choral director has done in terms of preparation.' He goes on to explain the sensitivity of stepping into the role normally occupied by a choral director while they are present during the rehearsal process. He posits, 'By definition anything you say which is different, some particularly school-aged children may view as a criticism of what they usually do, so I try and avoid any suggestion that I know better than their own choral director.' During this sensitive process, JW feels that 'So much depends on the attitude and character and approach of the leader.' He has experienced a variety of interactions with regular choral conductors and notes how important the ego of the individual determines the success of the project. He reflects, 'Sometimes it's worked really well, sometimes it seemed like a little bit of a struggle and always looking back on it, it's been how adaptable and how sensitive and really how ego-driven the directors are of the participating choirs.'

JW recalls a particular occasion when guest directing for a choir in the United States with a well-known and respected choral director. He reflects, 'in hindsight it just didn't work for him to try and hand his choir over to someone else because he was so feeling he should be doing it and that actually fed to his singers.' The reticence of the conductor to relinquish leadership of the ensemble manifested in the singers' motivation to work with JW. He continues, 'I think they

wanted to be part of this performance but perhaps how he had prepared them, they were resistant to any movement towards what I wanted in terms of subtlety.' He noticed the resistant behaviour of the choristers as, 'that particular person in all of the rehearsals came and sat almost behind me almost as if they were relating to that particular director. You could see the singers with their eyes constantly on them, on that person.' JW recalls the feeling of tension during the first rehearsal. He recollects being 'tempted to ask him not to come to the rehearsal but I thought that's just asking for an explosion and he might withdraw his singers but that sort of situation can be really quite difficult.' Although this awkward situation is a rare occurrence for JW, he is disappointed that it took place with a relatively young and impressionable group of musicians from a university college choir. He remarks, 'When you've got singers there who are undergraduate singers in the chorus, $17-21$, they were hugely influenced by how he behaved really.' He continues, 'It was just down to the personality of their choral director who was a relatively young man, about 30-33, something like that who wanted to impinge his own presence on the occasion when actually it wasn't really appropriate.' Although JW normally enjoys the regular musical director to attend his rehearsals, in this case the director, 'wanted to be in the limelight himself I think, that was the problem. It was more about his ego than about the choir.' The piece being rehearsed was one of JW's compositions which made the uncomfortable situation, 'particularly galling because he reckoned he knew how it should go, but on this particular occasion I was conducting as well and on that particular occasion, my view of how it goes was more important than his.' The response of the choristers seemed to reflect a distaste for an alternative approach. He observed, 'You could almost hear when I said something, it was [intake of breath over teeth] sort of stuff going on and if you've got singers with him being visibly like that, it wasn't helpful.' JW reflected on the situation, suggesting that he should have 'perhaps bitten the bullet and taken him aside when it was obvious that he wasn't comfortable, saying, "I'm awfully sorry but if you don't feel comfortable I think it's probably best that you don't come to the next rehearsal."' JW feels that in order for a choir to be able to work successfully with a guest conductor, the regular conductor needs to 'go into it with the right attitude. If as a choral director, you're going to be so possessive of your singers and so possessive of how you think a particular piece should go…' the choir will manifest the director's reticence to work positively.

Although most of JW's experiences with guest conductors working with ensembles have been positive, he reflected on the most difficult in his career in which a visiting composer behaved inappropriately. He sets the scene, when he was 'Junior Director at the Royal Academy of Music and there was a 'charity concert with the Symphony Orchestra there and it was in December, so we included [composer's work] which is very popular piece for Symphony Orchestra.' JW invited the composer to play the orchestral piano part thinking it would add a nice dimension to the concert. He explains, 'He turned up on the day to the final rehearsal and after about ten bars he said, "Stop, stop, stop! That's the wrong speed. It can't go like that."' A colleague of JW was conducting the performance and said, '"Alright", and after a while there was something else wrong, "No, no, no, the bassoon is far too loud in that bit" and it escalated from that.' Following around 20 minutes of rehearsal, the conductor left the rehearsal to discuss the situation with JW and said, '" I've got a real crisis here because [the composer] is interfering so much that the thing is just not going to happen."' JW then returned to the rehearsal to find, 'the student orchestra were all sitting there, and [the composer] was sitting there at the piano looking thunderous.' The composer then spoke to JW and shared his view of the conductor as being, '" completely incompetent, he doesn't know what he's doing. He has no idea how this piece goes. I'm going to conduct.'" Furthermore, the composer stated, '" Either I'm going to conduct or I'm withdrawing all the music, I'm withdrawing consent for the performance."' Not knowing whether such action was legal, but given there were 90 minutes before the performance was due to start, the decision was made that, '" …if he's so big-headed that he wants to do it, let's put him on the podium and see what happens."' JW describes the atmosphere with the student musicians as being 'absolutely sullen. I was very proud of them actually. I said to them, "[the composer] has decided he should conduct the performance and I'm sure we will be all professional in doing what he would like us to do."' JW feels that the composer's ego was such that working in a collegial manner was difficult. He states, 'I've never performed a note of [the composer's] music since. This was about 15 years ago and it was the worst experience of a musician behaving inappropriately.'

The third vignette regarding JW's account of ego and collaboration is a positive one. When conducting a number of international choirs at an annual choral festival in Leipzig, JW felt that 'some choral directors and their choirs who were really there to show off. Really the collaboration bit of it was a bit of a nuisance, that's not why they were there.' Although

sometimes excellent choirs, the ego of the conductor affected the quality of the chorister's experience. He notes, 'They had prepared their repertoire and they were in some cases very good choirs and they just wanted to perform and to be applauded and that was their motivation for being there.' In contrast, JW recounts an experience with a choir, describing them as a very good girls' choir from the UK who were 'easily the best choir there and yet their choral director couldn't have been more modest.' Obviously she was brilliant at what she did and she said that the reason they were there was to interact with other choirs.' He continued, 'They did their own programmes but why she had them to come to Leipzig was to interact with other choirs from around the world, to hear them sing and to make musical friends. The attitude which was just brilliant.' Once again, the choristers reflected the display of ego exhibited by the conductor. JW observes, 'You can see that they adored their choral conductor, yet she had absolutely no outward ego at all. It wasn't her show, she was doing everything for the benefit of her singers.'

By contrast, the same year a German choir in attendance approached the festival quite differently. JW explains that they were 'there handing out handing out cards, asking if anyone wanted to engage their choir for paid concerts and they were there for utterly different reasons and I don't think that choir got anything out of it at all.' Furthermore, for the collaborative components of the festival which allowed the choirs to perform together the choir 'rather reluctantly came along to the joint stuff.' JW states that, 'I don't think at the end of it they got anything out of it that they wouldn't have got just going and doing a concert somewhere.' He feels that the difference in attitude of the choirs and their experience of the festival

> was down to the particular choral directors, what their agenda was, were they there for their own self-aggrandisement? 'I've got a great choir, listen to us!' Why are we here at this festival, bringing choirs together? It's what the singers can get out of it in terms of opening their eyes to other repertoire, to different cultures. Why travel half way across the world and then be so insular about it?

JW states that, 'If you get a choral director who is open-minded to what it can produce and imaginative, then they can give their singers so much. Otherwise, if it's all ego-based, it just doesn't work.' As a visiting conductor, he experiences conductors for whom working collaboratively is a problem, positing,

That's really a matter of collaboration and partnership with the musical director that you've been working with. If the musical director who is usually working with the choir has felt threatened or somehow intimidated by this person coming in, they feel they've been slightly undermined by them and it hasn't been something that has added a useful, extra dimension, then I think the residue can be negative.

