Music and Collaboration:

Rapport, Leadership and the Role of the Individual in Collaborative Processes

Natalie Grant

The Faculty of the VCA and Music

The University of Melbourne

October 5, 2010

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Music Performance (by Research)

Abstract

This research investigates the collaborative processes that occur when new creative work is born, with a particular focus on musical collaborations. This thesis is based upon the responses to interviews that were conducted with 25 artists currently engaged in professional collaborative arts practice. Each artist was asked to define collaboration, then to give details of past collaborative experiences. All of the artists' answers and experiences varied, but there were three areas that were of particular interest to all of the participants. These were: the relevance (if any) of rapport within collaborative arts practice, the role of the individual in collaborations, and the place of leadership in collaborations. This thesis shows that many of the artists involved in this study valued some kind of personal rapport within a collaborative project. A number of the artists claimed that it was not possible to separate artistic and personal rapport, and that they only wished to work with artists with whom they had that kind of rapport. But in the absence of a close personal relationship many of the participants in this study valued mutual respect, openness and understanding of personal differences within collaborative processes. Each artist had different experiences of the roles of the individual and of leadership within collaborative projects. This study found that the answers to these questions varied mostly depending on the individual artist's role in a particular project, their understanding of that role and their relationship to others in the collaboration. All the artists agreed that it is of utmost importance to be clear of one's role in collaboration in order to function successfully and creatively with other artists. Many of the artists involved in this study also agreed that if a collaborative project is to be led then it should be done so in a non-dictatorial fashion, and that if this is not possible then the project should not be labeled 'collaborative'. With this in mind some of the participants in this study amended their definition of collaboration throughout the interview process, as close examination of their experiences sometimes didn't match up with their initial thoughts on the subject. The overall results of this thesis are many and varied, and give a detailed insight into current thinking on collaborative processes within music.

Declaration of Authenticity

This is to certify that:

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University, and is between 10,000 and 15,000 words in length.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made.

N. Grant

5/10/2010

Acknowledgements

The following thesis presents the findings of a series of interviews conducted in Australia, in person and online in 2010. This thesis has been an undertaking that, by definition, required the energies and expertise of numerous individuals. All have my deepest gratitude for helping to make this project possible.

Twenty-five professional artists from the fields of music, dance, theatre, instrument making and production assisted with my research, and I wish to acknowledge the gracious offerings of their time, thoughts and experiences that have proved vital to this study. Each artist welcomed the opportunity to share their expertise and to be involved in this study, responding patiently and thoughtfully to a series of questions about collaborative works and processes.

I also wish to thank my fellow students and lecturers at the Faculty of the VCA and Music, University of Melbourne, for their openness, and for their interest in my work. In particular I wish to thank Dr. Donna Coleman, Dr. Robert Vincs, Dr. Barry Bignell, and Joan Pollock for their tireless efforts and consistent support. There are countless teachers, students and artists who have inspired me to collaborate and create my own work. They are too many to name here, but I appreciate and am deeply grateful for their encouragement.

Contents

1. Introduction

As a percussionist my professional experiences include creating works with other musicians, composers, puppeteers, sculptors, filmmakers, actors, dancers and visual artists. I have noticed that in my work, and across the various collaborations I have been involved with, various issues arise that are often unique to the particular situation I am working in. There seem to be a variety of constants that are shared amongst several collaborations. My intention in this thesis is to examine the collaborative experience of a number of arts practitioners. I aim to investigate the collaborative processes that occur in creative music making. In particular, I will investigate the roles of rapport, the individual and leadership in the collaborative process.

I approached a number of professional artists from the fields of music, dance, theatre, instrument making and production to assist with my research. All of these artists have experienced collaborations that had musical **or** performance/recording-based outcomes. Also, each participant had a different definition of collaboration, based on the nature of their art and their experiences.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines the word 'collaboration' as:

> Labour, co-operation; *esp.* in literary, artistic, or scientific work.[1]

For the purpose of this research, collaboration will be defined as the interaction between different artists (with each other as well as with their environments). In addition, the word *artist*, for the duration of the thesis, will be an all-encompassing word used to describe all of the musicians, composers, producers, and other participants in this study.

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[1] Oxford English Dictionary: "collaboration," http://dictionary.oed.com.ezp.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cgi/entry/50043844?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=collaboration&first=1&max_to_show=10 accessed January 10, 2010.

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Artists collaborate for many different reasons - sometimes for technical purposes or as a means to express an individual's pre-established idea. In the case of film scores and in most orchestral and chamber music, the script or score is already composed, and the collaboration on the part of the actors and musicians is a means for expressing a pre-determined idea. At other times, collaboration takes place during the creative process, as a platform for expression through the simultaneous interaction of artists. Collaboration opens up new thoughts, ideas, approaches to process and outcomes. It brings new and different audiences, and potentially opens projects up to new media.

There are many elements that can affect an artist's work regardless of their location. Artists constantly work within their own particular knowledge base. Therefore, when artists from a variety of disciplines, countries and cultures create artistic works together, they not only collaborate with their art, but also bring together completely different sets of values, perspectives and experiences based on their own lives and environments. Similarly, artists can draw on ideas and skills from collaborative projects in their own solo work, and introduce these into further/future collaborations.

Arguably, developments in technology and communications, and the Internet in particular have brought artists closer together, enabling new works to develop rapidly without the artists having to be in the same room. Merging the voices of artists and drawing inspiration from different environments encourages diversity and maintains individuality.

This thesis is an attempt to understand my fascination with the enormous range of interactions that may be loosely labeled 'collaborative.' These kinds of interactions are, in effect, negotiations of notated and oral cultural language and heritage. These are mediated through the personal relationships and convergence of the ideas and skills each practitioner brings. Although I have chosen to focus mainly on Australian artists, and on collaborations revolving around music, I believe these to be just a few of the many existing narratives relating to the arts and other cultural practices.

2. Methodology

My goal in conducting this research project is to investigate the experiences of musical collaborations, the nature of collaborative practice, and the processes involved. By interviewing artists from a variety of background and disciplines, my premise is that the study of their combined experiences will lead to a deeper understanding of the often-used term 'collaboration.' In particular, this project will focus on the different roles and relationships found within collaborative arts practices.

An entire range of personal and environmental factors can arguably influence one's artwork. When different artists join to create something, they combine the results of all their previous work and experiences. Although this can result in an incredibly rich variety of shared language and experience, discipline-specific language and varying levels of flexibility and open-mindedness can greatly influence a collaborative relationship.

In professional situations I have witnessed what I believe to be the overuse of the word 'collaboration.' In particular, I refer to situations where an artist reproduces someone else's *work* in the exact way that the creator requires, without space for any or much personal or creative input on the part of the artist/performer. I have been interested to see if these elements are present in other artists' experiences or merely unique to my own. This project is a way of finding out if my experiences are similar to others.

The basic methodology in this project initially consisted of drawing up a list of potential interview candidates. These artists were then contacted via email, phone, through mutual friends/acquaintances and in person and asked to provide their input for the research.

I chose these particular artists because of the kind of work they do. I began by approaching people that I knew, had worked with or had seen/heard of and thought would be relevant to the study. There are just as many artists that I could have interviewed but didn't, due to time constraints on their part or mine. The project also required a moderately broad range of artists, not just percussionists, or instrumentalists, and so there needed to be a cut-off point within each discipline and genre.

This study drew near-unanimous participation and enthusiasm. Apart from two international participants (one who emailed responses to written questions and one who was interviewed online), all interviews were conducted in real time, face-to-face, in Melbourne between February and May 2010, and recorded on a small digital recording device. A total of 25 artists from a number of disciplines offered their time and thoughts to the project. The number was realistic given both the time and word limits imposed on the thesis, as well as to allow an in-depth study of the subject matter involved.

The list of artists grew as some of the artists had suggestions for others to interview. Even the interview process itself became quite 'collaborative,' as I worked together with the participants on questions. We agreed on times to meet, some contacting one another other on my behalf to inquire about potential interviews. In this way we delved together into their ideas and experiences of collaboration.

I drew up a 'master-list' of questions before the interview process had begun, covering the whole gamut of the who, what, why and how of collaboration, beginning by first asking the participant to define collaboration, then following with a series of questions relating to their experiences. The questions arose from my own experiences, making work by myself and with other artists, my experiences as the leader of collaborative projects, as a participant in other peoples', and also having been involved in more democratic creative processes.

This long list of questions - covering a wide range of areas and possible scenarios - enabled me to tailor each interview to each individual based on my prior knowledge of their work. There were other areas that I was interested in, and questions asked but not included in this study due to time constraints and word limits and relevancy, but perhaps they will be included in a broader study in the future.

I felt that by talking face-to-face with the participants I could elicit candid responses, and tailor the order of the questions to the flow of the interview and to each artist's particular experiences. Some early investigation showed me that artists were going to be much more willing to participate in a 30-60 minute one-off interview, than to sit and fill out a form at home in their own time.

Each interview was transcribed, and from the quotes and anecdotes of all the artists involved I began to organise common ideas into sections. The transcriptions and the audio recordings of the interviews allowed for accuracy when quoting and also enabled me to go back and check specific details if required. My research also involved consulting available books, journals and online resources, but it was the interviews ... that have formed the main resource for this project.

All the participants have agreed to have their names known, and I have not used pseudonyms because I felt it important (as an historical snapshot of creative collaboration in 2010), to show how all the participants' work fits together. The process of my relatively small project forms part of a bigger picture. It should be noted that each participant was given the option of being named or not in the findings of my research. As each chose to be named, it may have been possible that they were self-censoring their answers.

In saying this, I found in general a very open and trusting response from all involved. The arts practitioners I chose to interview choose collaboration and are therefore seemingly open to conversation. They also appeared to have a genuine, unguarded desire to talk about their work. Whatever amount of background information they chose to share, they shared their experiences of collaboration and collective art making willingly.

As I delved further into my research it became clear that for everyone, artist or otherwise, collaboration is part of our lives. I tried to bring that awareness to my work on this project. It also became clear that although collaboration is inherent in everything we do, there are particular reasons why some artists consistently seek out new people to collaborate with, or desperately hold onto the relationships that have been formed by long-term collaborations. These situations, their causes and outcomes will be investigated further throughout this thesis.

2a. List of Participants and Principle Disciplines

Peter Neville: Percussionist

Alex Pertout: Percussionist

Yumi Umiumare: Butoh Dancer

Elaine Miles: Glass Blower

Rosemary Joy: Instrument Builder

Tony Gould: Pianist

Greg Arnold: Singer/Songwriter

Eugene Ughetti: Percussionist

Ros Warby: Dancer

Myles Mumford: Sound Artist/Producer

David Shea: Pianist/Composer

John Arcaro: Percussionist

Helen Mountford: Cellist

Dave McCluney: Record Engineer/Producer

Ros Bandt: Sound Artist

James Hullick: Composer

Tony Hicks: Woodwind artist

Kutcha Edwards: Singer/Songwriter

David Chisholm: Composer

Robin Fox: Sound and Visual Artist

Graeme Leak: Percussionist/Composer

David Young: Composer

David Jones: Drummer/Percussionist

Fritz Hauser: Percussionist/Composer

Rick Walker: Percussionist/Multi-Instrumentalist

3. Defining Collaboration

"Toward a shared vision … "[2]

Vera John-Steiner

As a starting point for this research, collaboration was defined as the awareness, interactions and relationships between different artists, with each other as well as with their environments. The idea was that this was a working definition, to be put to the test in the subsequent interviews. Whether the actual 'collaboration' lies in the process of creating a musical work, a recording, or an artwork involving music, or whether the outcome of the work itself *is* the collaboration, are all ideas to be investigated in this project.

The first question asked in all the interviews was: "as an artist, how would you define collaboration?" This question seemed like an easy one for most of the candidates, until they began to elaborate on all the different artistic projects they'd been involved with at that point, and the lines began to blur (between collaboration and co-operation, and between art and work).

The majority of definitions given began very generally, as "creating work together," "working with any other artist … working with anybody." Many of the participants shared very positive experiences of working with other artists, but also described situations that were difficult or draining. Some decided by the end of the interview that certain projects actually hadn't been 'collaborative' at all! Composer David Shea said that "collaboration is a pain in the ass," something to be done only if you really, really want to. Composer James Hullick suggested that "the idea of collaboration is a bit like this Platonic idea of perfect forms; it doesn't really exist in the real world!"

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[2] Vera John-Steiner, *Creative Collaboration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), xv.

Some of the artists had a particularly one-sided definition of collaboration. Singer/songwriter Kutcha Edwards stated that "collaboration, for me, is somebody else collaborating with me. I'm not really collaborating in a sense with them, because they're coming to who I am, where I come from." Composer David Chisholm said, in jest, that "the cynical version is you get people to invest in the work with ideas and labor for less than."

Having collated all these different definitions, the only initial conclusion that could be drawn was that there were many definitions of collaboration. The alternative opinion was that nothing is collaboration, and no project or artwork could actually live up to the high standards imposed by many of these definitions.

Percussionist Peter Neville, who has engaged in all manner of notated and improvised musical performance and recording throughout his career, said:

> I can't see how there can be any music outside of a total solo performance that doesn't require collaboration. I think it's always collaboration along the way, and if you're an open person you're always learning, whether it's from listening to the other sections of the orchestra or watching how the conductor communicates with musicians, and they're skills that you can bring into the rehearsal room. If you're just making a show from scratch you have to learn how to excite people, how to motivate people, how to accommodate their needs, how to successfully put your ideas forward in a way that people will be receptive to them. All these skills … it's all part of the same continuum.

David Shea agreed:

> I don't understand what a non-collaborative work could be … every single time there's a solo musician they deal with their body and objects, which you could call performance art. They deal with space and the relationship of the body in space, which is architecture. It's using the

brain and the body, which is neurochemistry, and psychic energy …
What we do is collaborative …

Although individual artists spend some of their formative years honing technical skills on their own, it may be suggested that even the input of teachers and other practitioners can be seen as collaborative. One can "always learn from other people by watching them work … that's always the case," according to Robin Fox. For Rosemary Joy, "it's inspiring to see how other people work … this whole journey I've been on is a result of the different people I've worked with and the different ideas that have come up, and the different possibilities," she said. This research project is no different. Conversing with different artists through face-to-face interviews gave insights into other conversations, artworks and experiences. In reporting the interview findings I am adding my own voice, hoping that others will respond and continue the conversation.

Something that came across quite strongly from all of the artists was the importance of collaboration to their work and to their creative process. The influence of other artists with different backgrounds, different skills, and different perspectives seemed vital. Many problems were described as being outweighed by the outcomes of collaborative artworks, and because of this artists continue to collaborate.

Artists' perspectives and definitions of collaboration depend on the different roles they have played in collaborative projects. Some of the participants in this study are instrumentalists who have performed other people's works; others are composers and musicians who solely perform their own work. Instrument builders and composers who work with musicians and other artists to realise their artistic visions also contributed. The individual definitions seemed to depend greatly on one's position within a project.

Percussionist Alex Pertout suggested that real collaboration can only occur "where people are playing in the moment and something develops," in performance. Others defined it more in the process and creation of work before it is presented to anyone else. Glass artist Elaine Miles described it as "finding a

common theme, a common concept, and working very closely together when you're all in one room; creating work together." For sound engineer/producer Dave McCluney it's about "getting involved with the musician and trying to find out what sort of things they're after for the project."

Some artists likened artistic collaboration to a relationship with a family member, a lover, or a friend. Composer/producer/sound artist Myles Mumford described it like this: (Collaboration) "is like a relationship. Various relationships have different roles for the people in them, so a parent-child relationship is no less important but it is different from a marriage relationship, which is different from a friend relationship, which is different from a mentor to a student. I guess I'd have to say it is different based on the situations but it is about a relationship or an interaction." Interestingly, David Chisholm, who often works closely with Myles, said that, "it is a really personal relationship, it's as important as a lover or, you know? I won't say a child, but it's as important as a lover; it's got that intimacy to it, particularly when you're welding your practices together for a period of time, and very publicly … I can't work with people I don't like or respect, or vice versa, that don't respect me, you just can't because all the time I'm preoccupied with how poorly I'm being treated. The professional/personal relationship is absolutely interlinked."

There was a distinction between what the artists described as 'real' collaboration or not, in distilling and refining these definitions through descriptions of their work and experiences. The most commonly offered definitions fell into several categories:

One of these was the idea of individuals bringing skills that are particular and separate to an existing project. Most of the participants spoke of wanting to have the input of a particular artist because of the specific work that that person does, or being invited to participate in a collaborative project because of certain skills they themselves possess. In terms of inter-disciplinary or inter-cultural collaboration, they spoke of bringing their particular skills and ways of working into another artist's environment. Alex Pertout has done a lot of session work, some that he described as collaborative, some as purely 'work' or just 'a gig.'

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He described the ones that he thought were truly collaborative as, "where you are asked to really devise and develop areas of music that are going to help the overall content of the product that is going to be the final product, the recording."

The idea of collaboration as creating something from nothing, through a combination of ideas and skill sets, is linked to the previous idea. A lot of the artists painted beautiful images of the collaborative process. They described it as "a mixture of two minds, a fusing of two ideologies," and a "meeting as equals, not one in charge of the other."

An idea that was raised several times throughout the course of the interview process was that the word 'collaboration' can infer a certain amount of mutual respect and creative input. If a project is to be labeled 'collaborative' that there should be equality in regards to the weight of everyone's opinions and input into the project, particularly as opposed to "one or more of the parties replicating somebody else's ideas," as Peter Neville put it. Even if the level of contribution is not 100% equal, at least there should be "some kind of co-contribution to a common goal." Percussionist John Arcaro described 'true' collaboration as "everyone really having input and … as a group deciding on things rather than just people doing their own thing or somebody telling the others what they're actually doing." David Chisholm described it as implying "a distribution and a kind of egalitarian approach in terms of labor and investment." He went on to suggest that the real value of collaboration comes "from a democratic idea that … it doesn't matter where the best idea comes from as long as it's recognised as the best idea."

There was also a general sense of understanding that the reality of a collaborative project might not live up to these utopian ideals, but nevertheless that they were something to strive towards. "The ideal form of a collaboration would be that everyone's on equal footing and everyone gets along, and they work collectively towards some end," stated James Hullick, who then went on to say that "I think a lot of people believe that's what collaborations are, but in my experience they're always varied and not entirely collaborative in their various iterations."

This brings up another distinction that arose out of the interviews, the difference between a purely democratic collaborative process (which some argued is not actually possible), and 'led' collaborations. Artists shared experiences of being on both sides of this kind of process, and had differing opinions as to whether this could actually still be labeled as collaborative.

Some argued that on larger scale projects some kind of leadership is necessary. According to dancer Yumi Umimare, "if it's among so many people (a) leader (needs) to be requested, but it's a fine line because 'leader' means 'director' who's brought this concept … (and) everybody has to follow their aesthetic."[3] Others described the experience of a shifting leadership role, depending on the task at hand and the various skill sets of all the participating artists. Elaine Miles describing it as an affectionate "tug of war."

There was a strong feeling amongst some of the artists interviewed that collaborative projects really do need someone who has the final say. Whereas others voiced a strong dislike for any kind of leadership in the groups they participate in. Dancer/choreographer Ros Warby, who has been working in the same democratic environment for nearly twenty years, said, "I couldn't even begin to try and do that." David Chisholm pointed out that "it's a tricky word when you're 'collaborating' with someone who's got a company or is the instigator of that kind of project."

It seems to be that when artists are clear about their roles, they do not necessarily mind being 'directed'. However if a project is pitched as being collaborative or a collective venture they usually don't want to be told what to do.

Throughout the interview process there arose a distinction between co-operation and collaboration, and the differences between collaborating in the creation of art and 'working' on a project with someone else, or with a group. In

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[3] Personal interview with Yumi Umiumare, February 9, 2010, p91.

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general, as artists turned to talk about projects that they themselves initiated, their views on leadership and what defines collaboration began to shift. David Chisholm said that he likes "to talk about it as work, as labor, and recognise what it is. I like the idea of calling it working together. But then I'll have a creative team, like a production team I think more collaboratively, like a lighting designer and a designer. I like the idea of being able to say, 'it's this,' and 'what do you think?' and bouncing ideas. But still it's much more me signing off on something ultimately."

This became a turning point in the thinking of some of the participants, where they began to question if the experiences they had just described actually matched up with their initial definition of collaboration, whether that definition needed to be altered or whether their experiences (for the most part) couldn't be counted as 'collaborative.' David Chisholm put it this way: "I've actually talked myself around from thinking about it as a collaborative artist to thinking that I'm more of a co-operative (artist) … which implies that everyone makes it together but that ultimately it's driven by a central idea which I've generated." Another decided, after much deliberation, that, "I think there are very few proper collaborations around, to be frank; heaps of fusion of ideas and heaps of, kind of, mixing this and the other."

Expectations regarding equality differ depending on one's role in a project. Performers in a project may expect an equal cut, whereas a composer or producer might expect more as they initiated, composed or curated the work. James Hullick explained that "it is expected that people will be on an equal footing but they never are, in bands. There's always someone who's got everyone together, or a couple of people who sort of drive the band, and organise the gigs … I found that because it was expected to be equal, generally, in band situations that tended to cause the arguments, because it never was."

The idea of contributing something to a shared project, whilst maintaining individuality was expressed by a number of the participants. Yumi Umiumare described collaboration as "each artist remain(ing) individual, so keep(ing their)

individual diversity or whatever their character or expertise is." Cellist Helen Mountford (who collaborates regularly with dancer Ros Warby) stated that "collaboration for me means a willingness and a desire to let other people's thing change what you do but while staying completely true to what you do."

Can the concept of collaboration actually be defined? And does it really matter in the context of this thesis? Perhaps some clarity may be found by deciding on what is <u>not</u> collaboration. Alex Pertout described this as when he is "given a part to play," as opposed to having some input into that part. He described the scenario of handing over finite charts or roles as "people helping your project or developing your project or helping in your project," as distinct from collaboration. Singer, songwriter and producer Greg Arnold described the bulk of what he does as "less collaborative than, say, an improvised piece where everyone's responding to things." He also said that he probably doesn't count as a real artistic collaboration "that point from, once the finished album is done and it goes into the stage of marketing and things like that. Even though you are still working together on the same project I think that's a different process," he said.