Gaining new perspectives

JW regards complacency when rehearsing music something to avoid with choirs. He explains, 'Sometimes if it's a work that perhaps half the choir have sung before, after four or five rehearsals you're a bit too far ahead and there's a danger that they'll become a bit complacent about it.' He continues, 'They are very confident and yet there's another three rehearsals before the performance. If you allow it to go to the top and become stale, then it's quite difficult to lift them back up again when the performance comes.' In order to provide a fresh perspective for his singers, he uses mixed seating and says to his choristers, 'Right, today's rehearsal, the rules are that on either side you've got to have someone singing a completely different voice part, you can't sit next to anyone you're married to or anyone you'd like to be married to.' Having a fresh perspective can challenge the singers and maintain maximum effort in rehearsals. The choristers then try 'harder and those people who think, "Oh I know this particular piece", actually find they were relying hugely on their neighbour to give them confidence of entries. It can help keep the level of intensity of the rehearsal nicely.'

JW reflects on having visiting conductors rehearse choirs which he normally directs, suggesting it can be 'really helpful to have a fresh view because they rehearse with me on a weekly basis and someone else, provided they are capable and competent and can engage with the choir can very much help to focus things.' JW describes the process of the same message being delivered by a different person as being 'really annoying. When they say, "Oh it's terrific, he or she did this" and I've been saying that every week for the last five weeks', but the choral director very much has to have subtleties of psychology.' He further describes the impact of a fresh perspective, positing, 'A guest conductor has one advantage and that is of novelty. Choirs I work with regularly know how I do things and what I'm doing but a skilful guest conductor can really engage something new.'

The opportunity to observe choir directors working provides JW with fresh perspectives for his professional development. He notes, 'Whenever I watch anybody else work, I pick up little things that I will incorporate into my own work, whether quite amusing warm-ups or just ways of dealing with a situation, I really enjoy watching other conductors work.' This is most valuable for him during the rehearsal process. He states that rehearsals are 'where all the business is done. Performances are only the sum of the rehearsals really. I really enjoy sitting in on rehearsals, seeing how people work.' He enjoys watching other practitioners 'partly because it's really nice to see a strong engagement between a conductor and their singers but partly because I'm a magpie in terms of what I do.' This is especially useful for him if 'they are rehearsing repertoire that I know intimately. Quite often I'll see completely different ways into it.'

JW values opportunities to hear other choirs in order to encounter new music. In discussing a conference of choral directors, he mentions 'there's a choir coming from Estonia who will sing Latvian music and Baltic music which simply is a brave new world to us.' As well as repertoire, cultural approaches provides fresh perspectives during opportunities for exchange. He states, 'I'm really struck by the completely different music cultural identity that they bring and also just the way in which sing, the sort of tonal qualities that the different choral traditions.' Sharing choral practices can develop expectations even if the cultural practices are already common. JW reflects on the series of collaborative concerts he participated with me in Australia, recalling that the choirs 'had a big diversity of approaches, a big diversity of expectations, some had much more sophisticated music programmes than others and so they can gain from seeing just how high the bar can be.'

Flexibility and adaptability

The third emergent theme reflects the relatively unknown nature of collaboration. When working with new groups of people in new environments, many unforeseen factors require flexibility and adaptability from all parties. JW states, 'I've had lots of experiences where I've been disappointed by the level of preparation of choirs that I have then had to work with.' He recounts a project in which he was conducting a performance of *Carmina Burana* which involves. He explains, 'the *ragazzi* chorus was being done by a local school and the musical director was someone I knew fairly well and I had no reason to believe they wouldn't do a decent job.' It became clear that the children were unfamiliar with their part. He states that the children,

'didn't know what they were doing and I had to in effect 'belt and braces' by getting four of the sopranos of the chorus to literally stand amongst them to sing the children's part just to get it going.' Being flexible allowed the children to perform the work. He continues, 'By-and-large, once they were up and running, once the phrase had started, they would sort-of catch on and sort of remember how it had gone. I think one has all the time to…the best plans always go awry.' JW acknowledges the importance of planning and preparation but maintains that flexibility is paramount. He posits, 'You can plan a rehearsal, you know the amount of time you've got, you know what you've got to get through and you have a plan in your mind as to how you are going to approach that.' He suggests however that 'all the time you need your antennae to be telling you what the feel of a rehearsal is and sometimes you will need to scrap plan A either to have a plan B or to use your nous.' Being aware of the mood of choristers is fundamental and relinquishing a plan to accommodate the group temperament which can fluctuate is recommended. JW suggests for example, 'it would be a really good idea to sing a really easy, up-beat movement just to raise the temperature of the rehearsal again.' He feels that when working on a complex piece, this can 'enable the performers so they've really achieved something special, above what they thought they could do.' He provides Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* as an example of such a work. He states, 'There's that challenge of getting them over what I call the credibility hump. At first it will either be completely bewildering to them or they won't be able to understand what it's about.' He recalls his first time conducting the work, saying, 'You may spend 15 minutes rehearsing *Burn Down their Houses,* it's really awkward and you have to do slow, detailed rehearsal and if you did that for an hour then the rehearsal will go like that [points down].' If the choir is reticent to embrace a difficult piece, he suggests allowing the choir to 'believe in the work by focussing the first couple of rehearsals on the easiest bit so in a relatively short time, they can sing a movement confidently and realise, "Yeah, this is going to work."' This is most apparent with Tippett's Oratorio in which after working hard on some complex and angular choruses, 'You'll do 10 minutes on *Steal Away* and they suddenly feel a confidence in it again.' Constantly monitoring the morale of the choir with such a work requires the conductor to be flexible and adaptable so they can 'ease their way into it and then by subtle guile, you can use that as a lynch pin to remind them of the bits they can sing and then chip away at the more challenging sections.'

JW feels that choristers should also adopt a flexible and adaptable approach to learning music. He considers that, 'Sometimes that involves leaving them in their comfort zone, sometimes actually it's me giving them a little jolt so that they are less complacent and just, "exactly how we always do it."' He acknowledges that not all choristers are at the same level of experience and ability and the need to differentiate for a variety of musical needs in rehearsals is challenging but essential. He states, 'You're challenge as a choral conductor is to keep both ends of the spectrum equally involved.' He feels that there are often 'strong singers who could do it on one or two rehearsals but you want them to come to all eight rehearsals because they form the momentum for the choir.' For JW it is important 'to keep them interested and involved and enjoying the rehearsals, that sort of psychological balance while not losing the lesser end of it.' More challenging is the frequent collaboration between enthusiastic amateur choir and professional orchestra. He points out, 'It's very different to working with professional musicians because professional musicians want something completely different from you, they don't want to be entertained, they don't want for you to fill the time.' He continues, 'they want you to come well-prepared, not to waste time and to rehearse effectively. If you've done what needs to be done in an hour and a half rather than two hours, fine, great, off we go home early.' By contrast, he claims that with amateur choristers if there are two hours of rehearsal scheduled and, 'if after an hour and a half you say, "I think we've done enough, you can go home now", they'd be outraged. Because they've come here to sing, they want two hours' worth of rehearsal.' Somehow a balance must be achieved where everyone enjoys the rehearsal process whereby,

> You've got business to be done, you've got to be efficient to enable the professional musicians to get on top of everything you're asking them to do and very often on the minimal rehearsal while you've also got to motivate and to inspire and to engage with the amateurs involved in a very different way and that's the real challenge.

By maintaining a flexible and adaptable approach, when collaborating with other musical directors JW has enjoyed a long career including many large-scale musical collaborations. He has benefited from the fresh perspectives of both egotistical and humble directors in the process.

Discussion

Egotism and collaboration

The vignettes provided by JW provide examples of collaboration being memorable for the wrong reasons. His strong recollections of successful large-scale performances were notable for issues of egotism affecting interactions between the GC and regular conductor. The modicum of literature focussed on the phenomenon of guest conductors in collaborative choral performances mostly provide instructions for how the process should work (Glosser, 2005; Freer, 2007; Ward, 2010). This research avoids examination of the implications of personality conflict rendering meaningful, positive work impossible. If the process of involving a GC in a performance project is to provide renewed enthusiasm and fresh insight for choristers, then how singers collectively relate to that person is critical if the activity can be considered a success. The preparedness of the GC and RC to bracket their respective egotism in order to focus on the musical process of the ensemble should be included in any discussion of successful musical collaboration.