In addition to defining collaboration versus non-collaboration, some artists also described the situation where collaboration *becomes* non-collaboration over time. Percussionist Eugene Ughetti described a long-term collaboration with Elaine Miles that he considered to be very much 'collaborative' as initially they were getting to know each other and each other's crafts. A few years down the track, he considers the work that they present as less 'hands-on' collaborative, as they are now familiar enough with each other's work that they are able to create their separate parts in isolation.

There is a school of thought, not new to this research, of collaboration as a 'third hand'[4]; the idea that an artwork created by several individuals has the potential to be different and greater than the work that any of those individuals may have achieved on their own. For Myles Mumford, this means "that if we only do what I want to do then we just made what I wanted to make, and I might

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[4] Charles Green, *The Third Hand: Collaboration in Art From Conceptualism to Postmodernism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).

as well have just been making it by myself." Elaine Miles described the experience of making work with artists from different backgrounds as "producing work you couldn't produce on your own … everyone brings skills and you get a much bigger and broader outcome than you could ever do on your own."

Woodwind player Tony Hicks wondered whether this 'third hand', and the influence of collaborating partners allow "you to take steps you hadn't conceived of, or, the door opens … you've seen the door there but you haven't known how to open it, and via collaboration new things come along." Cellist Helen Mountford described playing with Ros Warby, and also playing in a dance space, as totally different to playing with musicians in more traditional music spaces, saying "I just know I end up playing (what) I wouldn't have played … at home at all. And I'm very happy to go … that's where I want to be taken, somewhere else, that's why I do it."

How an artist defines collaboration depends greatly on their personal experiences, and the roles they have played in the production of artwork, both of their own and of other artists'. Further investigation into other areas explored in the interviews may shed more light on this, but the goal of this research was not simply to define the term. The purpose of this was to open a dialogue with each of the participating artists, and to give them a framework and an entry point to begin to describe their experiences.

4. Rapport

"Music's too precious for me to get involved with people that
I don't like, basically. I'm totally not interested … "

Tony Gould

Many of the participants in this study defined collaboration as the coming together of like-minded artists, of those with shared visions and similar values. Some even likened collaboration to a personal relationship, be it a family relationship, or that of a friend or lover. Elaine Miles described collaboration as "kind of like a marriage … you have to be really good at communicating." For Myles Mumford, also, "all the permutations of relationships exist in the permutations of collaborations." A number of similar responses validated the question of whether some kind of strength of personal relationship (or any kind of personal connection) is essential, preferable, of benefit or hindrance to a collaborative situation.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'rapport' as a "labour, co-operation; *esp.* in literary, artistic, or scientific work."[5] For the purposes of this study the participants were not asked to define rapport, but rather, whether they thought it to be a necessary element in collaboration. Each participant detailed from their own experiences the rewards and costs of friendships that intersect with artistic practice, and the extent to which rapport has been an essential and sometimes destructive component in their collaborative experiences.

Many of the artists involved claimed that a certain level of rapport is vital to any collaborative process. For some, like composer/percussionist Graeme Leak, it is

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[5] Oxford English Dictionary: "collaboration"
http://dictionary.oed.com.ezp.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cgi/entry/50043844?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=collaboration&first=1&max_to_show=10 accessed January 10, 2010.

a pre-requisite; "I'd say that the rapport for me happens before the collaboration," he said. "I wouldn't start working with someone until I knew that we got along." And for Tony Hicks, "if there's no rapport there's no collaboration, there's no relationship." Other participants in this study described a personal rapport as an added bonus, if and when it occurs. Composer James Hullick declared that, "I don't think you need to be friends … I don't think you need to socialise, but it's fun if you do."

Some of the participants in this study described differences between the personal rapport that one might have with a collaborative partner, as opposed to artistic rapport. They referred to a level of professionalism necessary in collaborative situations, and the difference between having respect for someone's work and 'getting along', socially. "I don't think it [a personal rapport] is necessary," said composer David Young. "I have actually worked with people with whom I don't really have a rapport, in a personal sense. But I have enormous respect for their work, and it's been great."

For sound and visual artist Robin Fox, also, "that's the difference between friendship and professionalism … so, two people whose artistic practice, for example, is very well matched, could come up with a great collaboration without ever going out for dinner, or doing anything like that. So I don't think it's necessary," he said. Likewise, for drummer David Jones, "it doesn't always match up that it's the ideal person, like someone you'd really like to hang out with, but their work might be really amazing and it's fantastic working together, that's as far as it goes," he said, "and that's fine too, not to have expectation about that."

In general, however, the participants in this study spoke of striving for some kind of personal relationship with collaborative partners, and of a preference for situations where this is possible. For percussionist Peter Neville, even one-off collaborations necessitate this kind of effort. "Being a freelancer," he said, "you'll turn up to a gig and people won't even introduce you to the people you're playing with, and suddenly off you go. How can you make a meaningful connection without any personal touch?"

Similarly, instrument maker Rosemary Joy cited collaborative situations where the artists involved may not feel the need to develop a personal connection because the collaboration is purely a means to an end. She explained the importance of feeling "interested and engaged and not just … passive. To be excited in some way by the possibilities of what's going to happen and not just be 'this is a just a job.'"

Some participants described a kind of natural or instant rapport that they have found with other artists. They contrasted this experience with that of a rapport that never comes to fruition, despite many attempts. According to Tony Hicks, "with some players it just never worked, and with other players it worked right from the start." In situations where artistic rapport is lacking, he said, "it's not that we're not trying to communicate musically, it's just we have languages that don't fit together naturally, so we're having to make too many compromises."

Alongside descriptions of instant rapport, or 'non-rapport', there were many accounts of a rapport that is developed and nurtured over time. Ros Warby spoke of the twenty-year working relationship she has nurtured with Helen Mountford and designer Margie Medlin. "We've grown into this (collaboration) together," she said, "we're very good listeners to each other … we've each learnt how to work in that dynamic beautifully, and from that place you can really find the work."

In contrast to this, some participants described experiences of working with particular artists over a long period of time but never developing any kind of rapport with those artists. For Tony Hicks, "there are musicians who I've played with in theatre contexts and those more commercial parts of the industry … for 20 or 30 years and still don't like playing with them because the concept doesn't fit … when you play together it's hard work."

Some participants spoke of the 'jam' culture of improvised, free and jazz music. Artists who involve themselves in fairly spontaneous forms of collaboration such as improvised performances or jam sessions with people they haven't worked

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with before, described a kind of instant, natural rapport that can occur. Percussionist Peter Neville explained, "sometimes you could just have an instantaneous rapport … you often hear of improvised musicians who get in a room and suddenly it all clicks and they're making wonderful music straight off." However, no one seemed to be able to articulate exactly what it is that makes for that special spontaneous rapport. For Tony Hicks, "sometimes the first thing you play with someone will work, and that's like the improvisations process; sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't, and you don't know why."

Other participants in this study were familiar with more theatre-based approaches to making work, when all parties create something together, in a room, from scratch. For Ros Warby, "working on the floor together, listening and letting the work unfold out of that place" is preferential. "And it's only by the fact that the rapport is there that anything happens, and the interest, in each other's person and in each other's work… I do find not having that underlying trust and friendship with a collaborator quite challenging because it's just exhausting to get through to the very raw essence of what you're trying to find, because of personalities …" she said.

When creating a new work from scratch it can take awhile for different artists to warm to each other and to the project. "In terms of getting traction with a collaborative project, building a piece … it usually takes a week or two for everything to find it's feet, for people to feel comfortable perhaps to throw their ideas in, to feel that everything's going to be valued," said Peter Neville. "And it's not even that so much, but it takes a while if you're starting with a blank slate, for the notion of the project to form."

Robin Fox concurred: "I think there is a wariness in the beginning with a lot of collaborative processes where I guess each member of the collaborative group is a bit nervous about whether their ideas are going to be accepted into the group," he said. "And that's a bit like anything, like a public speaking issue or whatever. It's just, sort of, nerves, a sense of nerves, and those nerves can be really accentuated or exacerbated by the personalities involved or they can be completely swept away and everything's beautiful. So if there's an instant

rapport that's fantastic, but if not it can be kind of awkward for a little while, and then either it works or it doesn't. And usually if it works then that's the basis for the rapport to get better."

Ros Warby claimed that working over a long period of time with a collaborative partner can benefit both personal rapport and the work itself. "Sticking to the same creative team and working from where we left off to the next point is much more satisfying [than changing all the time]," she said. "It kind of benefits the work too." Pianist Tony Gould also referred to the growth of personal and artistic relationships over time. In particular, he cited his collaboration with David Jones, recalling David taking time to write out some complicated rhythms to help with a solo that Tony was preparing, and saying, "you can't do that on a casual basis unless you really love someone, and so that sort of thing, that personal thing, it's grown with David and I," he said.

Other participants shared stories of long-term collaborations where their art and personal relationships have grown together: "It's about a shared history," recounted Peter Neville, speaking of several long-term collaborations with Swiss percussionists, and of building a solid platform from which to continue working together. "You see them and you're straight into it, it's a good friendship," he said. There is also a shared language that can develop between long-term collaborators. For Greg Arnold and Dave McCluney, this has cut down a lot of time in the studio. When recording together, Greg said that now, after many years, "I'll often just have to go 'you know, that sound,' and he'll [Dave] know what I mean. It moves into that thing of communication where you don't have to be as articulate," he said. This makes for "a very happy and successful (collaborative relationship) … you kind of have a good … not only a shared language that can communicate ideas but just a global shared language that you just move that pace …"

Many artists involved in this study also cited trust, along with rapport, as a successful element in long-term collaborations. "The more we work [together]," said Myles Mumford of his work with David Chisholm, "the more we trust each

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other to do our bits … the more I know what he's going to want, and the more I know that he's going to give me what I want; it's been a great process."

Some of the participants also thought that trust and friendship made for more comfortable and less controlling collaborative relationships. Recounting nearly twenty years of playing the music of Richard Barrett, Peter Neville said that "the early pieces were completely notated, controlled, but over time as we've developed a better relationship with him the music's opened up. So now he's very comfortable giving us improvised scores, as it were." Percussionist Rick Walker agreed that rapport is vital in an open and relaxed collaborative situation: "rapport is everything in collaboration," he said, "because if you don't establish it, then people get nervous and really nervous people don't tend to collaborate well in my experience."

In addition to this, some of the participants in this study shared the opinion that artists may be more prepared to compromise their own vision for one of someone whom they trust and respect. "I think over time," said Peter Neville, "people's natural personalities will emerge more and more, and at a certain point perhaps other members of the collective may be more happy to surrender their voice in order that the work can proceed." In this case the work benefits from a personal rapport as well as an artistic one.

According to some of the participants, if we trust someone else, we are less likely to worry about the outcomes of their contribution to a collaborative project, or about what they're 'doing' to our music/art. When speaking of her twenty-year collaboration with Ros Warby, Helen Mountford said, "we just have incredibly implicit trust … I've now worked with her long enough that I just so trust that she … I trust her relationship with music so freely that I have no … I don't ever feel the anxiety that she would somehow misinterpret music or do something strange with it … I trust that she knows what she's doing really. And I trust the thing that what we make together works together because it has often enough."

Several of the composers who took part in this study have written music for a specific performer, based on a personal relationship and a shared history with

that particular artist. "Any musician that I work with over a long period of time," said James Hullick, "the music becomes partly about them, and I don't write … I try not to write music that's just for any player; it's usually for a person in mind. And I don't care who plays it after that," he said. Rosemary Joy was also "really interested in personalising the instrument for a particular musician because I didn't want the musicians to be just technicians, like 'this is my idea, you perform this,' but to create something that was kind of in some way coming from something they'd told me, 'this is my favourite sound,' and I'd try and create a tiny world that will then inspire them. So it's like I'm giving them a gift and then they give that to the audience, in a way," she said, "it was almost like the musician was the audience for the instrument."

Whilst providing details of friendships and artistic rapports, some of the participants in this study also thought that there may sometimes be a kind of freedom in not having a close personal relationship with a collaborative partner. "In some ways you get better results if you're not great friends," said James Hullick, "because it's a lot easier … you're maybe not so touchy-feely about upsetting the other person and those sorts of things."

There is also the danger of feeling too comfortable and not being challenged by a collaborative partner who is also a close acquaintance. "There are people that I really enjoy hanging out with," said Myles Mumford, "and I really enjoy their work, but feel that in actual fact our rapport gets in the way of us actually creating anything … We sit around and we laugh and we joke and we have a good time; we don't actually end up creating anything."

Some participants suggested that perhaps some tension is beneficial to a creative working environment, that it keeps everyone on edge. "I feel it's [collaboration] sometimes a meeting of worlds, and that's why it can be colliding rather than a melding," said David Jones."And that can produce it's own greatness too, you know? The difficulty, the irritant creates the pearl in the oyster." For Greg Arnold, also: "I've definitely been in band environments where I can say well this isn't really harmonious, we're not even really on the same page as to where we're going and there's definitely conflicts both broader

philosophically, musically, personal style, everything. And yet, independently of that I can sit back and go, that's tension and it's really powerful and good tension for the outcome," he said.

Is there such thing as a collaborative personality? Are there particular character traits in the kinds of artists who are drawn to working collectively? Is this what allows such close personal and artistic connections to be made? "Most of the people that I've played with over the years," said Alex Pertout, "because they've worked in so many different styles, it's been quite easy to be creative, and to find that they have similar interests. And apart from the world that they came from, they are actually looking for other … the horizon's different, in terms of where they would see themselves, and where they would take their music into." In terms of cross-cultural collaboration and cross-disciplinary collaboration, it seems as if the kinds of artists who pursue this particular kind of work actually seek it out and are so open to ideas that communication isn't a problem – they find a way to make it work.

Do artists hold back on thoughts or ideas if they are not really 'into' the people they are working with, or the work itself? In terms of handing over all of one's own original ideas to a collaborative effort, "if I was really into the project I'd push that forward and say I think we should, you know, use this, and go in this direction," said Robin Fox. "But if my heart's not in it, in a way … I won't actually push that, so I'll come up with another solution or whatever … So definitely, and that's unfortunate."

Perhaps a certain amount of personal as well as artistic chemistry does benefit a collaborative work. For some, however, the art can ultimately be more important than any clashes of personality. Working through problems and personality clashes in collaborative situations was part of the process for some of the artists in this study, especially when the outcome of the artistic process was 'worth it.' "If the essence of the thing that you create together (which is greater than the parts)," said Helen Mountford, "is better than what either of you could do individually, strong enough, you stick there and you deal with the stuff that comes up about that."

Artists who took part in this study described differences between what is aimed for in terms of the role played by rapport in successful, fulfilling collaborations, and the reality of most collaborative situations. The results of this study found that artists were quite realistic about different situations and possible scenarios, and the fact that some people just don't get along, but nevertheless strive for the ideal chemistry.

Tony Hicks spoke of his experience of another artist coming along, "sit[s] down and start[s] playing and everything works! To me," he said, "that's the kind of rapport I'm always trying to find, because then it's easy; then you can take those next steps into new discoveries." And for Eugene Ughetti, "of course in the ideal world everyone would be good friends and, you know, every moment of your collaboration would be like a fun kind of social experience. But sometimes that can get in the way as well … I am interested in there being a really good working relationship … a very happy, comfortable, open, honest and effective relationship. So I think by rapport I guess if you mean effective communication and respect, definitely, but if you mean rapport as in things beyond that, no."

Through their descriptions of experiences and preferences in collaborations, the kinds of definitions of rapport that surfaced in the interview process were (one or more of) a shared vision for the work, a respect for the work of other artists, without necessarily translating into friendship, but retaining good communication and a level of mutual respect.

These were the things that were desired, but there was also a realistic attitude toward about personal relationships, and the kinds of problems that go along with them. "Artists have to be prepared … when they're working in collaborations … that there are going to be disagreements," said James Hullick, "and that's life." "It's not always easy," concurred Helen Mountford, "and sometimes it becomes a bit like a sibling thing too … Because inevitably there ends up being, personal stuff gets played out whether you want it or not, so you get into sibling rivalry …"

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The data arising from the interviews suggests that it depends on how the individual artist views the collaborative project, primarily, as to how they view the relationships between the individuals involved in that project. Also, one's relationship with other artists in collaboration can affect how they view the work. "It's very important that you're comfortable with the players from the beginning," said sound artist Ros Bandt, "and it's much better when they come around naturally …" Like several other artists she compared collaborations to a familial relationship: "it's like a family, collaborating, you have to work through all these relationships. And sometimes they're experienced people and sometimes they're not, and sometimes you'll have personalities that just don't work," she said. Myles Mumford agreed: "it's probably different based on every relationship, every collaboration. Some people I don't think I could work with at all if I didn't have an understanding and positive relationship with them," he said, "and some of the people I think it probably gets in the way."

5. The Role of the Individual

"To bring the best of yourself to that project, to listen and welcome the overlap that happens between collaborators"

David Jones

Collaborations of any kind are inevitably made up of individual brains, bodies, skills and ideas. For the purpose of this project individual artists shared their experiences of collaborating within their respective artistic practices. Several individuals who have made work with one another were also able to give different perspectives on the same projects. Each participant detailed their own personal experiences, speaking of their own expectations and others as individuals in collaborations, and of the different roles that they and others have played within collaborative projects.

Many of the participants spoke of the necessity for individuals to bring the best of themselves as well as their finest technical skills to any collaborative project. For Greg Arnold, "to enter a collaboration … you should be able to bring all your best skills and translate them into the project, [into] the environment itself to make them work." For David Young, an artist's particular unique skills are what make collaborations interesting. He said, "I think it's really important for the individual artist to bring *their* expertise … I think it's less interesting if you have artists who are 'collaborative' multi-art form artists who do a little bit of everything."

Furthermore, James Hullick explained that it is important, for the sake of the collaboration, for "people [to] come to the project with their first ability." Otherwise, "people start taking on roles that are not their first ability, that are their twentieth ability, but something that they really are interested by … and in a collaboration, it may not be the appropriate time to suddenly become a

lighting designer … if you want something to be of the utmost quality then people have to be firing on their first abilities." Conversely, others saw collaborations as a chance for individuals to expand their relative skill-sets. Percussionist/composer Graeme Leak has found that in collaborations, "over the years … people tend to step up to the tasks that need to be done." He described this experience as one where individual roles can evolve.

James Hullick also pointed out the necessity of knowing one's limitations, and the limitations of a collaborative group. He spoke of having an awareness of skills and gaps in skill sets amongst individual artists in collaborations. When embarking on a new collaborative venture, he suggested that artists first sit down to consider, "where are these gaps going to be? What's the stuff we really don't know as a group? And you have to talk about that," he said.

According to Peter Neville, not only do you "have to bring your skills to the table, but then if it's going to be collaborative you've got to be mature enough and open enough to listen to the other person's idea. It really is a conversation." Other artists also cited listening and treating collaborations like conversations as important factors. "I really think it boils down to, just listen, have conversations that are two-way, as distinct from one dominating," said Tony Gould, "it's a question of common decency and respect … it's conversation."

Rick Walker suggested that the individual musician "listen and support the rest of the musical expression" when collaborating with other musicians. "I always try to listen first before I play," he said, "if, when improvising with someone, I think don't play anything at all because I don't think it is appropriate to play anything at all, then I consider myself to have 'played' the perfect thing."

Some participants cited openness as an important quality for an individual to exhibit in collaboration. For Alex Pertout, "in order to make a collaboration it has to be quite open, and you just bring your experience and your side of the experience and that's what's going to help, in a way, to open it up." Similarly, for dancer Yumi Umiumare, "openness, but [also] understanding – accepting the differences" between collaborative partners is an important factor.

In addition to appreciating openness, and a willingness to accept differences in individual personalities, participants addressed the issue of social skills, or lack thereof, in collaborations. For James Hullick, "whether you like it or not you need inter-personal skills," he said, "and showing up and being a total social misfit is not going to help the project. It's like a lovely romantic idea and … if there is a field of existence where people can be total misfits it's probably the arts … but if you're terrible with inter-personal skills then as an artist you have a responsibility to make an effort."

For Ros Bandt, "if you're going to have really good collaboration you've got to have trust, and respect for other, not just yourself." According to many of the participants in this study, trust is another vital element. For Elaine Miles, speaking of her collaboration with Eugene Ughetti, "there's times where logistically we can't be … in the same room together for weeks on end. So you really have to trust that the other can do their bit without you."

David Shea described communication as the responsibility of every individual in collaboration, to "come up with a way of having to communicate with everybody. Because [otherwise] … you're dealing with people who maybe don't speak English, that have no background similar to your background, and suddenly you have this terrific idea and you're working with them and they're working with you … [but] you have no language. And not just language, just, blah blah blah, but you have no body language, you have no way of weaving and dodging, of re-skilling your set of skills that you already had, and that's a waste," he said.

Participants valued a sense of equality in terms of contribution to and distribution of collaborative tasks. "I don't see collaborative processes that are not of equal weight, if you like, between … partners, of much value," said Tony Gould. And for Graeme Leak, it is important to avoid problems down the track by recognising the work taken on by individuals. "Some people are quite happy for others in a group to take care of everything," he said, "and that can lead to resentment, so I think the main thing is … for everyone to keep talking about it,

and for everyone to acknowledge, well you're doing that and that's extra work, so at some point we'll need to work this out."

John Arcaro stated that it was important for individuals within collaborations "to make sure that everybody's voice is … heard, and everybody's happy and it's all … working together." David Chisholm said, "I ultimately see it as my responsibility, if we can take everyone forward then I'll be happy, because everyone will be happy." John Arcaro also spoke of a certain flexibility that an individual needs to demonstrate: he said, "I've found … that there's not a lot of point in getting frustrated or trying to be really strong on particular things, it's more about going with the flow and … trying to get the best result with the resources that you've got."

Rick Walker cited sensitivity as an important quality for a collaborator to have, to be aware of other artists' needs and feelings. He said, "it is important, sometimes, to make a person feel comfortable before you play with them, even though sometimes, you realise that the fact that you need to make them more comfortable means that you aren't going to necessarily go to any place particularly new in the collaboration … It's our job, if we are going to become better and better musicians, to constantly be sensitive to every situation's potential and act appropriately."