Gaining new perspectives

That diametrically opposite conducting styles can be equally compelling and effective has been well established (Neher, 2011). Contrasting rehearsal structures can also yield engaging and rewarding rehearsal experiences. A popular structure is to have fast-paced activities at the beginning and end, with slower-paced activities in the middle of the rehearsal (Pascoe, 1974). Other conductors use a process of juxtaposing fast and slow-paced activities throughout the rehearsal (Decker & Herford, 1973; Lamb, 1979). Both of these approaches have been found to be effective (Cox, 1989). Working in collaborative environments such as making use of a GC allows different approaches to provide fresh perspectives for choristers. Conductors may also benefit from the opportunity of observing alternative methods. Acknowledging that enthusiasm requires renewal can be difficult for any conductor but doing so can allow sustained creativity if the individual is open to engaging with someone whose approach is different from their own.

Flexibility and adaptability

The nature of collaborative projects is that the participants are unfamiliar with each other. There is often little time for a GC to come to terms with what needs to happen musically and otherwise prior to the performance. Although much has been written on the importance of

planning a meaningful choir rehearsal (Phillips & Cicciarella, 2005; Gorelick, 2001), planning for the unknown is compelling. JW discusses the importance of visiting participant choirs during the preparation stage which is desirable, however although this is helpful, it does not negate the possibility of unpredictable issues. Often in collaborative projects it is not just the GC that provides a new element, but the venue, the combination with other singers and a change from piano to orchestral accompaniment provide factors that cannot be easily anticipated. If planning is such that it is inflexible, the ability to deal with these factors will be even more challenging. Being flexible and adaptable to the new situation that all musicians find themselves in will help enable the conductor to make logical choices when needed. Flexibility and adaptability are words well-known in the worlds of Jazz and Drama, but less familiar in literature associated with the typically formal process of large-scale choral music.

Conclusion

Sharing ideas in producing choral music is critical in keeping the art form vibrant and engaging. Making use of a GC can inject new enthusiasm for all participating musicians which allows a progressive approach to developing techniques, repertoire and pedagogy. If the process of engaging with a GC is to be successful, the regular conductor either needs to control any instincts towards egotism or remove themselves from the process. The GC similarly needs to be open-minded for the likelihood of unknown factors presenting themselves relatively soon before the performance. The practice of allowing the maximum number of unknown factors to be encountered on the day of the final rehearsal and performance is common when access to the venue is limited. It can however lead to a stressful process which effects the enjoyment of participants and creates memorable occasions for all the wrong reasons. Conversely, limiting unknown factors while remaining flexible during the process can make best use of a GC in collaborative musical events and inject fresh, new perspectives for everyone.

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Coda

This final article brings together the final perspective of participants of music ensemble collaborations. It is also the final article written in the UK and featuring a British perspective, however Jonathan Willcocks' involvement in the project as discussed in Chapter Five and by my former pupils in Chapter Four unifies the transcontinental experience of the phenomenon. The themes in this and all of the preceding articles will be explored in further detail in the following chapter.

Chapter 10: Discussion and conclusions

This chapter discusses the three overarching themes that have emerged from the phenomenological process. Some of the themes were anticipated in Chapter One, and others were unexpected findings. The organising themes provide responses to the social, musical and logistical experiences of the participants throughout the study. Each journal article provides in-depth exploration of the views and experiences of several individuals. This chapter considers the findings of each of the articles in a broader way, providing shared meaning from a wide variety of experiences with music ensemble collaboration. The conclusions allow me to further reflect on my personal journey explored in my autoethnography and consider future projects with the benefit of this research.
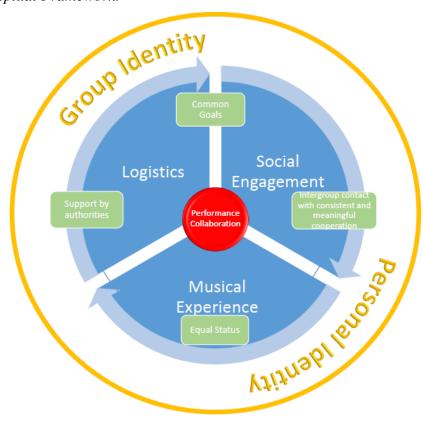
The eight journal articles included in this thesis provided a total of 31 themes. These themes have been organised into three overarching themes: Social engagement, Musical Experience, and Collaborative logistics that will be discussed in turn. The emergent themes from each article were not preconceived. Rather, they emerged as important to the lived experience of the participant in the respective time and place in relation to the phenomenon of ensemble collaboration. Consequently, themes can be found to be repetitious such as 'challenges with collaboration' and 'challenges' from two different articles, or were easily synthesized into a broader concept, such as 'family and intergenerational connection'. As a result, the three overarching themes contain a total of 15 merged themes to be discussed in this chapter. Table 4 shows the merging of several similar themes and the allocation to overarching themes.

Table 4. Presentation of 31 themes into three overarching themes.

Article	Emergent themes from articles	Overarching themes with merged sub-themes
From isolation to collaboration: an autoethnographic account	Isolation versus Collaboration	**Social engagement**
	Social Interaction	• Combatting isolation
	Music on a Grand Scale	• Personal, social & cultural identity
Sharing the Stage: Trends in Composition for Children's Choir and Symphony Orchestra	Historical trends	• Communication
	Benefits of the inclusion of children	• Empathy & Respect
'3:36pm, that's when all the fun starts': Forming musical identity through secondary school music	Musical/artistic	• Egotism and professionalism
	Personal	• Family and intergenerational connection
	Social/cultural	
'I think everyone's been thrilled': Music teachers' perspectives on school music performance collaborations	Enhanced repertoire opportunities	**Musical Experience**
	Staying involved	• Memorable music on a grand scale
	Promoting the Music Department	• Musical identity
	Guest conductors	• Guest conductors
	Venue	• Developing the school music programme
	Ongoing effects of collaboration	
	Challenges with collaboration	
School and university music collaboration: A case study of a performance of Britten's *War Requiem*	Challenges	• Challenging and rewarding adolescent musicians with repertoire
	Communication	
	Empathy and respect	
	Peer learning	
	Being memorable	
Together but disconnected: Involving parents and children in an intergenerational choral collaboration	Power of large-scale music	**Collaborative logistics**
	Intergenerational connection	• Benefits of including children
	Challenge and opportunity	• Venue
	Community and unity	• Challenges with collaboration
'I tried hard to control my temper': Perceptions of older musicians in intergenerational collaboration	Family	• Flexibility and adaptability
	Intergenerational disconnect	
	Challenge and reward	
	Professionalism	
'It was more about his ego than about the choir': Jonathan Willcocks reflects on a career as a guest conductor	Ego and collaboration	
	Gaining new perspectives	
	Flexibility and adaptability	

Figure 3 represents the conceptual framework of the thesis. It incorporates two theoretical frameworks and the three major themes to emerge from the articles. All of these elements contribute to what I propose is a model for successful and meaningful music ensemble performance collaboration.

Figure 3. Conceptual Framework.

At the centre, the focus of the framework is the topic, music ensemble collaboration. This refers to the collaboration of two distinct music ensembles in a performance activity. Circling the framework are the two elements of identity theory that are effected by all other elements of this study. These two forms of identity are therefore connected to all other elements of the framework. How we perceive ourselves as individual musician and as part of a 'new collective' of musicians are both separate forms of identity but interrelated within the collaborative setting. Our experience of the collaboration informs our sense of who we are just as our sense of personal and collective identity informs the collaborative process. The three sections of the circle represent the three main themes that emerged from the research. They emerged from the many participants who leant their voices to inform my understanding of musical collaboration. They encapsulate in a succinct way, the many themes that more specifically articulate the issues emerging from each case study. Finally, the four text boxes in the framework include the four elements of Intergroup Contact Theory that if included in the collaborative process, can reduce prejudice between groups. These elements do not always need to be present in order for successful and meaningful collaboration to occur, but represent optimum conditions for tolerance

and understanding to occur. Throughout the various case studies, the issues of collaborating with two musical ensembles have been voiced. This model synthesizes each of the ideas expressed by people's lived experience of real-world musical collaboration underpinned by two theoretical frameworks to support understanding of the phenomenon.