Participants in this study valued acceptance in terms of differences in personality, as well as flexibility in terms of the different directions that collaborative projects can take. According to Ros bandt, "one has to be very open and mindful to take a completely 360 circle at any time, and that everything can be thrown out the window, of why you might have got the funding, and all the rest of it, you know? Which you're accountable for, your ideas, you got the funding on the aesthetic value of that, and then you're not going to do it," she said. "So then you have to go back to the funding boards and say, 'we've had a slight mutation here, there's been a transformation that's happened, are you still happy with this?' And have integrity through these changes as well, because in the end you do have to be accountable to your public, to your funder, to the collaborating person, and especially the audience."

For Rick Walker the role of the individual in any collaborative situation is "to raise the musical level of every musical experience you encounter. When you enter a situation where people are obviously more experienced than you are, then it is your job to put your ego aside and learn everything you can from them so that raise your own level of musicianship," he said. "When you enter a situation where people around you are obviously far less experienced, accomplished or sometimes even mature than you are, then it is your job to teach them either directly or by dent of example to raise their level. In both ways, the musical situations that most people like the most are the ones where everyone (or at least a lot of people) have grown a lot."

Honesty and clarity were listed as other qualities expected of an individual in collaboration - being clear about the role one is playing, but also being upfront about the kind of role one is prepared to play. "Artists need to … say what they want … because a lot of artists don't," said James Hullick. "The other thing the artist has to do is to know … what they want and know what they don't want. So if you don't want something and you're really clear about it, it might be that that project's not for you, and it's time to move on, and that needs to be sorted out …"

In terms of navigating oneself as an individual within collaborations, several artists shared the idea of preserving their individuality, whilst also giving oneself over to the project, and the group. As Dave McCluney put it, "the individual has to maintain their individuality and yet be … part of the group, the ensemble." For Helen Mountford, "the role of the individual is both to stay completely true to what they do and their own artistic vision, and also incredibly open to absorbing and playing with other peoples' influence, while not losing the integrity of what they do."

Myles Mumford suggested that the individual should "pursue the best interests of the arts project with their own integrity as an artist intact," because in the case of collaboration, "we're actually working for an entity that is more that just ourself, so what we might pursue as an individual artist may not suit the work

that we are creating as a group, but we need to create work that maintains our integrity as an artist." Similarly, Robin Fox thought that each artist in a collaborative project should be able to "maintain their own sense of individual integrity while making their best efforts to contribute something to a group situation."

According to some of the participants, because other people are relying on them, individual artists need to prepare themselves for their role in collaborative projects. James Hullick put it like this: "do your homework, it's really important. In a collaboration there's a lot of assumption that, we'll just sort it out when we get to the space … I don't know how many times I've heard that but it just doesn't happen. If you don't learn your part or prepare something, if you're a designer for example and you're supposed to be doing the set design, you need to show up with something, you can't just go oh we'll talk it through … just show up with anything, it doesn't matter if it's wrong …" he said.

Loss of ego and the separation of individual achievement from the collaborative effort were common themes amongst those interviewed. For Eugene Ughetti, individuals in collaboration should "be true to themselves and to be ready to let go of their ideas." In his book *The Alchemy of Theatre*, Robert Viagas described extending one's personal ego into "an ego for the project as a whole, which allows you to lose personal arguments while continuing to give your all for the project."[6]

Taking the concept of loss of ego within a collaborative project to the extreme, Robin Fox said, "I guess you could argue that the individual should be completely subsumed into a collaborative process, so there should be no role for the individual in a collaborative process, like in some kind of utopian model ... the individual would just disappear and you would become this beautifully functioning symbiotic mass of brains, but that's obviously rarely the case … But I guess that should be my answer, I suppose, there shouldn't be a role for the individual, in a real collaboration."

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[6] Robert Viagas, ed., The Alchemy of Theatre: The Divine Science: Essays of Theatre and the Art of Collaboration (New York: Playbill Books, 2006), p3.

It is the role of the individual, according to James Hullick, to be professional, or at least to try … "there's things that make a project go so much better, like if everyone shows up and tries to be professional (laughs), even if they're not, and makes their best Aussie go at being professional, then it's going to help everything unfold in a reasonably sane way." He also emphasised the importance of leaving personal gripes at the door when entering into a collaborative project: "the other thing the artist has to do is be able to separate the problems in their life from the project," he said. "So, everyone's busy … I always operate under the assumption that everyone's flat-out, especially in the arts, I think it's true. And I think that any assumption that people aren't busy is going to lead you into trouble. Now, showing up to a project and saying, 'I've been so busy, I haven't done anything, I haven't done any preparation' is not an excuse, it just doesn't matter."

Individual roles can also change throughout the collaborative process. Some artists described a kind of slowly shifting balance, as roles and levels of involvement fluctuated, depending on the task at hand. For Rosemary Joy, "understanding your role is really important." She also supposed that "it is possible for peoples' attitudes to change through a project … it's important that everyone in the collaboration … [has] sensitivity to where people are coming from and also what will create the circumstances in which people can bring their best to the work." For Rick Walker a good collaborator should have an "intrinsic sense of what role is most appropriate" for them at any given time. For Ros Warby, maintaining a clear idea of who's role is what, "helps [artists'] ability to work together," and for everyone to be comfortable.

In addition to individuals being clear in their own roles, they are also able to create the kind of role that will help them to flourish. In this case, according to Tony Hicks, the individual needs to "pay attention to the context that's been created by assembling whoever's been assembled," which for him means that he can "create a position for myself within that that allows me to express myself honestly."

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Beyond understanding one's role in a collaborative situation, David Chisholm looks for individuals who show "a commitment beyond just what their role is, and how their role fits into the broader picture of things. Getting artists that have a broader philosophical approach to the way that they work, that have obviously technical excellence, but also have an idea that they're actually not just doing something which is a map; that there are things that inform it, the cultural framing, the colouring and the delivery."

This was a common theme throughout the interviews, the notion that an individual in collaboration is responsible not only for themselves but for the project as a whole. In terms of navigating the group in a collaborative project, James Hullick said that all "individual artists have to take responsibility for that because people are often brought together and whoever's bringing them together for whatever reason is not going to know everything, it's never going to happen."

6. Leadership

"I believe there is no such thing as democracy in the arts. It just does not work that way. A vision has always a name, an idea has an address"

Fritz Hauser

Leadership can take on many forms within collaborations, and various members of a collaborative project may hold the position of leader within that project at different times. The participants in this study were asked whether they thought that collaborations could be 'led' and still - given their relative definitions of this concept - be labeled as collaborative. The answers were as many and varied as the number of different types of collaborative situations, and the relationships that exist within them. Several artists argued that leadership in collaboration is unavoidable, some that it is absolutely vital and others that it has no place at all in the collaborative process.

In ascertaining what role, if any, leadership plays in collaboration, the participants in this study shared their definitions and experiences of leadership within collaborative situations. They depicted different kinds of leadership, and different ways in which leadership can arise. Tony Hicks described two distinct types of leaders: "there's the leader who dictates what he wants and everyone has to follow," he said, as opposed to someone who is a leader "more in a sense of keeping track of what's going on and keeping the process moving but allowing the process to be whatever its going to be. And guiding where it's needed … or making a decision where it's needed."

The inevitability of leadership within collaboration was referred to by several of the participants in this study. They argued that by its very nature collaboration requires or results in a certain level of domination by one or more parties. For Rick Walker it is more a matter of human nature: "human beings collaborate …

so human beings act humanly. Therefore issues of dominance, leadership, submission, invariably arise in situations. Occasionally," he went on to say, "one collaborates with someone who has vastly less experience or a much lesser skill set that you have. In this case, natural leadership arises."

"It's like all those personality studies you see," suggested Robin Fox, "some people are just natural leaders and so they step into that role quite fluidly." For David Jones, also, "personality-wise, it's very natural that in a group there'll be … leadership qualities expressed by one or two of the people." In both of the previous examples these thoughts were followed by the emphasis that these 'natural' leaders need to use their powers for good: "as long as the person is directing the thing with a sense of … with collaborative intent," said Robin Fox, "it's ok." For David also, "someone holding a vision becomes a natural leader, as long as they have the personal qualities to support that and not aggression, dominance, control, you know? Manipulation, dishonesty … If it really is clear … clear communication, loving communication, caring for everyone, really supporting each one's strengths, then that's great leadership … and bringing out the best in each of those people."

Tony Hicks described leadership in collaboration either as "an administrative decision or that's just the way that person's personality operates. If someone has a stake in the outcome," he said, "whatever that stake may be, whether it's to do with their reputation or financial input or something like that ... then they may be more inclined to dictate, for better of for worse, because they want to be in control. So that brings up personality issues too … "

Various members of a group or creative team, depending on different individuals' skills and strengths, may take on leadership roles throughout a collaborative process. Elaine Miles spoke of the necessary leadership "tug of war" between her and Eugene Ughetti in their 'Glass Percussion Project.' "It sometimes *has* to be Eugene, it sometimes *has* to be me," she said, depending on which of them is best suited to the task at hand. "There's times where it's really important that I get this job installed to a point where Eugene can come in … but then, in terms of music, I can give feedback and I can help them problem

solve and move things and do that but I think there's a real point where I should just step out of the way when the skills are in someone else's field. So we definitely have the need for leadership in different ways."

Likewise for Eugene, in collaboration "there are leaders for different things. So there might be more of a creative leader and there might be a financial leader, for example, like a producer-type role or an artistic director type role." Similarly, for David Young, "people tend to lead in different realms … quite often there will be a time keeper ... other people take the lead conceptually or take the lead in terms of pushing things conceptually," he said. "So I do think, you know, leaders do emerge, but it's not necessarily over one area, for example."

Peter Neville described the scenario of guided collaboration, where one member of a group brings a plan of what is going to happen, and the group takes it from there. He spoke of the situation where a composer, Richard Barrett, brought some rough ideas to a group of musicians. "He brought more or less a plan or a game plan, it wasn't a traditional score. At certain times there might have been mention of a couple of pitches that players could choose to use, but it was a very open, abstract plan. So it was of course all the players bringing their creativity and their listening skills to bear," he said. "So whilst it was guided by the so-called composer, everyone was filling it in with their own input." Rosemary Joy also spoke of a kind of directed collaboration, where everyone's role is decided upon but artists have freedom within that role to create their own work; she described it as "like a freedom within bounds."

The question of control divided the participants in this study, some staunchly believing that there is no place for leadership in a truly collaborative work, and others deeming it absolutely necessary. Tony Gould said that, "I don't like the idea … I don't think there has to be a leader. All my collaborative things have been with people that I love and people that I respect and I've never ever felt that somebody's leading and I'm, you know, the second-rate person, or vice versa. I don't think I want to get involved in that. That's not to say that people don't know more than you do, that's a difference," he said.

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According to David Shea, collaboration can entail "creating something other than what you would have done or would have been able to do" by yourself. "And the only way to get around that is to control it and to control it is not a terrible thing to do, but for me it's a waste … because then there isn't that creative freedom that everyone in the ensemble feels, to say, I do exactly what I do, don't change it – and I know how to do it within the context of your piece." For Ros Bandt, "if you're really going to have a really good system of collaboration there should be a high degree of reciprocity and there shouldn't be too much direction from any person." And Dave McCluney has found that "there's all kinds of different groups … there are groups where every single person has an equal say and in my experience that works great and it's actually a beautiful feeling, when that happens, because everyone feels an equal part of what's going on, and that's great," he said. "It makes for difficult band relationships … but it's great when that happens."

On the other hand, some of the participants in this study described leadership as absolutely necessary to a successful and fruitful project. For Graeme Leak, "a director, whether it's from the inside or the outside, where the buck stops with somebody who calls the shots at the end of the day" is mandatory. "There's no kind of socialist collaboration where everyone's equal," he said, "it's far more efficient for everyone to be enthusiastic and excited about an idea that everyone's agreed on and for there to be a director in place." For Rosemary Joy, "collaboration when it's kind of argy-bargy and it's kind of equal and everyone's … you know, I think it becomes weaker. I think you do need someone who is, in the end it's their say – it's kind of like a director or something," she said.

Some of the participants thought that in collaborations amongst a large group of people there needs to be by default some kind of structure or leadership, in order to move forward. "Sometimes it is tricky," said Yumi Umiumare, "because if it's among so many people the leader needed to be requested, but it's a fine line because 'leader' means 'director' who's brought this concept … [and] everybody has to follow their aesthetic." "Usually what I've found," said Robin Fox, "is that the larger the group involved in a collaboration the greater the

dynamic tends towards a more hierarchical model, where you have somebody who is potentially leading things. The larger the group … the greater the tendency for potential chaos, so it takes somebody to step in and organise things."

For some participants in this study leadership and collaboration are linked to trust and respect. For long-term collaborators a 'leader' may not be a dictatorial position, merely a role that is comfortable and works within the group. Some of the participants drew comparisons between long- and short-term collaborations, in terms of their feelings on leadership and direction.

Despite Ros Bandt's preference for the kind of democratic situation described earlier, she also suggested that if you have, for example, four members in a collaboration, "then you've got four directors, four performers, four composers, four everything … and that takes four times as long for each of those things." She differentiates between long and short-term collaborative projects, projects that allow time for democracy and discussion, and projects that have a finite and fast-approaching deadline. "You've got a logarithmic time of preparation to go through all that time, and in most western situations you're not allowed that time," she said. "So it's only in things that you do yourself over the long periods of time where you don't get paid and you have ensembles coming up where this kind of dense, really meaningful, really interlocking and interwoven and reciprocal collaboration really happens. And you see this with people who've been working together for years and years."

The artists who took part in this study differentiated between the roles of individual (member) and leader in collaborative ventures. However, the responsibilities and expectations of each were similar in many ways. Qualities such as openness, honesty, trust, letting go of ego, and the ability to listen to and accept the differences between collaborative partners were amongst those listed in both categories.

Several of the artists who participated in this study indicated that the kind of leadership they have encountered often has a direct link to respect for more

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experienced artists, and/or the artist/s who initiate a collaborative project. "the leadership role can change and can move through the band," said David Jones, who has had a long-running collaboration with Tony Gould. In the case of David coming in to a project that Tony initiated, "not only because of respect for someone older, but also respect for … I've been asked into something," he said, his position is to "take a side seat and support. Now if I invite Tony, I know instinctively," David continued, "that he will absolutely, likewise, be completely open to all suggestions." For Eugene Ughetti, this is a common occurrence. "Often it becomes a very natural process … kind of an obvious decision," for the instigator of any project to take on a leadership role.

In the case of collaborations where a distinct leadership role exists, the participants in this study spoke of the kinds of qualities they expect that person (or persons) to exhibit. "Someone holding a vision becomes a natural leader, as long as they have the personal qualities to support that and not aggression, dominance, control, …" said David Jones. For him, a great leader shows "clear communication, loving communication, caring for everyone, really supporting each one's strength's … bringing out the best in each of those people … not necessarily my idea is going to be the strongest, so at any given point if someone is introducing something into that improvisation that's so attractive, even if it seems unrelated, then I'll definitely go with that," he said. Similarly, in the role of leader of a collaborative venture, Greg Arnold thought it was "very important for … someone who's in that role to just be listening out for everyone and go 'that was better than what I was thinking' … that's an important skill to develop."

In describing more and more collaborations that had been completely directed or dictated by one or more artist, the participants in this study began to question whether certain situations could be called collaborative at all. Some came to this conclusion after some deliberation, others were very clear from the start. "I try not to use the word collaboration when working with other artists, actually, at all," said James Hullick. "I try to avoid it especially when I'm in a position as an artistic director, for example, and I'm employing people to work with me on a project. It's actually not a good idea to call it a collaboration because all the

flows of information and who's responsible for what, all of that gets all muddled, and so I try to avoid it," he said. For David Chisholm, "there's a difference between working co-operatively and working collaboratively, and I think more often than not how I deal with my own project," he said, "is I work co-operatively; I work with people but I drive the project … I think I've actually talked myself around [during the interview] from thinking about it as a collaborative artist to thinking that I'm more of a co-operative… which implies that everyone makes it together but that ultimately it's driven by a central idea which I've generated."

Greg Arnold described the song-writing process as one that is not usually entirely collaborative. "I write songs," he said, "they're usually written before I get into the studio, even if people bring other ideas which I really want them to do, the song is there and it exists, beforehand. We'll work on it, editing and changing things but it's very rare that we'll go ok let's go back and write half the lyrics as a group. Were I asked to be honest about it," he said, "I don't think it's necessarily democratic because I think the singer-songwriter global vision vote is worth a lot. But that's in my world; I suppose it's very different in a more pure collaboration which is obviously where the music doesn't exist before someone walks in … "

In the context of a band, the arranging and putting together of pieces can also be more collaborative in nature. Of the group 'Cosmo Cosmolino', Helen Mountford said, "we write collaboratively. That's one of the one's where people bring pieces, so people would have an ownership… some of the pieces have been group owned, in that we've started them together. Mostly these days, to save time, it's sort of like one person's piece, but everyone writes their own parts so it's collaborative that way – which is more of a typical band situation I guess."

Percussionist Alex Pertout described several ensembles and recording projects which he has been part of that he considers to be collaborative. "Some of the bands that I run though, I run in a different way," he said. "I might run a band or do a gig at Bennett's Lane or something, but the band is kind of 'my' band." In

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this case, "a collaboration is not a band. A band led by a person is not a collaboration in my sense. Although some people are collaborating by developing their things but there is a certain song that you play and a certain style, you know, and often the bands that play – especially in the jazz sort of settings here – are led by someone, so … that's a little bit different I guess. True collaborations are hard, in terms of what they really mean."

Robin Fox agreed, and went on to discuss honesty and clarity as necessary qualities in any situation, collaborative or not. He said, "when it's clear, particularly if somebody invites you to collaborate and then it's actually quite clear that collaboration's not what they had in mind (laughs) … what they had in mind was this kind of puppetry where they would just get you to do stuff and organise it," he said. "That's when it gets a bit, you know … there's a cringe factor … when it's under the guise of a collaborative process and you're just a punch card machine, you know?"

The impression given by most of the participants in this study was that there are no set rules about led collaborations - sometimes they work, sometimes they don't; sometimes they're necessary, sometimes they're not. "I think it's not always healthy for a leader to arise, or it's not always healthy for a leader not to arise. Once again it all depends on the situation," said Myles Mumford. When artists feel comfortable with one another, they can be more open to suggestions than if one artist is benignly dictating the direction and scope of the collaboration. On the other hand, if an individual artist instigates a collaborative project, and it is clear from the start that they may have the final say on the outcomes of that project, many of the participants were happy with that too. Leadership did not seem to be the issue, so much as how that leadership was imposed: with respect, openness, and a genuine desire to accept other artists' ideas and input.

7. Conclusion

Twenty-five interviews, over 10 hours of interview recordings and more than 50,000 words in transcriptions did not discover an absolute definition of collaboration. For some participants, the interview process significantly narrowed their pre-conceived notions of what they perceive collaboration to be. For others, the kind of close examination this study allowed resulted in a broadening of the term collaboration to include much more than they had originally conceived of.

What *is* evident is that collaboration occurs at both a conscious and unconscious level and depends heavily on the subjective factors that may be observed in any relationship. Furthermore, the findings of this study proved that there is no recipe, no right or wrong way to go about the collaborative process. The gathered information did, however, reveal some important methods and preferences of artists who have all had great success through collaborative work.

The clear finding from each and every interview was that each artist's experience of a collaborative project, of its members and of their place in the process, was dependent on the project and the members themselves. Many of the participants' opinions regarding the definitions of collaboration and roles within collaboration varied, but all were in agreement regarding the importance of clarity regarding these roles.

This study found that collaboration can be part of the process of creating a new work or the outcome of a work after it has been created, but can also be a part of both situations. Collaboration can be fleeting, or something built up over years of work. Some would only call long-term collaborations 'real' collaborations, because of the *kind* of rapport, the *kind* of trust, the *kind* of

shared language and quality of work that can be developed over many years and many varied projects. Others thrive in 'in the moment' collaborations, where they are thrust into an improvised situation with a new or unknown partner.

The outcomes of this study have confirmed the experiences I have had engaging in collaborative processes. These include an understanding of one's own role in collaboration being vital to one's performance within collaboration. Trust and respect are also important factors in how artists view leadership within collaborations, and personal relationships play a vital part in the success of long and short-term collaborations.

Collaboration for the artists in this study is about personal connections, just as much as artistic ones. It's about mutual respect and support, not only about singular achievements. The idea of collaboration and of shared creation and credit for artistic works is not, for the participants in this study, a deterrent. On the contrary, it is an incentive to engage in artistic acts, the outcomes of which are potentially greater than what any artist can achieve individually.

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9. Appendices

1. Interview Questions

As an artist how would you define collaboration?

What kind of collaborative projects have you been involved in throughout your artistic career?

- With whom?
- When?
- What form did it take?
- Did you feel that both or all artists contributed equally to the creative process?
- Why? Why not? Does this hinder the 'collaborative' nature of a project?
- Was it just a job? Just a gig?
- Was the collaboration your own initiative?
- Does that change your experience of the collaboration?

What have been your experiences making art/music collectively, as opposed to working solo?

- Do you have a preference?
- Why?

Do you usually initiate collaborative projects? Or are you asked to participate in them? And what is it about them that makes you accept?

What have been the problem/benefits?

Have concessions been made to make the collaborative project/s 'work'?

- Do you feel that this has compromised your own professional practice?

Do you feel that there is a distinct difference between real 'collaboration' and just doing your own thing whilst someone else does theirs?

What role do you think collaboration plays in contemporary arts practice?

Issues of appropriation; how do you feel about other people playing your music (using your ideas?) beyond the 'collaborative' project?

Have you collaborated with artists from disciplines other than your own?

- If so, has this experience been different from collaborating with artists from the same field as yours?
- How?
- Why?
- Has it worked?
- Have there been problems or issues caused by the different ways each artist works?

How long does is take to build a rapport with a new collaborative partner (especially one/s from different disciplines)?

- Is this a necessary part of working with artists/musicians from radically different backgrounds and artistic approaches?

What are your experiences of long-term creative partnerships as opposed to short-term ones?

Have you collaborated with artists from different countries/cultures?

- Did they differ in their creative practice?
- How does this influence collaborations?

Do you feel that it is easier to get airplay/funding/grants/exhibitions/performance space/audiences by making work with other/different artists?