Social engagement

Several unexpected findings transpired during this research, one of which was the prevalent theme of friendship that emerged from each of the case-studies. Although musical outcomes were considered important by participants, the opportunity to establish, maintain and develop friendships was a recurring factor for musicians of all ages and abilities. Six themes comprise this overarching theme; Combatting isolation; Personal, social and cultural identity; Communication; Empathy and Respect; Egotism and professionalism; and Family and intergenerational connection. Some of these themes are found in several of the articles and have been discussed under a representative heading. The six merged themes will be discussed in turn.

Combatting Isolation

Creating art works with other like-minded people can be a socially invigorating process (Freeman III, 1998). Collaboration between two or more arts groups increases the sense of connectivity beyond the immediate group of musicians which was discussed by participants in Chapter Four. As such, ensemble collaboration can be seen as the antithesis of musical isolation as explored in Chapter Two. Music teachers can often find themselves working in relative isolation in the school environment (Sindberg, 2011, 2014) as was noted by participants in Chapter Five. Such isolation can be demotivating for music teachers in the early stage of their careers, leading in many cases to individuals leaving the profession prematurely (Krueger, 2000). This can be combatted through the establishment of partnerships and collaborative projects (Robbins & Stein 2005).

Belonging to a group of like-minded people creates a supportive environment for young musicians to thrive (Duchan, 2012). As evidenced by my autoethnography and my case studies reported in Chapters four, Five and Seven, adolescents value teamwork and *camaraderie* highly and feeling accepted by peers encourages a sense of belonging. This notion is also supported by

Sweet, 2014). Music ensemble engagement provides participants with the opportunity to build relationships and build a sense of community, which can contribute to a person's overall well-being (Bailey & Davidson, 2005; Balsnes, 2012; Judd & Pooley, 2014).

It is possible for music ensembles to provide inhibitive feelings surrounding fear of not being good enough (Davidson & Bailey, 2005; Creech et al., 2014). Young musicians can feel insecure about their musical abilities, however a strong sense of support from school music teachers and peers engenders feelings of being included in a supportive community. Furthermore, music can have a de-isolating effect which can lead to social cohesion. Such engagement may have an important role to play in combating the rising rate of suicide amongst the 15–24-year-old age group (Harvey, 2008).

Participants in this research discussed the excitement upon realising they were part of a community of musicians. In Chapter Seven, students discussed the experience of community belonging while participating in community ensembles in London. In Chapter Three, participants in Perth similarly understood that school music activity involving collaboration with other institutions provided them with an existing connection to the local musical community. One benefit of musical collaboration for school ensembles is that students can understand how their commitment to music in school provides them with access to an active, musical community after leaving the relative safety of their school community. Although this reflects much of the literature which embraces the sense of belonging that musical community provides, Negus and Velázquez (2002) argue that there are instances in which musical activity can result in feelings of ambivalence and detachment.

Personal, social and cultural identity

For many of the participants in this research, friendships form the basis of engagement in musical ensembles. Participants in Chapters Two, Four, Five, Seven and Eight discuss their connection with people and a sense of community as being central to their experience. The fulfilment of social needs is one of the central factors for young people engaging in active music-making (Arnett, 1995; North, Hargreaves & O'Neill, 2000). Importantly, social interaction during the collaborative process between two ensembles redefines the collective identity of the original

(Tarrant, North & Hargreaves, 2002; Campbell, Connell & Beegle, 2007). This collective identity provides a sense of belonging for adolescents who often wear their group identity like a badge (Parker, 2011). According to Volpe et al. (2016), the 'collective behaviour of orchestras is a powerful model of inter-individual non-linguistic communication among highly skilled individuals' (p. 5). This communication between individuals helps establish a social bond between musicians.

Participants in Chapters Two, Four, and Seven mentioned the impact of touring and collaboration on strengthening collective identity and friendships. Interactions can facilitate deeper friendships which 'develop on long bus rides or airplane trips as musicians discover commonalities they may not have time to share in short spurts before or after rehearsals at home' (Apfelstadt, 2011, p. 28). It is often in the moments in between musical instruction and performance that students develop friendships (Feld, 1984). Duchan (2012) states, 'the social activity that fills rehearsal is not a distraction from the music but a crucial foundation for each member's sense of belonging to a community' (p. 87).

Deeply felt interactions as a response to music ensemble activity further impacts on the collective identity of young musicians. Furthermore, providing adolescents with a strong social environment can encourage life-long active participation in music (Lamont, 2011; Creech, Hallam & Varvarigou, 2014) as was the case for participants in Chapters Two, Four, and Seven. The decision to remain actively involved in music-making is impacted by the individual considering themselves as a musician and affording themselves this label (Hewitt & Allan, 2013). Collaboration of ensembles reinforces the self-identity of being a musician by allowing participants to see how they fit into the wider musical community (Payne, 2016). Sharing musical experiences with musicians from other organisations engenders a sense of belonging to something much bigger than the isolated, school ensemble. Enhanced musical identity can be eroded however, if the partnership is undermined by poor communication between musical leaders.

Communication

Communication during the process of musical collaboration should be effective for all participants. Ineffective communication can lead to isolation and disconnection which not only negatively effects the performance but also the desire to collaborate again. According to Dobson

and Gaunt (2015), effective communication is central to delivering musical performance as 'ensemble practices rely on collaborative and communicative skills, many of which are tacit and embodied' (p. 27). Interpersonal skills are often highly valued amongst musicians (Goodman, 2002) and this is exacerbated in the collaboration of two or more ensembles when roles in the performance project are temporarily redefined. Arts organisation administrators, school music ensemble directors and other organisational leaders will invariably have differing points or view about the project informed by differing desired outcomes. Khodyakov (2007) explains, 'Although difference in perspectives may increase the quality of the final product in creative organizations, it can also make the decision-making process less efficient' (p. 1). Inefficient communication can frustrate the musical process unless shared outcomes are communicated and expressed at the beginning of the collaborative process. Participants in this study, particularly Chapter Five, found that when communication was effective, the musical outcomes were achieved and the collaborative process was enjoyable. Conversely, when communication was less effective, such as Chapter Six, the musical quality suffered and the desire to collaborate further was diminished.

Empathy and respect

Active music-making is an inherently social endeavour (Turino, 2008; DeNora, 2010; Cross, 2014). Furthermore, 'musical participation is beneficial to children's overall social development' (Ilari, 2016, p. 23). Although musical engagement can foster social inclusivity within an ensemble (Dingle et al., 2013), the process of combining two groups temporarily may not allow enough time for empathy and respect between ensembles to be fully realised. Jackson and Burgess (2016) argue that, 'When you contribute a part of yourself to create something beautiful, you become a part of something greater than yourself. Collaboration promotes valuing and accepting the ideas and contributions of others' (p. 46). This was not always the case in this study, particularly Chapters Six and Eight, which found that groups only fully appreciated the contribution of the other group when their contribution was understood to be important to the success of the project. Arnold (2005) acknowledges that music teachers and performers are 'often involved in dynamically charged environments...requiring fairly constant engagement with relative strangers' (p. 55). The importance of empathy in such environments can determine whether multiple groups of musicians unknown to each other can successfully coexist in a temporary setting.

Correlations between collaborative music-making and possessing strong empathetic personality trait have been well established (Rabinowitch, Cross & Burnard, 2013; Keller, 2014; Kawase, 2016). These traits are not considered to be universal and factors such as gender, culture, and career stage are expected to be important factors (Costa, Terracciano & McCrae, 2001). Leadership and conflict with co-performers are more likely to be important issues for adult musicians than school-aged musicians (Blank & Davidson, 2007; Murnighan & Conlon, 1991). When two musical organisations join forces, each group must understand what the other group/s bring to the partnership to achieve a level of empathy and respect. The success of the performance requires qualities that the other group can provide and these should be acknowledged and understood by all participants. Any existing prejudices between groups must be addressed by ensemble leaders so that participants can work constructively together.

Egotism and professionalism

In opposition to empathetic behaviour, the negative effects of egotism can be found to disrupt successful musical collaboration. The ability of a music director to collaborate effectively with another ensemble requires the love of music to be of greater personal importance than personal glory (Garnett, 2009). Tensions may arise if conductors find difficulty in relinquishing control of an ensemble of which they have a leadership role and considering the new ensemble as a new and unique entity (Khodyakov, 2014). Arnold (2005) posits that 'Personal humility and professional[ism] will grow out of years of experience honing professional skills and abilities, and years of reflection in developing an ego which can transcend the allure of fame, wealth, prestige and greed' (p. 150).

Egotism is a difficult trait to observe in oneself. Leary (2004) states that, 'Most of us fail to realize, much less come to terms with, the fact that our perceptions of the world are often distorted in ways that are impossible for us to discern' (p. 54). Conductors involved in musical collaboration must therefore carefully consider the personal motivation behind the project before committing. Conductor egotism was found to negatively impact several of the case studies in this research. Musicians find making music difficult in circumstances in which there is obvious tension between musical leaders (Sateren, 1982). This can lead to a disconnection between the two groups which may feel a sense of loyalty toward one director or another as discussed in Chapter Six and Nine.

Family and intergenerational connection

A common prejudice encountered in intergenerational collaborations is ageism. Although ageism is commonly considered when young musicians can hold negative perceptions of the elderly, 'it is equally a measure of negative attitudes elder generations hold toward younger generations' (Christian et al., 2014, p. 1). Understanding and respecting the positive contribution older musicians can bring to a performance collaboration will benefit the performance project and develop intergenerational understanding (Bowers, 1998; Drummer, 2003, Belgrave, 2009; Darrow & Belgrave, 2013; Jackson, 2016). This research found that intergenerational understanding does not occur organically simply by having two ensembles with differing age groups perform in a concert together. Intergenerational understanding is enhanced when it is nurtured, as found in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight. Musical leaders should consider how the ensembles mix together before, after and during the rehearsals (Harrison, 2009; Daugherty, 2013; Ruck Keene, 2015).

If not properly structured, intergenerational collaboration can produce negative effects for participants (Beynon, Heydon, O'Neill, Zhang & Crocker, 2013). Musicians from different ensembles can become frustrated with the relative low level of ability of the other group. Conversely, participants can become irritated with a sense of arrogance by members of the other ensemble if they perceive themselves to be musically superior (Rensink-Hoff, 2009; Ruck Keene, 2015). The reasons for this breakdown in intergenerational understanding were evident in two of the case studies in this research and is consistent with discussions found in the literature.

Making music with family members can enhance the sense of purpose to performance projects and life-long learning for developing musicians (Gingras, 2013). Family support is an important factor in the continuing commitment of adolescent's musical engagement (Hickok, 2009). Additionally, there are benefits in sharing musical engagement within a family for parents and grandparents (Stollak, Stollak & Wasner, 1991; de Vries, 2011; Varvarigou, Creech & Hallam, 2011). As discussed in Chapter Eight, benefits include a positive sense of community belonging as well as increased sense of purpose and connection with younger family members.

The relationship between child and parent is a psychodynamic force able to influence the motivational effect a parent can have on a child's musical engagement. The interrelationship will

vary between each family and therefore the benefits of family music-making will differ also. Davidson and Borthwick, (2002) note that 'the parental perceptions of children can become prophecies to fulfil' (p. 13). Expectations that parents have of their children vary between each child but these expectations are also temporal and have the ability to change. Subotnik and Jarvin (2005) posit that 'Parental involvement can be either negative (nagging, restricting freedom of choice, turning an initially pleasurable experience into a constraint) or positive' (p. 347). This view of parental involvement when applied to music practice outlines that in some cases, parental intervention can be detrimental to the child's motivation.

Music can however play a role in resolving relationship issues in families. Miller (1994) suggests that 'musical intervention may then be effective in encouraging self-expression, enhancing family communication skills, and addressing the structural imbalances of power within the family' (p. 56). Participants in Chapters Seven and Eight, found that making music with the child, parent or grandparent, fostered feelings of connection, shared purpose, and an increase in mutual respect. Music is an inherently social activity with complex interrelationships between participants (Martin, 1996; Fischer, Giaccardi, Eden, Sugimoto & Ye, 2005). Musical collaboration provides further complexities to these relationships which involve the micro level of the small group to the macro level of the large group. The following section discusses the musical experience for participants in collaborative performance projects.

Musical Experience

Participation in a large-scale event invariably means that the individual musician is joined by many other musicians singing or playing the same part. Their individual contribution therefore could be seen to be less important given that so many other people are there to perform the required music. Participants have uniformly indicated feeling just the opposite. By being part of a larger collective, they have expressed feelings of being part of something important which has been empowering for them. This has been an unexpected finding in the research. This overarching theme is comprised of five themes which emerged from the journal articles. Many of the themes were found in multiple articles, and have been discussed under broader headings reflecting common concepts. The theme, Historical trends, was omitted as it was considered by the researcher to inform the background to the musical literature rather than the musical engagement. The five themes include; Memorable music on a grand scale; Musical identity;

Guest conductors; Developing the school music programme; and Challenging and rewarding adolescent musicians with repertoire. These will be discussed in turn.

Memorable music on a grand scale

Collaborative music-making can be an important factor in contributing to life-long musical learning (Myers, 1995; Mantie & Tucker, 2008). Music performed with large forces is often recalled as important events by participants who considered the event to be powerful. These large-scale collaborative performances provide pivotal life moments for students in Chapter Four, who reflected on them when deciding to pursue music beyond school. Although such performance projects are not restricted to any particular genre or ensemble type, the case-studies mostly involved choral/orchestral works due to their prevalence in the practice of ensemble collaboration.

Large-scale musical performances can be a thrilling experience for musicians. The individual participants in this research discussed feeling part of something important rather than feeling their contribution is diminished with large numbers of people. This reflects the natural inclination for humans to gather in exist in much larger numbers than any other primates (Zhou, Sornette, Hill & Dunbar, 2005; Weinstein et al., 2016). Musicians enjoy sharing the success of musical performance (Launay, Dean & Bailes, 2013), which leads to a social bonding with other ensemble members. Large-scale performance collaborations expand this sense of shared performance which can lead to euphoric feelings provided my endorphin release (Dunbar et al., 2012; Machin & Dunbar, 2011).

Collaborations are often memorable because of the combination of factors which allow the occasion to be unique. Such examples were discussed in Chapters Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, and Nine. Memorable experiences are a combination of objective, environmental factors (interaction with others), and subjective, internal factors (personal continuity) (Dewey, 1938; Ponzio & Enfield, 2004). Furthermore, a sense of personal satisfaction and pride in contribution is a result of experience that is inherently meaningful (Muirhead, 2012). In addition, music-making involves the aesthetic experience which is pleasurable and biologically stimulating (Dissanayake, 1992), which adds to the value and memorability of large-scale musical performance projects (Harper, 2014).

An important benefit to collaborating in music ensembles is that ensembles can attempt repertoire with expanded forces that may be impossible in isolation. Common examples such as; school wind ensembles with a lack of double reed instruments or lower brass (Walker, 2004), school choirs with a lack of tenors (Koza, 1993), school string orchestras with too few violas or double basses (Abeles, 2009), can frustrate the ensemble director by preventing performances of inspiring and motivational repertoire. Koza (1993), Walker (2004), and Abeles (2009) discuss the issue of gender association with particular instruments which can be an issue for single-gender school music programmes.