What do you think the role of the 'individual' artist is within collaborative arts practice?

What do you think of the influence of new technology on communication and collaborative practice?

Has technology allowed any long distance collaborations that would not have previously been possible for you?

Have you ever experienced collaborations that intersect artistic and activist practice? i.e. collaborations for political/activist purposes?

Does a leader sometimes/generally/always emerge in a collaborative situation ?

- Is it possible for the collaborative process to be 'led' and still be collaborative – does everyone need an equal say if it is to be called collaboration?

What do you think of collaboration as a teaching/learning tool?

- for yourself
- for established artists
- for students and emerging artists

2. Artist Biographies

"Peter Neville is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts and was appointed Head Of Percussion there in 2000. Whilst he works across the range of musical styles, he has a particular commitment to new music. As the percussionist of the ELISION Ensemble for twenty-two years, Peter has been involved with practically all their concerts, compact discs and international tours.

He is also a current member of SPEAK Percussion, Jouissance, The David Chesworth Ensemble, Libra Ensemble and The Raga Dolls Salon Orchestra and he has recorded and/or toured internationally with each of them. Peter has worked in orchestral and music-theatre settings and his CD recordings range from pop albums by Peter Andre and Deborah Conway to soundtracks including "Japanese Story" as well as numerous chamber music discs."[7]

"Alex Pertout is recognised as one of Australia's leading percussionists and with credits on hundreds of albums, soundtracks and jingles is undeniably one of Australia's most recorded musicians. His playing has graced number one charting singles and albums and many award winning recordings. He has also attained credits with television and theatre orchestras, in countless live performances, in countless live performances, as a multi-instrumentalist/composer and record producer, as an improviser and as an author.

Alex has established himself as a respected educator and is the Convenor of Contemporary Music Performance [Improvisation] at the Faculty of VCA and Music, The University of Melbourne. Alex graduated from the VCA in 1983 with distinction in performance and composition. He has since completed a Masters of Philosophy in Music at the Australian National University."[8]

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7 Peter Neville, email message to author, February 3, 2010.
8 "Alex Pertout," accessed September 19, 2010, http://www.alexpertout.com/contents.htm.

"Born in Hyogo, Japan, **Yumi Umiumare** is a Butoh dancer and creator of original Butoh Cabaret works. Originally a member of the seminal Butoh Company DaiRakudakan in Tokyo, she moved to Australia in 1993.

Yumi has appeared in numerous dance, theatre and film productions through out Australia Japan, Europe, and Eastern Asia. Her award winning productions include *Fleeting Moment*, *Tokyo DasSHOKU Girl, DasSHOKU Hora!!* She performs in the smash-hit *The Burlesque Hour* (Finucane&Smith) and in *Burning Daylight* (Marrugeku), indigenous dance theatre show. In 2009, Yumi created *EnTrance*, an acclaimed one-woman multimedia work.

Her choreography credits include *Ngapartji Ngapartji*, *Girls on Boys*, and *Once Upon A Midnight*, an Australian Japanese rock'n'roll musical. Yumi teaches Butoh regularly and curates BBO (Beyond Butoh) series-Butoh mini festival with Tony Yap in Melbourne."[9]

"Dr Elaine Miles is an established practicing artist working in Glass Installation and Interdisciplinary collaborations. She holds degrees in Ceramic Design, Applied Arts (Hons), Fine Arts (Masters) and PhD in Fine Arts. Her professional exhibitions, performance art and residency successes are extensive both within Australia and overseas including over 80 exhibitions at numerous high quality venues including various artist run spaces. She was the winner of the 2008 Civic Choice Award in the prestigious $60,000 Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture Awards.

Elaine's most recent successes have been in collaboration with percussionist and composer Eugene Ughetti, creating a series of art installation/performances under the title of The Glass Percussion Project. One major commission was

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9 Yumi Umiumare, email message to author, February 17, 2010.

presented under the title of 'intermezzo' at Federation Square and became the feature of an ABC1 Artists at Work Documentary in 2008."[10]

"Visual artist **Rosemary Joy** makes miniature sculptural percussion instruments for site specific works, usually for very small audiences. Rosemary´s current projects include System Building, inspired by and performed in Watertoren West (Noorderzon Festival, Groningen), Radialsystem V (Berlin), Melbourne Recital Centre and Sydney´s CarriageWorks.

Rosemary has created sculptural percussion works for many projects with music composed by David Young including *Yakumo Honjin* which was performed in Matsue Castle in far-West Japan; *Underground* which toured the Netherlands, Belgium, Mexico, Japan and Australia in 2007-9; the Aphids, Speak Percussion, Fritz Hauser and Boa Boaumann collaboration *Schallmachine 06* underneath Federation Square for the Melbourne International Arts Festival; *Schallmaschine 07* for Fritz Hauser's Different Beat Festival in Basel, Switzerland; Matthew Gardiner's *Oribotics [laboratory]* at the Sydney Myer Asia Centre; and Scale with percussionist Fedor Teunisse (Slagwerkgroep den Haag)at Bains::Connective in Brussels."[11]

"Pianist, composer and educator **Tony Gould** has received many accolades for his contribution to music In Australia, the most recent being the prestigious Don Banks Award from the Australia Council for the Arts. In 2008 he was awarded an Order of Australia (AM).

He has performed with and accompanied many internationally renowned artists and been guest artist with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria, Queensland Philharmonic Orchestra. He has appeared as associate

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10 "Elaine Miles," accessed September 21, 2010,
http://www.elainemiles.com.au/www.elainemiles.com.au/Biography.html.
11 "Aphids.net: People: Rosemary Joy," accessed September 24, 2010,
http://www.aphids.net/people/Rosemary_Joy.

artist with the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Dave Brubeck, Sarah Vaughan and many others.

Among a long list of recordings (including many of his own works) is an album of Australian poetry and music with the renowned Australian actor John Stanton. Gould also wrote the music for and collaborated with Stanton in a concert performance of Dylan Thomas' Under Milkwood, and most recently in 2009 the highly acclaimed theatre piece, And When He Falls."[12]

"**Greg Arnold** is a singer/songwriter, performing musician and record producer. He has been the writer and lead singer for "Things of Stone and Wood" since 1989. With that band, he won an ARIA and in 1993 he was the APRA Songwriter of the Year. He has written two top ten albums, the summery hit "Happy Birthday Helen" and one of the most radio played songs of 1994, "Wildflowers". His song "Silence no longer" was published as a poem in *Rolling Stone,* where "Junk Theatre" also scored a four star review.

His recent solo works have received extensive radio play on the ABC, and his song "Close My Eyes" which he recorded exclusively for The Red Cross (with Paul Greene and Rob Hirst) has had extensive play in the Pacific region and been played regularly on SBS television as a community service announcement."[13]

"**Eugene Ughetti** is a Melbourne based percussionist, composer and artistic director of Speak Percussion. He has studied with significant artists from most continents and completed a degree with Honors in Classical Percussion at the Victorian College of the Arts. His professional experience is diverse but his particular focus is new music and hybrid-arts collaboration.

Eugene has performed throughout Europe, Asia, Canada, North America and

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12 "Tony Gould," accessed September 24, 2010, http://www.tonygould.com.au/biography.htm.
13 "NMIT – Greg Arnold," accessed September 19, 2010,
http://www.nmit.edu.au/course_info/degrees/higher_education/meet_the_staff/greg_arnold/.

Australia with a wide variety of artists and in many contexts. He has appeared as a soloist with both the Melbourne Symphony and Victorian College of the Arts Orchestras. In 1998 he was an ABC Young Composer and ABC Young Artist.

Eugene has undertaken professional collaborations with choreographers, animators, dancers, installation artists, actors and instrument builders, and has commissioned over forty new solo and ensemble works."[14]

"A classically trained dancer, **Ros Warby** is one of Australia's leading dancer/choreographers, creating and performing solo dance work since 1990. Her award winning work has been presented in Australia, Europe and the USA. Warby has also performed with numerous companies and artists including Dance Works, Russell Dumas' Dance Exchange, Company In Space, Jude Walton and Jenny Kemp, Lucy Guerin Inc. and the Deborah Hay Company.

Ros has a long-term collaborative relationship with composer Helen Mountfort and designer Margie Medlin. Together they create environments for the solo dancer to exist, offering an elaborate interplay between the elements of dance, film, sound and light, and crafting a dialogue between these forms, where they coexist in a manner rarely achieved in multi-disciplinary work. This choreography between the elements is used to elevate, enhance, exaggerate and frame the dance itself."[15]

"**Myles Mumford** is an internationally award-winning composer, sound artist and record producer. After studying a bachelors degree in music performance and composition Myles became enamoured with the world of sound art and electronics. Following a Graduate Diploma at VCA in Dramatic Art Sound Design he began to focus his attention on the interaction of sound, space and

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14 "'Speak' Percussion – People," accessed September 24, 2010, http://www.speakpercussion.com/people.php.
15 "Warby, Ros – OzArts," accessed September 19, 2010, http://www.ozarts.com.au/artists/ros_warby.

communication and many of his musical compositions feature a fusion of instrumental performance, live electronic processes and an extensive use of multi-channel sound systems.

Since 2002 Myles has composed, designed, created and collaborated on over 120 theatre performances including dance works, dramatic works, installations, multimedia presentations, musical events and more than 50 films. Myles has also developed an enviable reputation as a record producer working with many of Melbourne's finest musicians bringing his aural aesthetic to a wide range of musical situations."[16]

"**David Shea** is a composer working with combinations of samplers and live musicians, centered on the possibilities of electronic and acoustic traditions. His focus is on the interconnections between styles, histories and mediums with single pieces containing multiple layerings of compositional methods, electronic and acoustic orchestrations. Drawing from experimental music and film music influences as well as traditional musics from both eastern and western cultures, many pieces are based on films, novels, mythology and visual sources.

His first major composition was the 20-minute title-track of Shock Corridor, 1992, inspired by Sam Fuller's film of the same name. Since then Shea has recorded and toured in the US, Europe, Asia and the Pacific. He is now based in Melbourne, and lectures at the Centre for Ideas, Victorian College of the Arts."[17]

"**John Arcaro** has been a member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra since 1990. He has also been a guest timpanist/percussionist with Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa Japan, Malaysian Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony, West Australian Symphony and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras. He has worked as

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16 Myles Mumford, email message to author, September 23, 2010.
17 "David Shea on MySpace Music," accessed September 25, 2010, http://www.myspace.com/dsheametta.

a chamber musician and soloist with ensembles such as the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, Synergy Percussion, Speak Percussion, Astra, Aphids, The Pokrovsky Ensemble Russia and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Performance highlights have included a critically acclaimed performance of Stockhausen's *Kontakte* with pianist Michael Kieran Harvey in 1996.

John has recorded numerous film scores and performed with a wide range of popular artists, including Frank Sinatra, Olivia Newton-John, KISS and Meat Loaf. John studied in New York and Philadelphia with leading orchestral percussionists and graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) with high distinction. He is currently a member of staff at the University of Melbourne and the VCA."[18]

"**Helen Mountfort** is a classically trained 'cellist and composer originally from New Zealand. Helen moved to Melbourne Australia in 1986 where she joined Not Drowning, Waving with whom she toured and recorded for the next 10 years. In 1989 with singer/pianist David Bridie Helen formed the chamber pop act My Friend the Chocolate Cake, which has performed extensively for the last twenty years including at WOMAD festivals in the UK and the Edinburgh festival. Helen is also a member of Cosmo Cosmolino, Fine Blue Thread and the David Chesworth Ensemble.