School music programmes may simply not have sufficient instrumentalists or choristers to produce repertoire that demands large forces (Sandene, 1994). Social, cultural or economic factors may inhibit the ensemble to flourish (Elpus & Abril, 2011). Limited repertoire options which can be a demotivating factor for participants can be resolved by the immediate expansion of the ensemble through collaboration with an ensemble from another organisation, either from another school or from a community ensemble (Myers, 2003; Bartleet, 2012; Roennfeldt, 2013). Participants in this study found the opportunity to perform repertoire such as Britten's *War Requiem,* Orff's *Carmina Burana*, and Verdi's *Requiem* motivational, musically rewarding and memorable. Such performances in these studies would have been impossible to consider with an isolated school ensemble.

Musical identity

Music performance collaboration projects provide musical opportunities for students that would not be possible with a school ensemble in isolation. These opportunities are often pivotal for participants as working with ensembles outside of their familiar school environment allows them to understand their place in the wider musical world (MacDonald, Hargreaves & Miell, 2002; Green, 2011). Adolescent musicians are often highly critical when working in collaborative contexts with unfamiliar musicians (Miell & Littleton, 2008) which enhances their sense of personal, musical identity. Furthermore, intergroup collaboration results in both personal and group outcomes which compel musicians to join and continue ensemble music-making (Van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003; Davidson, 2009). Participants in Chapters Two, Four and Seven, found self-identity as a musician was clarified when engaging with musicians beyond their immediate musical community. For many of them, school music experiences were all they

had known and to see others in the wider community participate and enjoy the same things enhanced personal, musical identity.

Guest conductors

Collaborations provide an opportunity to work with a guest conductor, as noted in Chapters Three, Four, Six and Nine. The guest conductor can provide neutrality in the instance of two regular conductors with tension over territoriality or egotism. A guest conductor with specific skills related to the project can provide valuable professional development for music staff as well as giving students a new approach to music making. If the guest conductor is successful, their fresh insight into music-making can bring renewed interest in the ensemble for participants. To be successful, a guest conductor must work productively within the collaborative context. Wis (2007) explains that conductors are 'typically not trained to think collaboratively when it comes to decision-making in the rehearsal and so for many of us this notion seems foreign and perhaps threatening to our concept of what a conductor is and does' (p. xiv). Managing multiple ensembles with multiple objectives requires careful consideration of what the collective aim of each group is. In this research, the case studies included several guest conductors; some of whom were able to successfully unify the new ensemble, and others who alienated participants and created difficult working environments for some musicians.

Developing the school music programme

Making music alongside an unfamiliar ensemble of musicians provides a new environment with new musical peers. As explored in Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven, exposure to a new group of musicians allows students to learn from more competent peers (Vygotsky, 1978). Musical development occurs in a social and cultural context (Hargreaves, MacDonald & Miell, 2012), therefore exposure to a wide range of peer-learning opportunities is beneficial for developing musicians. Participants in this research valued the opportunity to learn from musicians from ensembles outside of the school community and in some cases, remained involved in the ensemble despite waning interest to participate in events they viewed as important. Sustaining interest in active music-making is important for school communities as it

builds a sense of community, improves school attendance, and assists academic performance (Eccles, Barber, Stone & Hunt, 2003; Ebie, 2005).

Collaborative projects can assist with the promotion of the school and the school music programme by exposing the musical skills of the students to a wider audience. School administrative leaders can view the performance as an effective promotional tool to attract more interest in the school and its activities. Difficulties with programme management that negatively impact what a music programme can offer is a major source of stress for music teachers (Gordon, 2000). If school administrative leaders appreciate the value of the school music programme, it is possible for this perceived stress to be alleviated through a variety of supportive mechanisms (Baker, 2005). Music leaders in Chapter Five discussed the importance that large-scale collaborative projects had on the positive perception created in their school administration. This positive perception and appreciation for the contribution of the music programme in promoting the school lead to a perceived increase of support for their activities.

If successful, collaboration can develop into partnerships, such as the examples found in Chapters Five, Seven and Eight. Partnerships allow the sharing of skills and resources can strengthen the endeavours of a school music programme in a more enduring way. The Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health (n.d.) in the USA states that the 'synergy that a partnership achieves through a successful collaborative process is not just an exchange of resources among participants. Together, the participants create something new and valuable - a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts' (p. 2). Partnerships in music benefit in the same way. Shared resources include musical equipment and facilities but also human resources. Small music programmes can benefit from the expertise that may be found in nearby school or community music organisations (Sinsabaugh, 2006). Musical partnerships can also have a positive impact on the decision by students to remain actively involved in music (Abeles, 2004). In one of the case studies in this research, a multi-school collaboration developed into a long-term partnership. Music directors at each of the schools valued the opportunity to share resources and be part of something greater than the sum of the constituent parts. Consistent with the literature, the partnership resulted in an increase in student participation in musical activity after graduating from school.

A collaborative ensemble may attempt a piece of music the ensemble would not be capable of in isolation. This was the case for participants in Chapters Two, Four, Five, Six, Seven, and Eight. Increased breadth and depth of musicianship allows repertoire to be considered that would normally be out of reach (Isbell, 2005). More advanced repertoire provides new challenges for the participant musician and the opportunity to encounter more advanced musical concepts (Tyndall, 2014). Repertoire that is of high quality and chosen for the musical development of the musicians rather than the enjoyment of the audience results in better outcomes for participants (King, 2001). As such, collaboration can strengthen and advance school music ensembles and fosters further engagement, rather than diminishing the musical identity of the isolated ensemble.

Students enjoy being challenged. Being taken out of their comfort zone in a safe learning environment allows young musicians to thrive, as was found in Chapters Four, Five and Seven. Achieving satisfying performances of demanding works can be personally rewarding. Freer (2007) argues that in order to encourage choristers in middle school to remain involved in music-making, music teachers should be 'selecting repertoire that adolescents find relevant, challenging, and satisfying' (p. 32). Budiansky and Foley (2005) note that much of the music composed specifically for school band is 'formulaic, emotionally superficial, monotonously alike, dull, and didactic' (p. 17). Such repertoire can fail to inspire students as it is removed from genuine music traditions, classical or popular. Repertoire encountered by participants in this research was large-scale and involved multiple ensembles playing important musical works. Musicians involved in performing these works reflected on the power of the music, the inspiration drawn from engaging with it, and the lasting memories that they had from the event.

Logistics

The logistics involved with collaborating two or more musical ensembles are often more challenging and complicated than performance projects that can be managed by a single organisation. Musical collaboration can however provide benefits that are more difficult to

achieve in isolation. These challenges and benefits are discussed in four of the eight articles and represent a variety of logistical issues. The four themes discussed in the articles include: Benefits of including children; Venue; Challenges with collaboration; and Flexibility and adaptability. These will be discussed in turn.

Benefits of the inclusion of children

The growing trend of symphony orchestras developing their own 'in-house' children's choirs, represents an increase in opportunity for children to share the stage with professional symphony orchestras (Paulin & Armstrong, 1989). This trend is discussed in Chapter Three. Although this trend has received little research attention, the benefits for symphony orchestra administrations go beyond providing rewarding musical experiences to young singers. Symphony Orchestra administrators have considered long-term economic concerns and responded with educational outreach programmes for over a century (Thoen, 2009). Research into effective educational outreach programmes for young classical music audience advocates for active participation for school-aged students (Kahn, 2004; Skornia, 2004). Incorporating a children's chorus into the administration of a symphony orchestra ensures that active participation in high quality classical music occurs with frequency.

Attracting audiences to classical music concerts can be made easier if there are large numbers of children singing in the performance. According to Becker (1984), there are three groups of arts consumer; the core audience, or inner-most circle comprising of frequent and highly trained performers; the interested participant with less formal music training than the the inner-most circle; and students of the arts. Laermans (2002) concurs with this model and adds that the third group also comprises incidental visitors or 'passers-by'. By involving children in the performance, they are more likely to become active participant arts consumers (Roose, 2008; Becker, 1984). In my experience, child performers are often well-supported in terms of audience numbers. This in-built mechanism for selling large quantities of tickets can provide financial reassurance for concert administrators in the short-term and I suggest that it may help build a core group of arts consumers in the long-term.