Helen has collaborated for twenty years with dancer Ros Warby and producing two major works Swift and Monumental both of which have had extensive international touring. Helen writes music for film, television and dance and is in demand as a session musician."[19]

Dave McCluney is a sound engineer and producer who has owned and operated Atlantis Sound studios in Melbourne for 25 years. He has worked with

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[18] John Arcaro, email message to author, September 26, 2010.
[19] Helen Mountford, email message to author, March 2, 2010.

musicians of all genres and believes that music making should be fun. His production/engineering credits include Conway Savage, Maurice Frawley, Clinkerfield, Dan Brodie, Spencer P Jones, Area 7 and Tobias Cummings. Dave has also engineered/mixed for Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, Mick Harvey, Dave Graney, Greg Arnold, Things of Stone and Wood, Vika & Linda, Dan Kelly, Adam Simmons, and the Drones, amongst many others.[20]

David Jones is often described internationally as being one of the most innovative and musical drummer/percussionists in the world. David has toured nationally and internationally for over 30 years, and has performed and recorded in the genres of rock and pop, jazz, classical, ambient, world music, cabaret, theatre, television and improvised works. Since 1984, David has uniquely combined his meditation practice with his art, using Tibetan, Japanese and crystal bowls and South African kalimba alongside his drum kit to produce sustained sounds. David has composed and performed music for CD library collections for use in film, TV and documentaries, and has co-written and collaborated on hundreds of albums of all genres. His recent release, 'Colours of the Drum', was nominated for an Aria Award in 2008, and both this album and 'Meditations on Love' have recently been signed to ABC Publishing.[21]

"Dr **Ros Bandt** is an internationally acclaimed sound artist, composer, researcher and scholar. Since 1977 she has pioneered interactive sound installations, sound sculptures, and created sound playgrounds, spatial music systems, and some 40 sound installations worldwide. She has curated many sound performances, exhibitions and events. Her original works are recorded on New Albion Records (USA), Move Records (Melbourne), EMI/ABC, and Wergo (Germany).

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[20] "Atlantis Music Engineers," accessed September 30, 2010, http://www.atlantissound.com.au/files/music/engineers.html.
[21] David Jones, email message to author, September 30, 2010.

In 1990 Bandt won the Don Banks Composers Award, being the first woman to do so. She has been commissioned by the Paris Autumn festival, the Studio of Acoustic Art, WDR-Cologne, Transit and ORF Vienna and was one of the six exquisites in the International Sound Art Festival in the USA. She collaborates with many interdisciplinary artists and has been a founding member of three ensembles: La Romanesca early music ensemble, the cross-cultural Back to Back Zithers, and the improvisatory LIME."[22]

"**Tony Hicks** enjoys a high profile reputation as one of Australia's most versatile woodwind artists and teachers. He studied saxophone in Melbourne with Dr Peter Clinch, followed by further study in New York with Joe Allard and Carmine Caruso. In New York he also studied flute with Harold Bennett, and jazz improvisation and composition at the Eastman School of Music.

Since the early 1980s he has been involved in numerous jazz groups, classical and avant-guarde music ensembles, and commercial music projects including over 35 professional theatre productions, recordings for film, television and major events, and live performances with international artists including Frank Sinatra, Stevie Wonder, Billy Cobham and Randy Brecker.
He has performed throughout Australia, and across Europe, the United States, Japan and China with a number of leading Australian ensembles including the Australian Art Orchestra, Elision Ensemble, and the Peter Clinch Saxophone Quartet."[23]

"**James Hullick's** arts practice is wide ranging. His arts career began in the form of solo pianist, vocalist and composer. He soon branched out into electronic sound making before adding sound sculpture and music making machinery to his creative process. His sonic works have been presented in

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22 "Ros Bandt: Represented Artist Profile: Australian Music Centre," accessed September 21, 2010, http://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/artist/bandt-ros.
23 "The Australian Art Orchestra: Musicians," accessed September 21, 2010, http://aao.com.au/people/musicians/bio/tony-hicks/.

Asia, North America and Europe for a variety of ensembles and electronic formats.

James has been teaching sonic art to people with an intellectual disability since the beginning of 2005. In 2007 with Mary Bereux he founded *JOLT* Sonic and Visual Arts Inc, an organisation dedicated to presenting new cutting edge works, which he know artistically directs. In 2009 *JOLT* and the Footscray Community Arts Centre co-presented THE NIS – a large multimedia interabilties sonic art event.

James has completed a Masters in composition at Melbourne University and recently researched the phenomenon of "Recursion" for his PhD in the School of Art at RMIT University."[24]

"**Kutcha Edwards** is a Mutti Mutti man, born in Balranald, New South Wales, Australia. He was 'stolen' at 18 months and denied his birthrite to grow with his family, to experience his culture and to live his identity. As a teenager he was reunited with his family and so his journey began to retrieve his identity and reclaim what was denied him, his family and his community.

For the last 19yrs Kutcha has worked in the community at various organisations in Melbourne such as the Aboriginal Community Elders Services (ACES), Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, Fitzroy Stars Youth Club Gymnasium and the Koorie Open Door Education school at Glenroy.

In recent years Kutcha has experienced personal success through his music. For many years he was the lead singer in Blackfire and has since formed Kutcha Edwards and Band. He has traveled to China, Mexico and Japan."[25]

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24 James Hullick, email message to author, April 1, 2010.
25 "Kutcha Edwards Biography," accessed September 24, 2010, http://www.kutcha-edwards.com/biog.htm.

"**David Chisholm (Composer)** has heard his music performed by Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, International Contemporary Ensemble, Arcko Symphonic Project, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, The Australian Ballet/Sonic Art Ensemble, Dead Horse Ensemble, Vanilla Sex, Silo String Quartet and many major Australian soloists.

Key creative collaborators have included poets Yves Bonnefoy, Anzhelina Polonskaya and Elizabeth Campbell, choreographer Phillip Adams, cross-media artists Boris Eldagsen and Natascha Stellmach, choreovideographer Cazerine Barry, Koorie historian/sound artist Genevieve Grieves, sound artist Myles Mumford and conductors Timothy Phillips and Eric Dudley.

David has won 3 consecutive Green Room Awards for his scores for BalletLab, a Highly Commended in the Paul Lowin Prize and the French-Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2005 Award and was a Melbourne Prize finalist all for his song cycle *The beginning and the end of the snow.* In 2009 David was the first Australian composer in residence at the Camargo Foundation, Cassis, France."[26]

"**Robin Fox** is a Melbourne based sound and visual artist currently working with live digital media in improvised, composed and installation settings. He creates audio-visual works for the cathode ray oscilloscope, which have been released on the DVD 'Backscatter'(synaesthesia records). The DVD has screened at the Rotterdam International Film Festival, the Mittwoschule in Berlin, the 8th International New Media Arts Festival in Riga and the TRANSIT festival Switzerland.

Live audiovisual performances have taken place across Europe including appearances at the Netmage festival, Bologna, the Wien Modern festival, Vienna, Noise and Glamour Festival, Moscow and the Transacoustic festival, Auckland. Fox is a regular performer and speaker at Festivals around Australia

26 David Chisholm, email message to author, April 13, 2010.

(What is Music, Liquid Architecture, Electrofringe, SOOB, NowNOW, Big Day Out) and performs regularly across Europe and Asia."[27]

"**Graeme Leak** is a composer, performer and instrument maker with a background in classical and contemporary percussion, piano and drumming. He studied at the Sydney Conservatorium and in New York. Graeme's diverse activities include a decade with the legendary *Flederman* ensemble (which championed new Australian music throughout the 80's), solo performances in comedy, cabaret, concert hall, theatre and nightclub venues across Australia, the US and Europe, and many innovative projects in music-theatre, dance and large-scale outdoor events.

He is co-director of *The Spaghetti Western Orchestra,* a band that plays the classic film scores of Ennio Morricone. In July 2007 *SWO* made their international debut at the Montreal Jazz Festival and across Europe, playing to sold-out houses and critical acclaim. They now tour regularly to the UK, Europe and Asia."[28]

"**David Young** composes for and co-curates cross-artform projects. His music is performed in Australia, Europe and Asia, in contexts ranging from concerts to music theatre and installation. His music has been variously described as 'musical origami', 'accessible, yet satisfyingly abstract' and 'quietly determined to be itself … an aural equivalent of seeing a world in a grain of sand'.

David has been commissioned by ensembles and musicians including the Libra Ensemble (Melbourne), Elision (Brisbane), Australian Youth Orchestra, Ives Ensemble (Amsterdam), Fritz Hauser (Basel), Yasutaka Hemmi (Shimane, Japan), Aequatuor (Zurich), Ensemble 21 (Denmark), and others.

David completed his PhD in Composition at the University of Queensland. He is

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27 "Robin Fox," accessed September 21, 2010, http://www.robinfox.com.au.
28 Graeme Leak, email message to author, September 23, 2010.

a board member of the New Music Network, RealTime Open City and co-founder of SoFA (Social Firms Australia Ltd). In 2010 he was made Director of Chamber Made Opera in Melbourne."[29]

"Swiss percussionist **Fritz Hauser** develops solo programs for drums and percussion which he performs worldwide, cross-media works with dancer/choreographer Anna Huber, with architect Boa Baumann as well as with director Barbara Frey. Compositions for percussion ensembles and soloists, sound installations (a.o. Therme Vals), radio plays, music for films and readings.

In the field of improvised music he has worked together with numerous musicians: Urs Leimgruber, Joëlle Léandre, Marilyn Crispell, Christy Doran, Pauline Oliveros, Lauren Newton, and Patrick Demenga a.o.
Since the Stockholm International Percussion Event 1998 he has been collaborating with different percussion groups and soloists around the world: Kroumata, Synergy Percussion, Nexus, Speak Percussion, Keiko Abe, Steven Schick, Bob Becker, Michael Askill a.o. He has recorded numerous CDs as soloist and with various groups."[30]

"Composer, multi-instrumentalist, master percussionist/drummer and video artist, **Rick Walker** has been on the cutting edge of music
for the last 30 years. A founding member of both the 1980's World Beat movement and the emerging International Live Looping movement,
he has taught, lectured, performed, and recorded in 15 different countries as solo headlining artist/sideman.

He's collaborated, recorded and toured with master musicians from all over the world playing a diverse collection of 1,000 exotic percussion instruments

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[29] "Aphids.net: People: David Young," accessed September 24, 2010, http://www.aphids.net/people/David_Young.
30 "Fritz Hauser," accessed September 24, 2010, http://www.fritzhauser.ch/english/bio_english/e_bio_0.html.

including the drumset, his first musical love. He's made his living as producer, studio musician, teacher, sound designer, author, band leader and live looping innovator and has recently invented and/or designed several ground breaking new technologies in video projection, live audio and video looping and digital signal processing. He produces the world's largest international live looping festival, annually in his hometown of Santa Cruz, California."[31]

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31 Rick Walker, email message to author, March 11, 2010.