The advent of the 'in-house' children's choir within the symphony orchestra administrative structure reflects the growing list of repertoire for such a combination (Tagg & Bartle, 2010; Tagg, 2013). Musical considerations are also served by having control over the preparation of the

children's choir. Symphony orchestra administrators can control factors such as: employ their own children's chorus conductor, oversee audition processes, ensure adequate rehearsal time is provided for preparing the music without other competing choral commitment, manage collaborative rehearsals with an in-house adult choir and other considerations such as répétiteurs, correct editions of scores, and appropriate uniforms and branding.

Venue

Performance venues which are large, beautiful or culturally important can be a source of inspiration and excitement for musicians and audiences as discussed in Chapters Two, Four, Five and Seven. According to Mehrabian and Russell (1974), performance spaces can elicit; emotional, cognitive, and physiological reactions which are impacted by environmental stimuli such as music, odours, colours and light. Bittner's integrated model takes into account other attributes such as; layout, signage, equipment, furnishings, personal artefacts and décor (Bittner, 1992). Both models acknowledge that reactions to stimuli result in either approach or avoidance behaviour to the venue. Venues with positive attributes not only impact on the degree to which the audience enjoys the event but can bring a sense of prestige to an occasion and assists with making a performance project memorable (Mencarelli, 2008). Participants in this research discussed the way in which performing in a prestigious venue different to the regular school performance spaces was exciting and inspirational which is compatible with the literature (Donnat, 1998; Audubert & Daniel, 2000). Modern school auditoriums are invariably a multi-purpose space, designed for performances other than music to take place (Daugherty, 2013). Allowing young musicians to perform in spaces specifically designed for musical purposes can be motivational and enhance the performance experience, particularly for students who would normally not have opportunities to appear on the stage of an inspiring venue (Petrie & Knight, 2011).

Unfamiliar venues can however, provide collaboration administrators with increased factors of difficulty to cope with in the final stage of a performance project (Gilbert, 2005). Venues with problematic acoustical properties can make performing difficult, especially in absorbent or overly reverberant spaces (Daugherty, 2013). Insufficient space for performers can inhibit the enjoyment factor for young musicians as Dewey observes, 'Lack of room is denial of life… [but] openness of space is affirmation of its potentiality' (Dewey, 1934, p 209). Larger and

grander venues are a logical option for having the necessary space for expanded, collaborative ensembles as well as seating larger audiences.

Communication issues with outside venues can add a layer of complexity for school music ensemble directors to negotiate, as found in Chapter Six. One of the reasons for issues with communication with venues outside of the school community is the temporal nature of most events (Van der Wagen, 2007). Events are typically organised by a small management group with a host of volunteers and contractor employees working on a temporary site without the benefit of a human resource manager. This structure can make communication about event logistics for school ensemble directors already collaborating with other music ensembles challenging (Van der Wagen, 2007). Temporary events allow limited time for deep interpersonal understanding between administrators and managers which can negatively impact communication efficiency (Druskat & Kayes, 2000). This is congruent with the temporary events experienced by participants in this research with which communication was problematic to the point of impacting the performance.

Challenges with collaboration

In addition to communication with performance venues, other logistical challenges may emerge for collaborating music ensembles such as: travel and associated costs, pupils missing rehearsals, and additional workload with increased administration. When two ensembles from separate institutions rehearse and perform together, logically either one or both groups will need to travel to a venue that is unfamiliar. This adds two challenges; increased costs and increased time, both of which were experienced by participants in this research. Music teachers are often best placed to manage large-scale, collaborative performances (Wheeley, 2004). Decision making from the 'bottom-up' in a school hierarchy is an efficient way to ensure what is needed for a successful performance is catered for (Caldwell, 1998; Glover, Gleeson, Gough & Johnson, 1998), as noted in Chapter Five. The necessity for music teachers to be confident with administrative tasks connected to the large-scale collaborative performance such as budgeting and booking external performance venues adds to the challenges of such a task (Wheeley, 2004). Although the logistical challenges experienced by participants were a source of frustration with collaborative projects, they uniformly expressed the view that such challenges were worth the musical, social, and cognitive outcomes.

Flexibility and adaptability

When collaborating with two or more ensembles, participants will be involved in a new and unique performance situation involving a variety of temporary factors. Just as it is impossible to know exactly what a new collection of musicians will sound like together until they begin rehearsing, it is equally difficult to predict how a new collection of personalities will work together until the artistic process begins. Although exciting, this process requires musical leaders to respond to unknown factors of being in a new venue with a new and temporary ensemble; preparing for and reacting to issues that arise. As explored in Chapter Nine, flexibility and adaptability are increasingly seen as important attributes for musicians in modern times (Hannon, 2010; Reddan & Harrison, 2010; Carey & Lebler, 2012). Music teachers and ensemble directors who can use intuition to respond to a situation are better able to make sensible, musical decisions that best suit the performers rather than adopting a 'one-size-fits-all' approach (Alt, 1996; Bamberger & Hernandez, 2000; Spranza, 2013). The literature supports the findings from this research in which participants valued the need to adapt to new and sometimes challenging musical situations when collaborating.

The third overarching theme of logistics confirms that the findings in this research is congruent with the literature. Although collaborative musical projects pose a variety of considerable logistical challenges which can be burdensome for busy music teachers, the benefits for participants are seen as worthwhile. Logistical considerations of large-scale, musical projects if successfully implemented, allow for developing musicians to interact with others in a positive and productive.

The three overarching themes reflect a general congruence between the literature and the research in this study. Although the themes discussed recognise that musical collaboration is complex, time-consuming and difficult, there is a clear mandate for large-scale musical projects combining multiple ensembles. Responses to the research questions drawn from the research will be presented in the following section.

Answering the research questions

The research questions that drove this study were: 'What are the implications for participants in collaborative performance projects?' 'Do collaborative performance projects have an impact on music teachers?' 'Are collaborative performance projects helpful in developing a growing Music programme?' 'Are the difficulties and issues associated with collaborative performance projects outweighed by the benefits?' Each question will be answered in turn according to the findings of this research.

The implications for secondary music students engaged with collaborative music projects are far reaching and varied, depending on the nature of the event. An enhanced sense of personal musical identity resulting from participation in a wider musical community was found to be an important finding in this research. Intergenerational understanding is a possible factor if the collaboration involves different generations however it was found that this only occurred if opportunities for social interaction were successfully introduced and managed. The most significant musical implication was the exposure of developing musicians to more advanced repertoire than they would normally encounter in an isolated ensemble experience. Large-scale musical collaborations also provide participants with memorable occasions which impact their sense of musical identity. Part of what makes musical collaborations memorable is if the opportunity exists to perform in a prestigious venue which takes the student musician off campus and into the wider community.

The impact of ensemble collaboration for music teachers can be positive if the majority of the four factors of Intergroup Contact Theory are in place. The opportunity to develop music skills by working with other music leaders can be valuable professional development. If egotism is a factor between conductors, the experience can be detrimental for all participants and result in a reluctance to participate in future collaborative projects. Similarly, if communication between institutions is untimely or lacks clarity, the resultant experience for the music teacher can be negative. In order for the music teacher to have a positive experience with ensemble collaboration, there must be a high level of empathy and respect between stakeholders.

For music programmes in schools that require growth or development to fully realise their potential, collaboration with ensembles outside of the school community is recommended. The motivational impact of large-scale musical collaboration is important for students considering a cessation of musical engagement. The enhanced sense of group identity that occurs with

ensemble collaboration positively impacts social cohesion which benefits the music programme. The opportunity to be musically challenged through exposure to more advanced repertoire enhances perceptions of what is achievable. If carefully maintained, this perception of musical attainment can continue beyond the temporal collaboration project.

The difficulties and issues associated with collaborative performance projects can be outweighed by the benefits but this is not guaranteed. Associated costs with travel, venue hire and other expenses can be problematic for some institutions. Issues of conductor egotism can be particularly damaging to the collaborative experience which can have short and long-term implications for musician satisfaction. Problematic communication can similarly have negative ramifications for participants. Social issues can be successful if the four sections of Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory are adhered to; equal status among group members, common goals, intergroup cooperation with consistent and meaningful contact, and support by authorities. The benefits of music ensemble collaboration between institutions can impact the individual musician, the group or ensemble and the wider institution. Enhanced group identity for the ensemble encourages social cohesion and friendship. The ensemble then serves more than just a musical purpose, and becomes an opportunity for adolescents to spend time with friends. Enhanced individual musical identity encourages young musicians to consider themselves as 'musician' thereby belonging to a wider community of like-minded people.

My experience of music ensemble collaboration has mostly been positive in part, due to the personal enthusiasm I have brought to each project. As a stakeholder, I projected my vision of collaboration on to others just as many of the participants in this study did with the ensembles they directed. I wanted my students to experience the joy of large-scale collaborative performances that I had. Those participants for whom collaboration with others was imposed, did not always display the same level of positivity during the process and these occasions often exhibited difficulties.

Limitations

The intention of this research was to explore music ensemble collaboration in a variety of musical settings. The projects highlighted in the phenomenological case studies tended to focus on choral collaboration and also the performance of grand, classical works. This was in part due

to my ability to find willing participants, but also suggests that choral collaboration is more musically straight-forward that more contemporary ensembles. The practical nature of choral singing is that there are multiple voices performing each part, whereas in a contemporary or jazz ensemble, many parts should not be doubled as they have solo roles within the music. Further investigation into partnerships between school wind bands, brass bands and orchestras would have been welcomed.

Although phenomenological research provides a rich text from which the lived experience of the participant can be understood in depth, the view of the participant is both unique and temporal. Generalisability of the findings of these case studies is therefore limited.

Collaboration between ensembles from different institutions has attracted little research. In order to establish the lasting effects of this phenomenon, participants were chosen from different stages of their lives and musical journeys. To clearly establish the long-term implications of musical collaboration, a longitudinal study involving partnered ensembles would be beneficial. In addition, although I was fortunate to be able to carry out this research in two countries, phenomenological exploration of this topic in non-Western settings could reveal additional cultural factors.

There is a significant difference between the motivation behind ensemble membership for adolescents and older musicians in this research. The sample size is a limitation that inhibits conclusions about intergenerational ensemble collaboration being clearly made. The absence of the theme of friendship for older musicians in favour of the importance of being musically challenged should be explored with other ensembles with a greater number of variables.

Future research

Future possibilities for research include; exploration of a variety of instrumental ensembles not represented here, such as contemporary ensembles and world music ensembles; use of a mixed methods methodology for large-scale collaborations; phenomenological or ethnographical study of some of the prominent composers of works requiring collaboration; and empirical research investigating the impact of cultural factors on the process of collaborations.

Finally, I believe that the shared music-making can be a powerfully uniting experience. Not only should school ensembles engage more regularly with other institutions, instead of the maligned pursuit of ensemble competition, but the process deserves wider research attention. I hope that this thesis provides a body of work which can be built on by future researchers.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics permission, article three

MONASH University

Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)
Research Office

Human Ethics Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the project below was considered by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Committee was satisfied that the proposal meets the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and has granted approval.

Project Number:	CF14/3996 - 2014002070
Project Title:	Reflections on School Music: students involved in collaborative performance projects
Chief Investigator:	Assoc Prof Jane Southcott
Approved:	**From:** 15 January 2015 **To:** 15 January 2020

Terms of approval - *Failure to comply with the terms below is in breach of your approval and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.*

1. The Chief investigator is responsible for ensuring that permission letters are obtained, <u>if relevant</u>, before any data collection can occur at the specified organisation.
2. Approval is only valid whilst you hold a position at Monash University.
3. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure the project is conducted as approved by MUHREC.
4. You should notify MUHREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
5. The Explanatory Statement must be on Monash University letterhead and the Monash University complaints clause must include your project number.
6. **Amendments to the approved project (including changes in personnel):** Require the submission of a Request for Amendment form to MUHREC and must not begin without written approval from MUHREC. Substantial variations may require a new application.
7. **Future correspondence:** Please quote the project number and project title above in any further correspondence.
8. **Annual reports:** Continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an Annual Report. This is determined by the date of your letter of approval.
9. **Final report:** A Final Report should be provided at the conclusion of the project. MUHREC should be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected date of completion.
10. **Monitoring:** Projects may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by MUHREC at any time.
11. **Retention and storage of data:** The Chief Investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of original data pertaining to a project for a minimum period of five years.

Professor Nip Thomson
Chair, MUHREC

cc: Mr Andrew Sutherland

MONASH University

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

University of Western Australia, School of Music and Churchlands Senior High School Music Department

Project: School and university music collaboration: A case study of a performance of Britten's War Requiem

Associate Professor Jane Southcott	Andrew Sutherland
Faculty of Education	███████████████
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You are invited to take part in this study. Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether or not to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the researchers via the phone numbers or email addresses listed above.

What does the research involve?

The aim of this project is to examine whether collaborative performance opportunities form a critical incident which causes students to remain actively engaged in music after graduating from school.

Participants will be asked around seven questions in the first interview and seven questions in the second interview. The first interview will take place around 2 – 3 weeks before the performance. The second interview will take place within two weeks after the performance. Both interviews should not last any longer than an hour. The interviews will be audio-recorded

Why were you chosen for this research?

You were invited to participate by the researcher due to your involvement in the collaborative performance project of Britten's *War Requiem*.

Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research

Please sign the consent form and return to the researcher before the commencement of the interview. You have the right to withdraw from the research project at any time up to the submission of the text for publication. You will be sent the transcript of the interview or a copy of the audio recording if you prefer for you to confirm. You can refuse to answer any particular question and if you change your mind about being involved in this study, you can withdraw prior to your confirmation of the interview transcript or recording. You can remain anonymous in the content of the research and a pseudonym will be used in reference to your responses. However you may decide that you wish to be named in any thesis or publication that arises from this research. Your options are listed on the Consent Form.

Possible benefits and risks to participants

While there are no direct benefits to the participants, it is hoped that the research will help music teachers understand what aspects of music education most lead to active music engagement after students graduate from secondary school.

The interview will not cause any discomfort to the participants other than the time taken to answer the questions. The questions will not address anything that could cause the participants trauma or irritation.

Confidentiality

Reference to your responses will be made with use of a pseudonym. The data from all participants of the research will be submitted for publication in appropriate peer-reviewed journal and then ultimately for submission for the fulfilment of a PhD. It is possible that the research will be presented at relevant conferences. Any reference you make to students or other individuals will also be anonymous and pseudonyms will be used to protect identification.

Storage of data

The information provided during the interview will be stored in a password-protected computer stored by the researcher. The chief investigator will also have a copy of the data on a password-protected computer. The data in its raw format will be destroyed five years after the successful completion of the PhD.

Results

Participants may have access to the transcription of the interview if the request is made. Participants may also request an electronic copy of the published journal article once it is available. Both requests can be made via email or telephone.

Complaints

Should you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics (MUHREC):

Executive Officer
Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)
Room 111, Building 3e
Research Office
Monash University VIC 3800

Thank you,

Assoc. Prof. Jane Southcott

MONASH University

CONSENT FORM

School and university music collaboration: A case study of a performance of Britten's War Requiem.

Chief Investigator: Associate Professor, Jane Southcott

Student Investigator: Andrew Sutherland

I have been asked to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have read and understood the Explanatory Statement and I hereby consent to participate in this project.

I consent to the following:	Yes	No
Participating in an audio-recorded interview	☐	☐
Having my responses transcribed by the researcher	☐	☐
Having my responses used in academic research under a pseudonym	☐	☐
Participating in a follow-up interview if more information is required	☐	☐
I am happy for my real name to be used in the study	☐	☐
	☐	☐

Name of Participant _____

Participant Signature _____ **Date** _____